

Liberty University

The Struggle for Leadership in the African American Church

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by

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Acknowledgments

My study and research are dedicated to my family for their tremendous support. I am grateful for their encouragement.

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on looking at the struggles that African American leaders have within the church setting. It analyses the failings of the church in its mandate to offer spiritual and social nourishment to the black community. There have been concerns by clergy and the community at large that the reverent position that the church leader is no longer present. In its place, lies frustration and, in some cases, anger. The study will unravel the cause of the descent of the church. It examines a plethora of literature on the area, finding both supporting and opposing information. In the methodology, the study uses a mixed approach that incorporates the use of quantitative questionnaires in addition to intervention design. The results of this process indicate that the leaders are not aware of the issues facing their church. The dominance of power reduced inclination towards altruism and service leadership, diminished engagement with church congregants, poor planning for ministerial strategy, and lack of communication come of the leading problems in churches. The study thus recommends open dialogue on how to strengthen the church, especially within the younger generation, to encourage austerity of the black church. Further research can look at the shifting identity of black people and how it has affected the perceptions of the church.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Overview

The first chapter of the study aims at developing a foundation for the study. The study begins by examining the contextual development of the black church, the sensitivity of the black church to the plight of the African-American community and its role as the House of God, and the interplay between the church's leadership and its role in the community. To this point, it makes it possible to identify events or occurrences that might constitute a 'leadership struggle' in the context of the Black Church. The problem statement section defines some of the struggles and identifies 'the problem' that needs addressing. The chapter also identifies keywords, limitations, delimitation, and assumptions that underlie the research. It concludes with a thesis statement.

1.1 Ministry Context

The Black Church continues to be a bulwark in the African American community. Numerous existing and developing researches presuppose a close relationship between religious symbols such as prayer, songs, and praise and social actions among the members of the community. Its long history of social indulgence places it at the center of the community's economic, socio-cultural, and political dimensions. Historically, the Black Church has played a leadership role in addressing social vices, fostering equality, and strengthening the black culture¹.

¹ Malone III, Walter. "The Assessment of Organizational Culture and Servant Leadership within an African American Church: A Descriptive Study of Behavioral Norms and Expectations. *Nature*. (2008);451(7177): 1.

African-American church leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. catalyzed social change for the benefit of the community and ensuring that the Declaration of Independence ("We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal") live out to the true meaning of its creed². However, despite efforts, attaining equality remains a struggle for the community, which reciprocates to racial prejudices and realignments within the church.

Right from the early decades of slavery, oppression, bigotry, discrimination, ethnic dehumanization, and injustice defined the life of a common African American³. Small groups of Christian associations provided hope and catharsis to the troubled souls. In God, they found refuge and motivation that kept them going. Contrarily, the growing religious associations among the slaves always raised concerns among the slave owners who viewed it as an ultimate threat to white existence. White masters used biblical justifications to emphasize a slave's responsibility to remain obedient and spectators in the church rather than part of the congregation.

They carefully watched the religious exercises convinced that without close inspections, such gatherings might ensue into escapes and uprisings. Nonetheless, such investigations did not stop religion-inspired insurrections, such as Nat Turner's Rebellion of 1831⁴. Decades later, insurgent groups, primarily build on the 'black church,' managed to reassure normalcy by instilling individual, social, and political change within the African American communities. The culmination of the Confederacy did not only signal freedom for masses of enslaved black

² Francies, Lamont Ali. "An Exploration of Worship Practices at an African American Church of Christ." (2013);. Doctoral Dissertations.76

³ Douglas, Kelly Brown, and Ronald E. Hopson. "Understanding the black church: The dynamics of change." *Journal of Religious Thought* 56, no. 2/1. (2000): 95.

⁴ Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. "Church culture as a strategy of action in the black community." *American Sociological Review* (1998): 767.

Americans but also inspired the emancipation of the black church. The church became the only place for blacks to find refuge.

The institutionalization of all black Shiloh Baptist Churches provided a place where African Americans would retreat to solace and promote their mutual good. The proliferation of the black church gave rise to numerous other churches that brought together various elements of African rituals, southern sufferings, and slave emotionalism, which reflected into worship characterized by pain, anguish, and shouting⁵.

Irrespective of their denominational differences, many African Americans have always regarded the black church as their religion, community, and home (AAREG). Concerning the complete devotion, black church and black culture is so intertwined that scholars sometimes perceive them as identical⁶. That is why, during the civil rights era, the church was able to mobilize enough social and political power that allowed them to become the epicenter of the African American struggle for civil rights.

Through the church, the African Americans subsumed their identity and found therapeutic relief from social pressures they underwent are part of American history. For long, the church has remained the primary institution in which black people experience prestige, authority, and rank⁷. From this historical precedent, it is possible to explain why the disposition towards the church remains strong decades after slavery and why African Americans are more likely to seek counsel from church leaders rather than professional counselors.

⁵ Francies, Lamont Ali. "An Exploration of Worship Practices at an African American Church of Christ." 2013;. Doctoral Dissertations.76

⁶ Douglas, Kelly Brown, and Ronald E. Hopson. "Understanding the black church: The dynamics of change." *Journal of Religious Thought* 56, no. 2/1. 2000; 95.

⁷ Ibid, 75

The church plays a leading role in absolving the community's suffering by overseeing the implementation of policies that aim at reducing social margins and restoring equality. To foster the biblical sentiment of 'brothers' keeper,' the church does not only live by bread alone but indeed operates in line with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s précis "the church cannot be silent while mankind faces the threat of nuclear annihilation. If the church is true to her mission, he must call for an end to the arms race."

In God, African Americans have found a mediator who, through faith, is willing and able to solve their problems and hardships. They believe that God, through His immanent nature, has the business of helping His own people overcome their afflictions and anguish and to protect them from the forces of evil. This type of belief is in concordance with the words of Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:37-39);

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The church continues in its struggle to lead its congregation in realizing God's love by helping them meet their existential needs. Following the intertwined connection between the church and the society, it is not surprising that many African American Christians and ministers feel compelled to lead others in achieving the spiritual and 'worldly' needs of the community. More than 70% of the African Americans are consistent churchgoers, while even the unaffiliated feel that they are 'spiritually affiliated.' On the contrary, only half of Americans, on average, consistently attend church services. To lead such large congregations, leadership is critical at all levels. While most families recognize the importance of leadership right from the household

setting, the African American church unequivocally and respectfully accepts the direction of the clergy.

The community continues to see its religious leaders, including Richard Allen, Jesse Jackson, Martin Luther King Jr., and Andrew Young, among others, as voices of hope. Various African American scholars admit that pastoral leadership is a critical component of the community's history and future⁸. Du Bois (⁹) described the clergymen and women as the unique personalities developed by the Negroes on the American soil. In their roles, he explains, they became healers of the sick, the comforters of the mourning, the interpreters of the Unknown, and the avengers of the wrong. In them, people see living incarnations of God's existence and truth enchanted with the Word of God to lead and guide those created in God's Image.

However, for them to lead and guide God's precious people, the leaders require authentic biblical wisdom combined with an appropriate pastoral leadership style that fosters discernment and full engagement of members in ensuring that all are involved in evangelism, exaltation, and edification¹⁰. Members should be willing to support them in all ways possible in achieving the primary goals of the church. Wisdom-based and shared leadership were eminent throughout biblical times. For instance, King David had nuggets of wisdom that allowed him to build the Kingdom of God in the glory of His Holiness (Psalm 145). People like Joseph, Moses, Joshua,

⁸ Jones Sr, Anthony D. "Leadership and spirituality: The indivisible leadership of African American school administrators as pastors." PhD diss., Iowa State University, (2010): 11567

⁹ Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt, ed. *The negro church: Report of a social study made under the direction of Atlanta university; together with the proceedings of the eighth conference for the study of the negro problems, held at Atlanta university, may 26th, 1903*. No. 8. Createspace Independent Pub, (1903): 50

¹⁰ Trader-Leigh, Karyn. "Understanding the role of African American churches and clergy in community crisis response." *Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies* (2008): 15.

Caleb, Solomon, Paul, Deborah, Mary, and Christ Jesus always had wisdom permeating their souls, allowing them to lead the people of God diligently.

While initiating the church, Jesus Christ granted it a plurality form of leadership. His Twelve Disciples exemplified humbled brotherly love, unity, and shared leadership. The appointment of the apostles who helped the Disciples in carrying out various responsibilities in the church also exhibited shared leadership (Acts 6:3-9). Amongst them, it was difficult to differentiate between the chiefs and the assistants. God emphasizes that through the renewed spirits of our minds (Ephesians 4:23), we are wiser together (Proverbs 15:22) and can discern what the will of God is (Romans 12:22).

However, top-down leadership is still strong in African American churches. Most of the black churches have one pastor who has the authority to hire and fire the assistant as well as lay leaders¹¹. By casting a lens on most of the African American churches, it is possible to identify a pastor as the chief leader of the church with a chain of hierarchies under him/her. Through the highly supportive congregations, the pastors have been able to solicit and secure power as leaders of the community's transcendent and existential needs¹².

Although such powers have helped in spiraling their influence in establishing better communities, they contrast God's call for brotherhood and plurality. In the words of Ayers¹³, the author of *Power to Lead: Five Essentials for the Practice of Biblical Leadership*, 'a biblical leader must be a person of character and competence whose aim is to influence the community of people to achieve a God-honoring calling by means of the power of Christ.' Doing the will of He

¹¹ Ibid, 12

¹² Ibid, 16

¹³ Ayers, M. *Power to lead: Five essentials for the practice of biblical leadership* (1st ed.). RBK Publishing Group. 2015: 25

who sent them and accomplishing His work should be their food (John 4:34). Thus, authentic biblical leaders require a sincere and collective assessment of our times to be able to stand in the gap between God and those created in God's Image¹⁴.

It is apparent that the ability to practice collective leadership and wisdom in the churches desperately demands the ability to seek discernment from God. Sincerely, supplement each other's decisions and judgments, and to maintain sober mindedness. Togetherness and transparency allow Christian pilgrims to always walk together in the light and still hold the right sense of direction without being led astray.

God calls all church leaders to shift from their interests and diligently commit to His own bidding. He warns leaders against exploiting their followers and disregarding those who are in need (Isiah 58). He warns of dire consequences for leaders who fail to care for their flock or dispense false ideas. Thus, leaders remain primarily accountable for their actions and leadership styles over the flock within their jurisdiction. In their inherent spiritual dispositions, African American leaders must be able to act responsibly, clearly visualize the future, and maintain integrity in leading their flocks to God's unfolding kingdom.

To do so, Greenleaf¹⁵, after coining two conflicting words: servant-leader, articulated that a leader's primary goals should be to serve others by placing the highest priority on the needs of their followers rather than themselves. Working for God and living by His word demands that a church leader loves the church of God and every person that makes up the church. Loving in this context means putting other people's priority above self and listening to them with humility

¹⁴ Barnes, Sandra L. "'The Alpha and Omega of Our People': A sociological examination of the promise and problems of the contemporary Black Church." In *Free at Last?*, pp. 149-172. Routledge, 2017: 160

¹⁵ Greenleaf, Robert K. *The power of servant-leadership: Essays*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998: 52

to promote both their existential and spiritual wellbeing. Some researchers believe that servant leadership has deep roots in biblical foundations and principles (Lynch & Friedman 2013, 88; Russell 2003, 8; Sendjaya & Sarros 2002, 860; Bunch 2013, 1). Christian Apologist (2018, 1) argues that Jesus is a perfect exemplar of servant leadership. He (Jesus) taught His disciples that leadership was an act of service and a full commitment to humility rather than pride. In the words of McMinn¹⁶;

"A servant leader is a person who leads the way Jesus did; a servant leader is one who leads by example of service; a servant who seems to lead by example, not edict; a servant leader is an example after that of Jesus." (p. 13)

To this point, it is eminent that the black church has indeed played a central role in defining the black culture and promoting the existential and spiritual welfare of the African American community. Developing a servant-leadership approach is essential in ensuring that the church remains on this course¹⁷. As the only institution owned by the black community, the church must continue creating safe ecclesial spaces essential for rejuvenating impulses necessary for achieving Black existential freedom and curbing forces that exasperate social injustices¹⁸. Just like it remained steadfast in fighting for civil rights, preachers in their pulpits must seek to

¹⁶ McMinn, T. F. J. "The conceptualization and perception of biblical servant leadership in the Southern Baptist Convention." (2002): 13.

¹⁷ Lynch, James, and Hershey H. Friedman. "Servant leader, spiritual leader: The case for convergence." *Lynch, JA & Friedman, HH (2013). Servant leader, spiritual leader: The case for convergence. Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics* 10, no. 2 (2013): 88.

¹⁸ Hopkins, Dwight N. "The Black Church and Its Mission for the Twenty-First Century." In *The Black Church Studies Reader*, pp. 265-278. Palgrave Macmillan, New York (2016): 265.

find solutions to teenage pregnancy, violence, sagging pants, HIV/AIDS, murder, and school drop-out, which are still rampant in the community. Addressing such issues is at the core of black preaching and is essential for the community's growth and survival.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Although the African-American church remains steadfast in its fight for social liberation more than a century after the emancipation proclamation, various voids, both from the church and the community, are emerging in the current leadership, which tends to cloud the church's conventional goals. The continuing structural change in the country's capitalism is permanently breaking the associations in the African American Church¹⁹. The gap between the fortunate and less fortunate within the community is consistently widening, giving rise to class polarization. Just as the whites, the increasing black middle class is against crime and drugs and blames poor blacks for such vices, yet they have little interest in contributing to their solutions. They have become psychologically and spiritually attached to capitalism.

Thus, with the increasing size of the black middle class, the division and diversification of the African American community continue to widen, thereby threatening the role of the church as the leader in fighting for legal equality. The evidence asserts the church is catalyzed by the plummeting church membership in recent years. A significant number of the black middle class now prefer multiracial churches over black churches. An opinion poll carried out by Gallup in 2017 revealed that about 38% of adults attended religious services weekly (Newport 2018). This is quite low compared to the 2008 statistic when it was 42% (Newport, 2018)²⁰. Although as many as 83% of the population believe in God, only a few attend church services. The Black

¹⁹ Marable, Manning. *How capitalism underdeveloped Black America: Problems in race, political economy, and society*. Haymarket Books, (2015): 25

²⁰ Newport, F. *Church Leaders and Declining Religious Service Attendance* (Gallup.com. 2018)

Church is losing its glue of togetherness. The black church's economic foundation is weakening, and many are struggling to remain operational.

Given this reality, most of the African American churches have one full-time clergy who has the authority to hire and fire and assign responsibilities. In contrast, most of the church officials are volunteers willing to contribute to the development of the church. The encroachment of paucity in African American churches has made leadership a real struggle within the churches making some leaders lose their focus in God's promise. Besides, the African American church continues to battle with homosexuality, an issue that has caused division within the church.

While carrying out the polls, Gallup paid some attention to the reasons for the wane in church participation. A potential explanation was the reducing quality of the religious leaders within the church ranks. In their report, they quoted, "it's certainly possible that churchgoers don't quit churches, but instead quit ministers, priests, and rabbis" (Newport, 2018). However, such assumptions remain subjected to research.

Historically, pastors and ministers in the black church have been leaders of worship, shepherds of their flock, supporters of the weak, and counselors of hope. They had a pivotal role in addressing social vices within the community and ensuring that it lives within the precepts of God's will. Some people believe that this is changing. A review of the Black Church claims that an increasing number of pastors within the community are deviating towards fulfilling their separate interests rather than being Jesus' hands and feet (Menzie 2014)²¹. Instead of using the synagogues to empower their flock and to foster morality, some mega-pastors use it to preach prosperity for their self-gain. Cultural and aesthetic issues such as the hip-hop culture, worship

²¹ Menzie, N. *Are Prosperity Preachers Destroying the Traditional Black Church?* (A Review of 'Black Church Inc. , 2014)

styles, and role of the media in the church and how they influence the community's service to God and 'men' are resurfacing (Malone III 2015, 25). Divisions within the church concerning these issues are wanting.

A documentary by Black Church Inc. reveals that apparent abuse of tithes and honorariums and twisting the gospel to support unnecessary financial giving is on the rise in African American churches (Jacques 2015)²². According to the documentary, church leaders are giving up their role as citizens and community leaders. In as much as such accusations might appear authentic, there is no single research that has exclusively explored them. In case they are accurate, there is a need for academic research to explore the causative factors and how best they can be addressed.

While African-American researchers and leaders synonymously agree that leadership is a critical component of every aspect of social structure, especially the church, it is unfortunate that there is no single research that has attempted to address the intensifying struggle for leadership within the African-American churches in the 21st century. Scant literature has touched on the role of leaders in the African American churches with others attempting to pinpoint effective leadership approaches that the church practices or should adopt. This leaves a significant gap to address the struggles that the church leaders must encounter in their daily practices and how they adapt to the changing social, economic, and political structures to keep alive the old spirit of the church.

²² Jacques, R. *Black Church Inc Movie* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_E9alkvdbM (2015)

1.3 Purpose Statement

The study of struggles in African American churches and how best to address them remain undeveloped paradigm of inquiry. However, ongoing arguments suggest in numerous ways that there is a need to scientifically probe the issue and establish possible remedies for the problem. Blackaby and Blackaby²³ point out that pastors' mediocre leadership is causing significant breakdowns in the church. Greenleaf²⁴ agrees that mediocrity in leadership is a significant problem not only in the church but the world at large and supposes that reducing it is difficult. Nancy²⁵, in her research, is convinced that the poor leadership style among pastors, degenerates church growth. Surely, church leaders need a type of leadership that focuses on followers and teamwork rather than self to be able to lead in our times. To do so, understanding the struggles in the church, their roots, and possible solutions are paramount.

Filling this research gap will be of great importance in identifying leadership issues that cause church struggle. Additionally, it will contribute towards identifying best practices that church ministers and leaders adopt in addressing the problems. From such information, it will be possible to establish new standards and strategies for addressing various internal and external issues that threaten the existence and operations of the church. By viewing these problems from both telescopic and microscopic points of view, it will be possible to determine the smaller 'Parts of the Body' that might not be functioning well, contributing to the improper functioning of the

²³ Blackaby, Henry T., and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda*. B&H Publishing Group, (2011): 25

²⁴ Greenleaf, Robert K. *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. Paulist Press, (2002): 52

²⁵ Nancy, F. J. *The relationship of pastoral leadership styles and the decline of the church* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (Publication No. 305223549) (2003): 1

whole church as a body (Romans 12:15). Through this, it shall be possible to restore the church and feed the flock of God without filthy lucre but with a ready mind (1 Peter 5:2).

1.3.1 The Problem

The problem that the research aims to address is the intensifying leadership setbacks within the African American church and how best they can be addressed.

1.4 Research Questions

The primary research question that the study will contend with is;
What struggles are African American churches experiencing within their leadership, and how best can they circumvent their leadership to address these emanating struggles and challenges to better their current and future position as the leaders of community change in the African American social structure?

The research aims at addressing the following specific questions;

1. What struggles are African American churches experiencing within their leadership?
2. How do the struggles that the church experiences affect its commitment to Godly service?
3. To what extent do African American church leaders exhibit altruistic calling?
4. To what extent do African American church leaders consider themselves servant-leaders?
5. How can the church circumvent its leadership to address the emanating struggles and challenges?

1.5 Definitions, Limitations, Delimitations, Assumptions

1.5.1 Definitions

African American Pastor. A black pastor with an African American origin serving in an African American church

Altruistic Calling. An inner motivation to promote other people's welfare even if it means risking one's own life.

Believers/ Congregation. A group of people who believe in God and show some commitment to serving Jesus Christ, at least through adoration and service.

Black Church/ African American Churches/ the Church. Christian churches that have historically and still currently minister predominantly to African American believers within the United States.

Church. A designated space or place where Christians, sharing the same beliefs, gather to worship and adore God.

Clergy. A person who is licensed to lead and conduct religious worship in a Christian congregation. The words clergy and pastor are used interchangeably, although they might not mean the same thing.

Godly Service. A service to others and self that is consistent to God's Word, and glorifies His name

Leadership. The act of influencing or serving others to accomplish a specific purpose for the benefit of the majority.

Religion. An organized social structure consisting of a group of people who hold specific beliefs, practice spirituality, and aims at preserving some form of moral frameworks, doctrines, or symbols. Close to it is the word secular, which denotes anything none religious nor spiritual.

Servant Leadership. A type of leadership that places other people's interests before self. It starts with the inner feeling to serve others and serve well (Greenleaf 1998).

Struggle — an open clash between what is and what ought to be.

1.5.2 Limitations

Like any other study, this research is subject to numerous limitations. Leadership struggle is something common across churches and other non-Christian sects. However, this research focuses primarily on African American churches, which means that data is only collected from people affiliated to the African American church. It also implies that the results of the study will not be generalizable.

Additionally, the research assumes that pastors, and their leadership style, are the major instigators of struggle within African American churches. This is not true. In one way or another, congregants, as well as other external factors such as unsupportive system and policies, might as well contribute to the struggle. Thus, the study's focus on pastors might be a threat to its internal and external validity. Since an African American is likely to have only one pastor at a time, accessing them for data collection might be met with great difficulties. Also, the research period is limited, making it difficult to collect and analyze large volumes of data.

Finally, the research depends on the pastors' and the clergy's self-report, which is highly dependent on their actual behavior and preferences. In the self-report, the respondents can acquiesce to characteristics that fit them and dissent with those which are against their interest. They may portray themselves as socially responsible and committed to serving the will of God. Thus, the data collected might not be the true reflection of the ideal occurrences on the ground.

1.5.3 Delimitations

To limit the chances of the study becoming fuzzy, it specifically addresses the leadership struggle in African American churches. As such, the participants are expected to be people affiliated with the church – African American pastors and clergy to be precise. Meaning, that the findings of the research and the recommendations thereof might not apply to churches without

the African American foundation. Additionally, the study assesses the style of leadership as the primary cause of a leadership struggle in the churches and ignores all other possible causes. Meaning, that the findings might be addressing one aspect of the causative factors, thereby inconclusive. The findings are highly applicable only in cases where the leadership style is determined to be the problem.

1.5.4 Assumptions

Various assumptions underlie this study. First, it assumes that the leadership style practiced by pastors and the clergy is the primary cause of leadership struggle within the African American ecclesial spaces. Although it might not be accurate in entirety, the assumption makes it possible to design research that specifically targets pastors and to address core issues that have impeded the efficient operation of the church for long.

Additionally, it assumes that the challenges and struggles faced by African American churches are homogenous. Defiant to this assumption is the fact that the struggles and challenges faced by the church are not entirely homogenous²⁶. Some vary by church size, church demographics, and the surrounding environment. Nonetheless, this assumption is necessary for fostering the generalizability and plausibility of the findings, at least among the African American churches. Finally, the research assumes that the recruited participants will be willing and interested to participate in research. The success of the study entirely depends on their commitment.

²⁶ Jones, A. D. *Leadership and spirituality: The unified leadership of African American school administrators as pastors*. Dissertation Thesis (2010): 74

1.6 Thesis Statement

Whether or not there is a struggle for leadership in the African American churches, pastoral leadership styles, coupled with appropriate support of the people, is critical in strengthening the lay ministry and attaining the community's and the church's desired goals. If unresolved, leadership struggles can stifle the growth and development of the African American churches, especially the small and mid-sized ones, which tend to threaten the goals of the ministry.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Chapter Overview

As the world changes at an unprecedented pace, organizational leaders continue to contend with complex and more challenging problems, and the church is no exception. As Blanchard & Broadwell²⁷ put it, the context of leadership is changing fast, the stakes are high, and those who can effectively lead teams towards the achievement of extraordinary results attain great rewards. The applicability of Blanchard's & Broadwell's²⁸ perspective in the church context should never be underemphasized. Religious and secular leaders alike must be able to recognize leadership vicissitudes around them and be well disposed to address them. Bishundat, Phillip, and Gore²⁹ proclaim, "We call on all leaders of all ages to cultivate a critical hope as an essential part of the leadership development process." (p. 91). They see critical hope as the ability to realistically assess the surrounding environment through a lens of equity and justice to envision the possibilities of a better future effectively.

In addition to this fundamental argument, critical hope should also have a fundamental role of helping leaders identify current and future challenges and threats that might amount to struggles as well as looming opportunities to facilitate current practices and prepare for the unforeseen future adequately. This chapter delves into developing a more in-depth and well-supported understanding of leadership struggle, its effects, and possible solutions to establish a concrete foundation for the accomplishment of the goals of this study.

²⁷ Blanchard, Ken, and Renee Broadwell. *Servant leadership in action: How you can achieve great relationships and results*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018), 15

²⁸ Ibid, 75

²⁹ Bishundat, Devita, Daviree Velázquez Phillip, and Willie Gore. "Cultivating critical hope: The too often forgotten dimension of critical leadership development." *New directions for student leadership* 2018, no. 159 (2018): 91.

2.1 The Concept of Leadership Struggle

The combination of the two terms, leadership-struggle, presents some level of provocation. Leadership is the driver for change and a primary necessity in addressing various issues within an organization. The early scholars of leadership from The Ohio State argued that two behavioral factors define whether a person is a leader. First, the person must show consideration to the needs of his or her followers. Second, having shown concern for the requirements, the person must take actions that initiate structure for planning for and addressing the need³⁰. Michigan scholars also added participation as a requisite in ensuring that the gap between the considered needs and their address is effectively bridged. They argued that the implementation of leadership plans is taxing and indeed impossible without inviting the efforts of others in determining the right course to take.

Lack of participation thus amounts to a struggle, which in this sense is seen as an open clash between two opposing groups leading to strenuous efforts. However, Williams³¹ argued that sources of leadership challenges and problems might be complex than model provided by Ohio and Michigan scholars. In fact, he points out that lack of proper participation is one among other numerous causalities. He sees communication issues, unaddressed or poor approach to conflicts, selfishness, lack of clear vision, lack of alignment, and poor relationships as instigating factors to leadership struggle. Each of these factors, and their possibility to generate a struggle,

³⁰Bass, Bernard M., and Ralph Melvin Stogdill. *Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications*. (Simon and Schuster, 1990), 52

³¹ Williams, Dean. *Real leadership: Helping people and organizations face their toughest challenges*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005), 52

is contingent on the leadership style and approach adopted by a leader. Thus, by casting a lens of types of leadership, it is possible to determine their odds of generating a struggle.

The Great Man Theory and the Trait Leader

Excellent Man theory holds that God sends leaders and that their divine nature grants them unmatched superiority to lead and guide their followers. In this sense, the leadership approach taken by a great leader is unquestionable, and followers have no other choice but to live within the dictates of the great leaders. Thus, those who wish to lead are encouraged to emulate the great leader. The theory fostered a belief that leaders are gifts to humanity from God, building the concept that leaders are born not made and that the leaders are born with enough qualities to exercise their influence over their followers.

However, as Halliman³² points out, there is an undeniable fact that leadership qualities and effectiveness influenced by various independent variables, including socioeconomic, environmental factors, and the nature of the followers' needs. In a broader sense, the grand man theory does not base its arguments on any scientific grounds or empirical validity. Given its subjectivity, 'a great leader' has the potential to bend situations and decisions to their advantage, knowing that the perceptions of others are not likely to affect their practice.

Although it worked in ancient times, it lacks relevance in modern times since it discounts the concept that leadership can be taught and learned, something which has become the new normal in modern times. However, the lack of relevance does not imply that relevance doesn't exist. Spector³³ points out that the contemporary application of the great man theory can be seen

³² Halliman, Robert W. "Understanding leadership: Let's put the horse before the cart." *American Journal of Management* 14, no. 4 (2014): 68.

³³ Spector, Bert Alan. "Carlyle, Freud, and the great man theory more fully considered." *Leadership* 12, no. 2 (2016): 250.

in the highly remunerated CEOs who are respected for their transformative abilities while paying little attention to their past transgressions. Humphrey³⁴ points out that although emulation of great leaders can generate a ripple effect on leadership capabilities, it might also lead to a misunderstanding of context and limited practicability in addressing real issues.

Trait theorists held that leadership is built on some common and eminent traits. Stogdill³⁵ identified eight differentiating traits, including intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, initiative, persistence, self-confidence, and sociability. He added that the applicability of leadership traits widely. He pointed out that a person with traits that granted him or her leadership advantage in one situation might be a follower in another situation where his or her leadership traits have fewer effects. Other researchers such as Kirkpatrick and Locke³⁶, as well as Bader, Zccaro, and Kemp³⁷, believe that there are specific traits applicable to situations, and among these are intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. They hold that leaders who lack these fundamental traits are susceptible to poor decision-making and approach to problems, which in the long run might worsen off the situation rather than solving it.

The argument raises a fundamental question as to whether leaders who lack basic traits to leadership are more vulnerable to leadership struggle. King³⁸ is convinced that while lack of the

³⁴ Humphrey, Ronald H. *Effective leadership: Theory, cases, and applications*. (SAGE Publications, 2013), 96

³⁵ Stogdill, R. M. Stogdill, Ralph M. "Handbook of leadership: A survey of the literature." *The Journal of Psychology*, 25, no 2 (1948), 35

³⁶ Kirkpatrick Shelley A., and Edwin A. Locke. "Leadership: do traits matter?." *Academy of Management Perspectives* 5, no. 2 (1991): 48.

³⁷ Bader, P. K., Zaccaro, S. J., & Kemp, C. F. Predicting leader adaptability with leader trait patterns. *PsycEXTRA Dataset*. (2004): 25

³⁸ King, Albert S. "Evolution of leadership theory." *Vikalpa* 15, no. 2 (1990): 43

five specific traits might result in poor leadership and possibly struggle, having them does not unequivocally guarantee effective leadership. Halliman³⁹ posits that trait theory remains inconsequential without context or situation and that leadership is not always about situations. Thus, overdependence on trait theory tends to diminish the practical relevance of leadership and jeopardize the commitment of leaders to serve their followers.

Situational Leadership

Situational leadership recognizes that one size does not fit all. As such, leaders must change their approach to leadership to effectively adapt to the impending situation. The leadership approach places significant emphasis on diagnosing the needs of the followers and adopting the appropriate leadership style to meet those needs. Humphrey⁴⁰ argues that poorly diagnosed needs and problems result in misleading and insufficient solutions, which might further cause chaos in the change implementation process. The leadership approach adopted inextricably depends on the necessary amounts of relationships, and the level of communication needed to meet the needs and advance development effectively.

Goleman et al.⁴¹, in developing the concept of emotional intelligence, argues, that situational leadership leans on six approaches to leadership, including coaching leaders, pacesetter leaders, democratic leaders, 'affiliative' leaders, authoritative leaders, and coercive leaders. He postulates that none of these approaches is neither good nor bad but explicitly depends on the impending situation. To integrate Goleman's arguments, it is of superlative

³⁹ Halliman 2014, 68

⁴⁰ Humphrey, Ronald H. *Effective leadership: Theory, cases, and applications*. (SAGE Publications, 2013), 96

⁴¹ Goleman, Daniel, Robert A. Hanson, and Susan E. Plant. *Emotional intelligence: a new vision for educators*. (National Professional Resources, Incorporated, 2012), 75

importance for leaders to effectively identify the appropriate approach to take given the underlying situation. Poor selection of leadership approaches might generate a clash between groups and ideologies.

Blanchard and Hersey⁴², in their contribution to situational leadership, asked a fundamental question, “what is the best leadership style?” Finding it fruitless to provide one answer to this question, the duo developed a matrix consisting of four styles including ‘telling leaders’ (S1, specific guidance, and close supervision), selling leaders (S2, explain and persuade), participating leaders (S3, share and facilitate), and delegating leaders (S4, delegate). They held that leaders should be willing to wear different hats as informed by the occasion. Even though the leadership situation varies greatly, making situational leadership sense-worthy, critics point various holes in the theory.

Northouse⁴³, in his book, *Leadership, Theory, and Practice*, alleges that situational leadership fails to identify appropriately the leadership style that is applicable in a group setting. He adds that the assumption of the situational leadership that leaders would always adopt similar patterns in addressing specific situations is superfluous since people would always act differently informed by various behavioral and demographic factors. Hersey & Blanchard⁴⁴ also point out that situational leadership puts much emphasis on the short-term strategy, which jeopardizes long-term goals. In general, while it might appear clear that situational leadership provides an

⁴² Hersey, Paul, and Kenneth H. Blanchard. (*Situational Leadership Sampler*. (Center for Leadership Studies, 1977), 98

⁴³ Northouse, Peter G. *Leadership: Theory and practice*. (Sage publications, 2018), 85

⁴⁴ Hersey, Paul, and Kenneth H. Blanchard. (*Situational Leadership Sampler*. (Center for Leadership Studies, 1977), 85

effective approach to short term needs and leadership problems, it fails to clearly describe specific situations under which specific leadership approaches are applicable.

Transactional Leadership

King ⁴⁵ sees transactional leadership as a dyadic exchange between the leader and the followers. First mentioned by Max Weber in 1947, then followed by Bernard Bass in 1981, transactional leadership pays special attention to motivating and directing followers primarily by determining their self-interests and appealing to such interests⁴⁶. Transactional leaders pay special attention to results and strictly follow existing policies, cultures, and structures to ensure meeting the desired intent. In the light of transactional leadership, leaders are to reward the best performance and assign penalties to poor performance as a way of ensuring that everybody performs to the expected standards.

Given the nature of leader-follower relationships in transactional leadership, Hartog et al. ⁴⁷ suppose that transactional leadership builds on reciprocity where member relationships hang upon mutually beneficial exchanges in which the leader expects the followers' act and behave in a way that maximizes their productivity. In contrast, the follower expects the leader to maximize his or her expected returns. According to Hartog, Muijen, and Koopman⁴⁸, a transactional exchange consists of four major dimensions, including contingent rewards, active management by exception, passive management by exception, and laissez-faire. While the leadership

⁴⁵ King, Albert S. "Evolution of leadership theory." *Vikalpa* 15, no. 2 (1990): 43

⁴⁶ Ibid, 143

⁴⁷ Den Hartog, Deanne N., Jaap J. Van Muijen, and Paul L. Koopman. "Transactional versus transformational leadership: An analysis of the MLQ." *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology* 70, no. 1 (1997): 19.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 20

approach received praise for maximizing the followers' satisfaction, it has received criticism for failing to address their dissatisfying factors.

A transactional relationship is built on a series of transactions rather than improving the level of affiliation⁴⁹. It pays little attention to enhancing followers' creativity and their ability to generate new ideas, thereby stifling their growth. Fostering the ideology that a simple reward, primarily monetary, is the fundamental determinant of employee motivation and performance is a dangerous assumption. Gregory, Stone, Russell, and Patterson⁵⁰ found out that fostering employee motivation by empowering them, fostering their autonomy, and boosting the significance of their tasks has a more enduring effect on their level of performance and satisfaction than a monetary reward. Besides, its overemphasis on short term goals places it at odds with the need to attain long-term corporate goals. The failure of transactional leadership to address followers' dissatisfaction and its short-term focus intensifies its vulnerability to generate conflict within the leadership as well as between the leader and the followers.

Transformational Leadership

James McGregor Burns in 1978⁵¹ theorized that creating valuable and positive change is followers to develop them into leaders to enhance their morale, motivation, and performance. Burns is convinced that leaders and followers who help each other in advancing to higher levels of morale and motivation are to experience a positive transformation that would help them develop and perform higher (p. 20). Various scholars have argued that transformational

⁴⁹ Ibid, 34

⁵⁰ Gregory Stone, A., Russell, R. F., & Patterson, K. Transformational versus servant leadership: a difference in leader focus. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25, no. 4 (2004): 350

⁵¹ McGregor Burns, J. "Transforming leadership: A new pursuit of happiness." (*Atlantic*, New York 1978), 20

leadership and transactional leadership are the antitheses of each other⁵². Unlike transactional leadership which leans on ‘give and take’ relationship, transformational leadership recognizes both intrinsic and extrinsic values of both the leaders and the followers and focus on developing their personalities, traits, and ability to adopt a change to effectively articulate and energize vision, challenging goals, and implement change.

Studies carried out for over three decades on the effects of transactional and transformational leadership on motivation and performance imply significant departure between the two and points out transformational leadership as more effective in achieving long term goals through effective change management. According to Burns⁵³, the two leadership styles are mutually exclusive, where the prior tend to maintain the status quo of the existing context, and the latter is trying to change it. Given its focus on value and personality, Burns emphasizes the need for leaders to treat their followers as people with feelings, beliefs, and needs not mere machines. Divorced from human ethics, Burns argues, the notion of leadership fades, and leadership complexities arise. Yukl⁵⁴ developed five approaches that he believes contribute to effective leadership in the modern age in a manner that is consistent with burn’s theorization;

- Liaising with followers to develop challenging and attractive visions
- Tying corporate visions with appropriate strategies necessary for their achievement
- Translating visions to actions

⁵² Ibid, 20

⁵³ McGregor Burns, J. "Transforming leadership: A new pursuit of happiness." (*Atlantic, New York* 1978), 20

⁵⁴ Yukl, Gary. "An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories." *The leadership quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999): 285.

- Expressing confidence, optimism, and decisiveness in the vision formation and implementation process
- Implementing the vision through well-planned steps

Although researchers such as Díaz-Sáenz⁵⁵ and Yukl⁵⁶ criticize it for its emphasis on the dyadic leader-follower relationship, transformational leadership remains the most dominant leadership style in the modern age. A kind of leadership which does not mention the dyadic relationship is yet to be theorized.

The point for carrying out analysis of the leadership styles was to establish whether leadership struggle might be in any way related to the leadership style adopted by a leader. From the four analyzed styles, it is apparent that the leadership style adopted is likely to affect the level of relationship between leaders and their followers. From the analysis, it can be postulated that leadership styles that tend to widen the dyadic leader-follower relationship stand at a chance of instigating a greater struggle in the leadership. In contrast, those that tend to narrow it are likely to lead to minimal conflict. Considering this argument, the great man leadership, situational leadership, and transactional leadership can be presumed to yield greater struggle than transformational leadership.

It should be known, however, that although the argument gives some impression of factuality, it is yet to be scientifically evidenced as there is no single research that has covered the subject. Many researchers have effectively examined how the leadership styles impact

⁵⁵ Díaz-Saenz, Hector R. "Transformational leadership." *The SAGE handbook of leadership* 5, no. 1 (2011): 310.

⁵⁶ (Yulk 1999, 286)

conflict resolution processes, but none has examined the possibility of the styles generating a leadership conflict.

2.2 Effects of Leadership Struggle and Challenges

Researchers unanimously agree that leadership is never efficient but faces numerous challenges and issues that, if not properly addressed, would amplify leadership problems. Williams⁵⁷ sees leadership as an approach for solving unceasing problems not to maintain the status quo but to improve it. For Johnson⁵⁸, one of the prominent authors on leadership, ethical behavior underscores effective leadership, and achieving the actual goals of leadership is difficult to attain without holding to the desired standards of ethics. He argues that there are numerous consequences for those leaders who choose to behave unethically.

Johnson⁵⁹ holds that leaders who lead unethically – he calls them toxic leaders – are more subject to abusing power, relying on deceptive information to lead, and betraying loyalties. In what he calls the shadow side of leadership, Johnson holds that leaders who portray ethical deficiencies exhibit excessive greed, lack of personal judgment, and poor moral values, which adversely affect their decision-making processes and relationships with their followers. To 'cast light' on their leadership capabilities, he portends, leaders must unlearn unethical behaviors and develop the capacity to lead ethically by developing specific ethical values such as optimism, compassion, courage, and integrity.

⁵⁷ Williams, Dean. *Real leadership: Helping people and organizations face their toughest challenges*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005), 65

⁵⁸ Johnson, Craig E. *Meeting the ethical challenges of leadership: Casting light or shadow*. (SAGE Publications, Incorporated, 2019), 65

⁵⁹ Ibid, 52

Johnson⁶⁰ sees leadership as a concept that is inseparable from ethical precepts. In this perspective, leaders who are committed to doing ‘good’ and combatting evil are well-positioned to make better decisions and tackle leadership challenges. However, a clear distinction between that which is good and that which is bad remains uncertain. To contend with this complexity, he remains open in his argument by encouraging leaders to develop and improve personal ethical frameworks by applying well-established theories to promote honesty and trust between them and their followers.

Dean Williams⁶¹, in his book *Real Leadership: Helping People and Organizations to Face their Toughest Challenges*, considers problems and challenges as critical aspects that embody organizations and institutions that can either lead to their growth topple them in entirety. What matters is how leaders apply leadership concepts in addressing the imminent challenges. He holds that using challenges for the benefit of an organization calls for leaders to draw a clear line of distinction between real leadership and counterfeit leadership. According to him, real leadership is about “showing the way and getting others to follow” (p.5). Real leaders get people to face reality (p.6), engage the group to foster n adaptive work (p.7), is committed to pursuing insight and wisdom (p. 8), and is willing to be responsible (p. 10).

He identifies and critically discusses six challenges that leaders are likely to experience in their leadership practice. The activist challenge, the development challenge, the transition challenge, the creative challenge, the maintenance challenge, and the crisis challenge (Williams 2005, p. 57-214) calls for leaders to be wise and approach problems with an open mind.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 85

⁶¹ Williams, Dean. *Real leadership: Helping people and organizations face their toughest challenges*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005), 5

Williams contends, “To exercise real leadership, one must understand how easy it is to be unwise and irresponsible with one’s power and engagement in a counterfeit leadership” (p. 14).

Counterfeit leaders tend to shrink their responsibilities by avoiding tough decisions, shying away from change, and keeping off from difficult situations but rather exhibit much effort in promoting their self-interests. Therefore, they stifle growth and topple the very foundations of their organizations that they promised to build. Kiker, Fugate, Kiker, & Callahan⁶² relates “counterfeit leadership” to reduced productivity, high turnover rate, poor follower engagement, unceasing conflicts, and limited rewards.

William’s ⁶³real leadership is indeed practical in the contemporary context. He argues, "Real leadership is fundamentally an interactive art, in which the leader is dancing with the context, the problem, the faction, and the objective" (p. 218). He adds that the "dancing" should be able to shape the role, styles, and tactics of a leader and the intervention approach that the leader adopts. He blends various aspects of situational and transformative leadership by encouraging leaders to always seek for avenues for change and to be able to be flexible and adopt a leadership style and strategy that suits the principal challenge to be addressed.

Johnson’s ⁶⁴ and Williams’ ⁶⁵perspectives on leadership and related challenges, as well as the arguments presented on the leadership styles, triggers a fundamental question; "Does your

⁶² Kiker, D. Scott, Julie Fugate, Mary B. Kiker, and Judith S. Callahan. "Consider This--Deciding whether an Organization Is Ethical or Not: A Policy Capturing Approach." *International Journal of Business Administration* 6, no. 6 (2015): 1.

⁶³ Williams, Dean. *Real leadership: Helping people and organizations face their toughest challenges*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005), 5

⁶⁴ Johnson, Craig E. *Meeting the ethical challenges of leadership: Casting light or shadow*. (SAGE Publications, Incorporated, 2019), 65

⁶⁵ Williams, Dean. *Real leadership: Helping people and organizations face their toughest challenges*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005), 5

team effectively lead your church?" (Hartwig & Bird 2015, p. 71). Demystifying this question requires leaders to assess themselves and their teams. Wageman, Nunes, Burrell, & Hackman⁶⁶ argues that as leadership roles continue to compound, "the demand for top roles are outdistancing the capacities of any single person" (p.7). As such, churches need to change the concept of 'a single leader' and flatten their hierarchies to leverage the effectiveness of leadership teams and share crucial strategic and tactical responsibilities⁶⁷.

Watt⁶⁸ emphasizes that attaining effective teams and ensuring achievement of church goals calls for leaders to master unique relational principles of effective church leadership. He identifies the mission, conflict management, power and influence, collaboration, emotions, forgiveness, reconciliation, and love as imperative principles that are critical in building effective teams and without which church leadership is at a high risk of collapsing He emphasizes that church leaders need to begin by assessing with open-mindedness the church believes in, what it stands for, and what it attends to achieve and lead the team towards attaining the goals. Churches, irrespective of size, ministerial teamwork, and collaboration, can never be overemphasized. Although the transformational leadership style tries to integrate the concepts of cooperation and teamwork, it still places significant boundaries between leaders and their followers. Greenleaf's⁶⁹ servant leadership paints collaboration and teamwork more clearly.

⁶⁶ Wageman, Ruth, Debra A. Nunes, James A. Burruss, and J. Richard Hackman. *Senior leadership teams: What it takes to make them great*. (Harvard Business Review Press, 2008), 7

⁶⁷ Surratt, Sherry, and Wayne Smith. "Team collaboration: Broadening the church leadership platform." (*Leadership Network*, 2011), 1

⁶⁸ Watt, Willis M. "Relational principles for effective church leadership." *Journal of Leadership Education* 13, no. 2 (2014): 126

⁶⁹ Greenleaf, R. *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997), 7

2.3 Servant Leadership

Coined by Greenleaf in 1970 in his work *the Servant Leader*, servant leadership is a type of leadership in which a person has a natural feeling that he or she “wants to serve, and to serve first” (Greenleaf 1977, p. 7). Servant leaders have a distinction by their intrinsic commitment to serving others, and through their conscious choice, they make leadership their aspiration. Servant leadership takes a sharp departure from the conventional leader-first type of leadership by building on a servant-first approach. A servant leader places the highest priority on the needs and interests of those whom he or she serves. After analyzing Greenleaf’s approach to leadership, Shugart⁷⁰, Spears⁷¹, Spears, and Lawrence⁷² point out that servant leadership has ten salient characteristics; listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

Despite its formulation over four decades ago, the concept of servant leadership remains in obscurity. Despite one decade of empirical research on the idea, servant leadership is yet to be fully operationalized⁷³. In the perspective of Sandjaya and Sarros⁷⁴, the primary reason why servant leadership remains in the gloom is that the general society still sees it as an oxymoron,

⁷⁰ Shugart, Sanford. "Servant Leadership: Robert K. Greenleaf's Legacy and the Community College." (1997): 25

⁷¹ Spears, Larry. "Reflections on Robert K. Greenleaf and servant-leadership." *Leadership & organization development journal* 17, no. 3 (1996). 65

⁷² Spears, Larry C., and Michele Lawrence, eds. *Practicing servant-leadership: Succeeding through trust, bravery, and forgiveness.* (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 45

⁷³ Van Dierendonck, Dirk, and Inge Nuijten. "The servant leadership survey: Development and validation of a multidimensional measure." *Journal of business and psychology* 26, no. 3 (2011): 249.

⁷⁴ Sendjaya, Sen, and James C. Sarros. "Servant leadership: Its origin, development, and application in organizations." *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 9, no. 2 (2002): 57.

which many people still questioning how a servant can lead. Leaders who still hold to conventional theories of leadership, such as the excellent leader theory, situational leadership, and transactional leadership, tend to see servants as meek and unduly humble resulting in effective leadership (McFarlane 2011, p. 31)⁷⁵. As a counterargument to this misconception, Gandolfi, Stone, and Deno⁷⁶ holds that “Servant leadership is neither lackadaisical (i.e., lacking in enthusiasm and determination), nor laissez-faire (i.e., things take their own course without interfering)” (p. 353).

The main point of divergence of leadership from other forms of leadership is its focus on the followers first. While most leadership approaches pay central attention to mission first and followers as agents necessary for fulfilling the purpose, servant leadership concentrates on the ability of an individual to succeed as a leader and, at the same time, a servant, followed by the mission. The success of a servant leader is built on stewardship and holding people accountable guided by discipline, humility, and putting one's needs after those of whom he or she serves (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011)⁷⁷. Although some might see the precepts of servant leadership as impractical, Gandolfi and Stone⁷⁸ holds;

“A combination of philosophical assumptions as well as tangible and empirical evidence suggests that servant leadership not only "work," but can be touted as useful and

⁷⁵ McFarlane, Donovan A. "The leadership roles of distance learning administrators (DLAs) in increasing educational value and quality perceptions." *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* 14, no. 1 (2011).

⁷⁶ Gandolfi, Franco, and Seth Stone. "Leadership, leadership styles, and servant leadership." *Journal of Management Research* 18, no. 4 (2018): 353.

⁷⁷ Van Dierendonck, Dirk, and Inge Nuijten. "The servant leadership survey: Development and validation of a multidimensional measure." *Journal of business and psychology* 26, no. 3 (2011): 249.

⁷⁸ Gandolfi, Franco, and Seth Stone. "Leadership, leadership styles, and servant leadership." *Journal of Management Research* 18, no. 4 (2018): 266.

desirable. Servant leadership works because it incorporates a proven element of effective leadership. Still, effective leadership is neither linear, nor is it a one-way form of communication or event. Instead, it is highly interactive" (p. 266).

Given its focus on the people first, collaboration and teamwork are at the heart of servant leadership. Numerous researchers have argued that contemporary organizations and institutions are in desperate need of servant leadership as a way of building ethical cultures and solving immediate problems that have stifled the growth of modern society. Kiker et al.⁷⁹ hold that organizations and institutions need to develop a culture that revolves around morality and self-reflection, which are ascertained by servant leadership. Specifically, the church, as part of the social fabric, needs servant leadership now than ever before. Cincala and Chase⁸⁰ establish that the church is deficient in serving leaders and is dominated by other types of leadership. The following section delves into developing a theological foundation on the leadership struggle in the church and creating an understanding as to why servant leadership, altruistic calling, and commitment to Godly service are indispensable in attaining success and addressing immediate problems in the modern church.

2.3.1 Theological Foundation

The word "leadership" became increasingly widespread in numerous churches not earlier than the beginning of the 20th century. At the beginning of its proliferation, the church used the term to denote a combined team of church office-bearers, including pastors, ministers, elders,

⁷⁹ ⁷⁹ Kiker, D. Scott, Julie Fugate, Mary B. Kiker, and Judith S. Callahan. "Consider This--Deciding whether an Organization Is Ethical or Not: A Policy Capturing Approach." *International Journal of Business Administration* 6, no. 6 (2015): 1.

⁸⁰ Cincala, P., & Chase, J. Servant leadership and church health and growth. *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, 12, no. 1 (2018): 89.

and deacons. However, it attracts exceptional interests that, despite significant use of the terms 'leader(s)' and 'leading' in the Bible, there is no single mention of the term 'leadership' in both Old and New Testaments. Paul, in his mission to strengthen the early church, uses the terms 'leaders' and 'leading' on numerous occasions in his letters but avoids the term 'leadership' in its entirety.

Clarke⁸¹ mentions that the apparent avoidance or reluctance to use the term 'leadership' raises several vital questions. "Does Paul's avoidance of such language suggest that the early church was predominantly a group of egalitarian communities that had no use for the generic p, titles for leadership? Was Paul in the objection of appointment of leaders other than apostles to serve in the early Christian Church? Does the biblical approach to leadership differ from contemporary leadership?" (p. 2-3). Clark's postulations amount to an interesting epistemological question: Might it be that the overemphasis of leadership in the postmodern church is the cause of its struggles? The available information in this study at this point, as well as available information from other studies, is so abstract to establish a conclusive answer to this question.

Despite the controversy that the question presents, the church, since the Great Commission, has always been built on two primary principles: Brotherhood and servanthood. Jesus commissioned his followers;

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (NIV Mathews 28: 18-20).

⁸¹ Clarke, Andrew D. *A Pauline theology of church leadership*. Vol. 362. (A&C Black, 2008), 2-3

Theologically, the mission of the church has been revolving around saving souls and reconciling people to God by building a Body of Christ constituting people who are baptized and working together to nurture and deepen their relationship with God and with one another. In the sense of church leadership, brotherhood and servanthood have ever been central. Jesus taught his disciples that those who seek greatness should seek to serve others instead of seeking power and status. He spoke unto his disciples;

“The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.” NIV Luke 22:25-26).

Despite Jesus' clear teachings, it is unfortunate that the church is historically led with individuals who seek to be first, and the church has experienced painful results therefore⁸². Even today, pastors and other church leaders have resorted to solo-leadership and pursuit of personal interests, which defy the original objectives of the church. Stein⁸³ holds that it is time for church leaders to revisit Jesus' call for servant leadership. Stott⁸⁴ provides that it is time that Christian leaders make three fundamental choices; to serve selfish ambitions or to sacrifice; to seek power or to serve; to pursue comfort, or to suffer for the benefit of all. To this point, it can be argued that the primary cause of struggle in contemporary church leadership is 'a disembodied body of Christ.' Lack of unity and pursuit of personal interests has clouded Godly service and is tearing

⁸² Thompson, Bill. "Servant, Leader, or Both?: A Fresh Look at Mark 10: 35-45." *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 9, no. 2 (2015): 54.

⁸³ Stein, Robert H. *Mark*. (Baker Academic, 2008), 7

⁸⁴ Stott, John RW. "The Cross of Christ (Downers Grove, IL." *InterVarsity Press* 176 (1986): 106

brothers apart instead of uniting them. What factors, therefore, contributes to disunity in the church?

2.4 Sources of Disunity in the Church as a Major Cause of Struggle

The Christian unity of the church is one of the most fundamental lessons in the New Testament. Jesus' life, together with His disciples, epitomizes the agreement that the church ought to have: A unity defined by the collectivity, togetherness, and brotherhood in evangelizing the Word of God. Jesus sees unity as part of the bolts and nuts that keep the church to its mission. He prayed, "Father, just as you are in me and me in you, may all of them be one so that they may be brought to complete unity" (John 17: 21,23). Jesus sees that through unity, the world would come to know that it is God the Father who sent Him.

The words of Jesus bring a new light on the impacts of not maintaining church unity. It is evident that without an agreement, members of the body of Christ would fragment, and the world would not be in a position to believe that "you have sent me" (John: 17-23). Thus, lack of unity an antecedent of church failure. The centrality of unity in the mission of church provides Apostle Paul with a reason to emphasize it. Paul talks much about unity, which he perceives as not only a product of the gospel but also its proof. According to Elliot⁸⁵, the message of Paul to the Romans and Galatians completely disapproves of the dependence on the Judaic approach to leadership characterized by self-justification and places divine grace and faith at the epicenter of the Christian Gospel. Grace and hope come to fruition after the establishment of unity.

⁸⁵ Elliott, John M. *Leadership development and relational patterns: the early church and the church in Zambia today*. (Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2007), 5

As such, Paul sees the church as a family who must deal with divisions to let unity prevail (1 Corinthians. 1:10-11; 2 Cor. 8-9; 13:11). Paul emphasizes oneness as the fulcrum on which unity balances. He writes to Ephesians, “There is one body and one spirit..., one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father for all who is above all, and in you all” Ephesians 4:4-6. Paul’s emphasis echoes Jesus’ prayer for the unity of the church as a primary determinant of its success. In agreement, the church finds love through which believers listen to and bear with one another. Without unity, lies, evil, corruption, grief, bitterness, and hatred befall the church (Eph. 4:25-31). These are the powerful verbs that define a church that struggles against itself.

Despite the emphasis and clarity that the New Testament places on unity, primarily through Jesus Christ and Apostle Paul, it is paradoxical that the church is much divided within itself. Michael Root and James Buckley⁸⁶, in their book, *The Morally divided Body: Ethical Disagreement and the Disunity of the Church* relate the current disunity of the church to its complex history of division. In the early centuries, Paul and his colleagues fought against the application of the Judaism approach to leadership in the church. They instead formulated a Christian leadership underscored by love, unity, and servanthood. In the third and fourth centuries, there was a sharp division due to a difference in theological understanding between Trinitarian and Christology theologians.

In the Sixteenth century, church division centered on ecclesiology and soteriology, while today church disunity emerges from different perspectives on moral theology. Root and Buckley⁸⁷ hold that the contemporary divisions due to differences in understanding and

⁸⁶ Root, Michael, and James J. Buckley, eds. *The Morally Divided Body: Ethical Disagreement and the Disunity of the Church*. Vol. 1. (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012), 74

⁸⁷ Ibid, 78

application of moral theologies are wreaking havoc not only between ecclesial communities but internally within the ecclesial communities themselves. Jenson well supports Their argument ⁸⁸in his essay, *Can Ethical Disagreement Divide the Church?* Jenson is concerned that churches are divided amongst themselves and from their ecumenical partners over matters that were initially not even considered as part of the church plan. Though he does not adopt extreme sides, he agrees that issues of ethics have indeed divided the church.

In his perspective, Gordon Melton⁸⁹ sees church division and disunity as an upshot of continual shifts and changes both at culture levels and society levels. He argues that due to change as a norm of life, the problems and issues that occur, the church cannot remain in stasis but must and will continue to mutate. According to him, new changes such as globalization, intensifying secularism, economic cycles, and emphasis on human rights continue to alter the church's approach to its role of evangelization. Although some of these changes have led to the proliferation of the church, others are changing the laws of the original church and have adversely impacted ethical standards in the church.

It is on record that the number of leaders, both Christian and secular, that are on the limelight for hypocrisy and scandals is higher than ever before⁹⁰. Many researchers also agree that the American churches are experiencing a leadership crisis with numerous church leaders importing the concepts of capitalism and the principles of business and profit-making into the

⁸⁸ Jenson, Robert W. "Can Ethical Disagreement Divide the Church?." *The Morally Divided Body: Ethical Disagreement and the Disunity of the Church*:1.

⁸⁹ Melton, J. Gordon. "Religious pluralism: Problems and prospects." *BYU L. Rev.* (2001): 619.

⁹⁰ Cincala & Chase 2018, 88

church. Consequently, leaders tend to deviate from the actual Scriptural teachings and instead market the word of God as a product to the consumer.

Many pastors and their supporting leaders strive to grant their congregations (customers) what they seek, ending up preaching what people want to hear rather than the assertions of the Holy Word. These mischievous occurrences confirm Melton's⁹¹ argument on socio-cultural changes as a causative factor for the changes in the church and its immediate consequences. Lest they lead the church astray, church leaders remain responsible for leading God's flock by committing to God's Word and working collaboratively in ensuring that the congregation also does the same.

To this point, although there is a lack of consensus as to what factors exactly cause church disunity, there is indeed a unanimous agreement that disunity is tearing the church apart against itself and is deviating it from the Great Commission. Therefore, how best can the church address its disunity and struggle in its leadership?

2.5 Addressing Leadership Struggle in the Church

Addressing the leadership struggle in the church begins with leaders being acquainted with their responsibilities. It is worth mentioning, although it might sound like a tautology, that church leaders must take up their responsibility of leading. Cast onto a lens, church leaders and their responsibilities have different roles and responsibilities that they need to master. The New Testament uses different designations in referring to church leaders. At one point, they are *elders* (Acts 20:17), given the maturity of their faith. In another instance, they are overseers (1 Tim. 3:

⁹¹ Melton, J. Gordon. "Religious pluralism: Problems and prospects." *BYU L. Rev.* (2001): 619.

1-7) with the role of church superintendence. They are also called pastors (Eph. 4:11), who shepherds the church.

Although these roles appear disintegrated, Peter emphasizes them in a manner that suggests that one leader should be in a position of practicing them all. He appeals to elders to be shepherds of God's flock (pastors) watching over them (overseer) "not because you must, but because you are willing as God wants you to be, not pursuing dishonest gains but eager to serve" (1 Peter 5: 1-3). In verse 4, he refers to Jesus as the Chief Shepherd, who will crown leaders who follow Him and lead in His way with the glory that never fades away. As such, church leaders are not only expected to lead but to lead the right way according to the Holy Word and to be examples to the flock whom they lead.

The New Testament also establishes characters and traits that church leaders ought to have to be able to teach (1 Tim 3:2) and keep the sound doctrine refuting those which contradict (Titus 1:9). Paul in his first letter to Timothy perceives a leader as a person who, in his desire to deliver a good work, is blameless, husband to one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, hospitable, not greedy of filthy lucre, knows how to rule his house well, and is dedicated to delivering useful reports (1 Tim 3). He repeats the same to Titus (Titus 1: 5-9). The New Testament thus calls for leaders not only to have a sense of God's call and a clear understanding of Scriptures but to practice and recognize what the churches which they lead ought to be and unceasingly lead the church towards that specific direction incorporating the efforts of others. How, therefore, can leaders uphold their responsibilities as elders, overseers, and pastors while preserving every trait of a godly leader as emphasized in the New Testament?

2.5.1 Commitment to Godly Service

Mitchell & Baker⁹² emphasizes the importance of commitment to the word of God and all that it dictates as a strategy for leaders to remain in God's service genuinely. He argues that a leader's commitment to Godly service begins with being preoccupied and absorbed by the Glory of the Lord. At the center of his argument is the praxis that giving glory to God is the very first mark of a Christian commitment. But first, what is 'engagement, and how does it relate to a leader's responsibility to a godly service? Mitchell and Baker⁹³ define it as a person's decision to do what he or she wills to do irrespective of the cost. He also sees commitment in the theologian perspective as a concept deeply rooted on the "commitment of God" to save His people: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Commitment to serving God, Mitchell, and Baker⁹⁴ argue, is a reciprocal to what He did to save humanity.

In his love, He (God the Father) sends someone He values the most (God the Son) to perish so that humanity may be redeemed. In the light of this love, each believer, especially the leaders of the flock, have a responsibility to love and genuinely serve God by denying himself or herself and taking up his or her cross and follow Him (John 4:20; Luke 9: 23), keeping his commandments (Deuteronomy 27:10; Kings 8:61; John 14: 15), not being ashamed of the Truth (2 Timothy 2:15), and loving the Lord with all the heart and soul (Deut. 6: 12; Matt. 22:37). Atkinson's (2014) argument, in the review *The Trinity and Servant Leadership*, that "as God is, so is humanity or as God is, so ought to be human" (p. 139) is applicable. By genuinely abiding

⁹² Mitchell, Jane R., and Martyn C. Baker. "Religious commitment and the construal of sources of help for emotional problems." *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 73, no. 3 (2000): 289.

⁹³ Ibid, 289

⁹⁴ Ibid, 289

by the provisions that define commitment to God, church leaders are better placed to accomplish the mission which God entrusted them with per the spiritual gifts that God bestowed unto them.

According to Bridges⁹⁵, a leader committed to a Godly service makes God look supremely valuable in Himself and submit to His bidding unconditionally. Through commitment, church leaders would be able to adopt leadership approaches that foster unity, brotherhood, and servanthood. McClendon⁹⁶, in his volume, *Doctrine: Systematic Theology* contends that commitment to Godly service calls for the application of God's 'interactive authority,' God's 'redemptive authority,' and God's 'unitive authority.' As such, delegated leadership builds on serving God and His people and structured in a manner that fosters Christian practices rather than positions or offices is essential. The theologies of commitment to godly service, thus, demands that leaders pay close attention to leadership and service as portrayed in the New Testament rather than uncritically and sometimes unconsciously adopting the secular leadership models within the church.

2.5.2 Servant Leadership

Though its application remains infinitesimal, servant leadership has attracted much attention in research in postmodern times. Servant leadership has been at the very heart of Christology since the beginning of Jesus' service on earth. In 1977, Greenleaf wrote;

"The servant-leader is a servant first ... it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test for a servant leader is: do those served grow in person? Do they, in the process of being

⁹⁵ Bridges, Jerry. *The practice of godliness*. (Navpress, 2016),89

⁹⁶ McClendon Jr, James Wm. *Doctrine: systematic theology*. Vol. 2. (Abingdon Press, 2011), 13

served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely to become servant leaders themselves? Does the least privileged in the society benefit from the leadership or at least not being deprived further?" (p. 13).

Greenleaf's⁹⁷ perception of servant leadership sharply contrasts against a type of leadership where a person wants to be a leader first because they seek materialistic possessions or power and builds a kind of leadership where leaders make sure that other people's highest priorities and needs become their initial priority. Although Greenleaf did not depend on the Scripture or Christian exposure to formulate his notion of servant leadership, his arguments, to a greater extent, epitomizes Christian principles.

The passages in Matthew 20:25-28 and Mark 10:42-45 brings three perspectives of servant leadership to light. In the first part, Jesus identifies the nature of worldly leadership and warns his disciples against subscribing to it. He notices, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors" (Matt. 20:25; Mark 10:42) and then warns them "But you are not to be like that" (Matt. 20:26; Mark 10:44). In this sense, Christian leaders are not supposed to wield power nor master those whom they lead. In the second part, Jesus identifies service as the primary prerequisite for being a great leader in God's Kingdom. He opines, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wants to be first must be your slave" (Matt. 20:26-27; Mark 10:43).

As reiterated by Greenleaf⁹⁸, Jesus calls the leaders of the church to "serve, and serve first" and that leadership greatness, in the context of the church, has nothing to do with power or authority but instead with service. In the third part, Jesus sees his approach to leadership as a

⁹⁷ Greenleaf 1977, 82

⁹⁸ Greenleaf 1977, 65

perfect example of servant leadership; "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). Although he is the Messiah, Jesus perceived Himself as the "Son of man" (a commoner) so that he could be a servant of humankind.

Focht and Ponton⁹⁹, a subscriber to Greenleaf's servant leadership theory, identified 12 characteristics that can potentially be used to determine a servant leader. Among them are value for people, humility, listening, trust, caring, integrity, service, empowering, serve others' needs before their own, collaboration, unconditional love, and learning. Within the lines of the Scripture are numerous qualities of a servant leader; serves one Master (Mathew 2:24), leads by being the last (Mark 9:35), is humble (Mark 10:35-45), makes personal sacrifices for the benefit of those whom they lead (Luke 10:30-37), sets an example (Luke 22:27), and is selfless (Galatians 5:13). In agreement with Blanchard and Broadwell¹⁰⁰, "we all have seen the impacts of self-serving leaders in every sector of our society" and that servant leadership is a better approach "to make the world a better place (p. 1). Given the clear emphasis of servanthood in the Scripture, it remains paradoxical how and why it is less practiced in the church today.

2.5.3 ¹⁰¹Christian and Pastoral Leadership

Christian and Pastoral leadership are almost intertwined both theologically and in a practical sense. They both center at influencing and serving others within the precepts of Christ's teachings to accomplish God's purpose through them. Beginning from the time of Jesus' ascension through Episcopalianism, the church played an intricate role not only in evangelizing

⁹⁹ Focht, Adam, and Michael Ponton. "Identifying primary characteristics of servant leadership: Delphi study." *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 9, no. 1 (2015).1

¹⁰⁰ Blanchard & Broadwell 2018, 1

¹⁰¹ Beeley, Christopher A. "Theology and pastoral leadership." *Anglican Theological Review* 91, no. 1 (2009): 11.

the Holy Word but also in social work. Augustine spent his days administering the cathedral staff, celebrating liturgies, caring for the poor, advocating for prisoners, and carrying out all his duties as a diocesan bishop in various regions around Hippo.

Beeley¹⁰² noticed that church leaders in late antiquity had even more significant roles than the current pastors. “Pastors cared for the mundane and the bodily needs of the sick and the poor, widows, orphans, and prisoners using the church’s common resources while exhorting individual Christians to care for one another” (Beeley 2009, p. 17). Although Beeley overemphasizes the role of the pastors in serving this-worldly needs, he holds that the primary purpose of the pastoral ministry revolved around shepherding God’s people towards their heavenly life with Christ Jesus. Consistent with his argument, Gregory Nazianzen developed a comprehensive pastoral leadership theological claim:

“Our treatment aims to provide the soul with wings to rescue it from the world and give it to God; to protect what is in God’s image if it abides, to take it by the hand if it is in danger, or to restore it if it is ruined ... and to deify and bestow heavenly bliss upon those who have pledged their allegiance to heaven” (New Advent)

Thus, Nazianzen perceives Christian leadership as deeply embedded in the mission of the Church to deliver God’s loving people. Barna¹⁰³ holds that Christian leaders, who are also servant leaders, are called upon by God to lead and to lead through Christ-like character. In their altruistic calling, leaders have a mandate to seek the fulfillment of others through behaviors and

¹⁰² Ibid, 15

¹⁰³ Barna, George. *Today's pastors: A revealing look at what pastors are saying about themselves, their peers, and the pressures they face.* (Regal Books, 1993), 52

actions directed towards their benefit. The practice or the act must be performed voluntarily with an informed intention to benefit another person without expecting any external reward¹⁰⁴.

Worthen and Worthen¹⁰⁵ also recognize that selfless leadership is a gift from God and that the act of altruism is evident if a leader or any other person behaves or acts for the sake of another and does so in a manner that promotes the wellbeing and welfare of the other person. The arguments presented in this section seem to point to the direction of ethical leadership where leaders are supposed to lead within tenets of ‘that which is good’ and desisting from ‘that which is evil.’ These words are also inscribed in Paul’s letter to Thessalonians, “reject every kind of evil” (1 Thess. 5:22)

The analysis in this theological foundation section repudiates the pessimism about leadership as presented in the first two paragraphs of the section and places leadership at the very heart of the church’s mission. The section also confirms that leadership is the primary determining factor as to whether the remains firm or fumbles apart. By developing a model from both the literature reviewed and the theological foundation established, it is anticipated that it would be simpler to determine imminent leadership problems and challenges (struggle) in the African American church. But first, are there existing theories that directly address or are directly related to leadership struggles in the church?

¹⁰⁴ Barbuto Jr, John E., and Daniel W. Wheeler. "Scale development and construct clarification of servant leadership." *Group & Organization Management* 31, no. 3 (2006): 300.

¹⁰⁵ Worthen, Hana, and William B. Worthen. "The Pillowman and the ethics of allegory." *Modern Drama* 49, no. 2 (2006): 155.

2.6 Theoretical Foundation

The following theories, although they do not directly address leadership struggle, were found relevant in fostering the understanding of leadership challenges and problems in the church.

2.6.1 Leader-Member Exchange Theory

In their leader-member exchange theory, Dansereau, Graen, and Haga¹⁰⁶ argue that leadership is a dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower. Unlike the contemporary behavioral leadership theories such as transformational leadership, servant leadership, and authentic leadership, LMX theory presumes that leaders have the power to influence their followers through the level of relationship they develop with them. The approach recognizes that leadership behavior can never be consistent across all groups. It establishes that there are two types of relationships in a workplace setting. In the out-group relationship, leaders and followers are only linked by the defined roles, job descriptions, and formal contracts. In In-group relationships, the two are connected by an expanded and mutually negotiated role and responsibilities. In-group relations are characterized by high professional respect, trust, liking, and loyalty.

In both groups, maintenance of relationships is defined by factors such as job satisfaction, salary, promotions, performance, and turnover. Maximizing each of these factors is primary to establishing long-term and more satisfying relationships. Erdogan and Bauer¹⁰⁷ posit that although research on LMX has matured, its antecedent boundaries and conditions remain

¹⁰⁶ Dansereau Jr, Fred, George Graen, and William J. Haga. "A vertical dyad linkage approach to leadership within formal organizations: A longitudinal investigation of the role making process." *Organizational behavior and human performance* 13, no. 1 (1975): 46

¹⁰⁷ Bauer, Talya N., and Berrin Erdogan, eds. *The Oxford handbook of leader-member exchange*. (Oxford university press, 2015), 5

unexamined to a higher degree. Nonetheless, LMX epitomizes the actual leadership practiced in a significant number of African American churches in which the relationship among senior leaders is more reliable than the relationship between the leaders and regular members. Such an approach to leadership (characterized by reward and benefit), given the examinations in the previous sections, is likely to precipitate poor relationships and eventually to leadership struggles.

2.6.2 Social Identity Leadership Theory

Social identity leadership theory builds the argument that leadership arises from and is practiced through social interactions. When developing the approach, Hogg¹⁰⁸ holds that leadership should be about inspiring others to want to do things and is less about motivating people to do something. They maintain that leaders have a role of shaping social identities in such a way that their followers see them and their proposals as the concrete manifestation of group beliefs and values. Thus, leaders ought to lead in a manner that promotes positive identities of those whom they lead. In this sense, a leader must first identify the self as part of the group.

Turner and Haslam (2014) emphasize that for a person to be a social leader, the followers must see him or her as "one of us, doing it for us, crafting a sense for us, and making us matter."¹⁰⁹ In the context of this argument, leaders require adopting a collective approach rather than individualism, must be context-sensitive, must be perspective sensitive, must identify

¹⁰⁸ Hogg, Michael A. "A social identity theory of leadership." *Personality and social psychology review* 5, no. 3 (2001): 1845.

¹⁰⁹ Turner, John C., and S. Alexander Haslam. "Social identity, organizations, and leadership." In *Groups at work*, pp. 39-80. (Psychology Press, 2014).

identities that unify the group together and aim at strengthening them, and must be concerned about change as a way of enhancing group ties. As such, social leaders require integrating their followers in decision-making and need to be deeply concerned about what their followers think of them as lack of such concerns may cause tensions and misunderstanding within the leadership.

The theory sees followers as people who can learn within the context of their environment and become influential, turning into leaders molded by their social reality and in-group prototypes¹¹⁰. Hogg¹¹¹ (2001) confirmed that messages and feedback from group members inform change in attitude, feelings, and behavior within that context. Cast onto the lens of social leadership theory; leaders have a role to be examples to those whom they lead by identifying and strengthening a unifying identity. Through the identification, they not only serve their followers but also mold them towards becoming leaders as well. Leaders who fail to behave or act outside the group's social identity context risk developing a gap between them and their followers, which would eventually thwart the level of their relationships and interpersonal understanding.

2.6.3 Exemplarist Moral Theory

Linda Zagzebski¹¹² argues that admiration and moral exemplars have a primary role in shaping the morals and practices of others. She holds that humans have inbuilt emotions for admiration, which acts as a tool through which they tend to detect those who are excellent and respond to people with extraordinary virtues. These exceptional individuals establish the basis

¹¹⁰ Turner, J. C. "Mapping social psychology series." *Social influence*. Belmont, CA, US: Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co (1991): 52

¹¹¹ Hogg, Michael A. "A social identity theory of leadership." *Personality and social psychology review* 5, no. 3 (2001): 184.

¹¹² Zagzebski, Linda. *Exemplarist moral theory*. (Oxford University Press, 2017), 112

for molding the ethical behavior of others. Generally, the theory holds, people tend to follow the individuals' "virtues," "right acts," "duty," and "good life" and aspire to be like them.¹¹³ Thus, moral exemplars are identified by direct reference to persons who are admired upon reflection. The central thrust of the theory is its direct reference to an exemplary to define an identified instance inextricably. She gives a practical example: "Gold is, roughly whatever is in the same elements *as that*."

In the efforts to define a leader, she starts from establishing a direct reference rather than developing an utterly clear concept. She outlines, "Good persons are persons *like that*... and good exemplars are persons *like that*." She then goes in detail to describe how these "good persons" and "exemplars" look like using the four elements that define them. She represents virtue as;

"A deep and enduring acquired trait that we admire upon reflection, consisting of a disposition to have a certain emotion that initiates and directs action towards an end, and reliable success in reaching that end" (p. 113)

She sees exemplars as people who hold to their duty by acting in such a way that another person with phronesis (a person like that) would judge to be the only option and would feel guilty for not doing it. In the sense of Zagzabski's arguments, it can be argued out that Jesus Christ is an exemplar. He came to bridge the relationship between God and human beings. Although his mission was ecumenical, he holds virtues, acts, duties, and life, which are indeed admirable. She maintains that people who are not admirable are contemptible (anti-exemplars)¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ Ibid, 119

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 114

Nonetheless, what might be considered an exemplar or contemptible is intrinsic to an individual depending on his or her reflective abilities. Thus, she remarks, "I am not comfortable naming names of contemptible persons" (p. 47). From Zagzabski's point of view, leaders are people who are *like that* given their virtue, right acts, duty, and useful life 'as reflected upon by an individual.¹¹⁵ Exemplarist Moral Theory has received criticism due to unclear identification of boundaries between the exemplar and contemptible as well as uncertain determination of factors that constitute "a reflection."

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Problem and Purpose

The African American church needs to acquire spiritual and organizational skills that can help develop its leaders into formidable visionaries. The church must produce leadership strategies that aim to facilitate effectiveness and approaches that can address the existential challenges that exist. Able to handle the needs of the church but also those of the communities within which they live¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 47

¹¹⁶ Marable, Manning. *How capitalism underdeveloped Black America: Problems in race, political economy, and society*. (Haymarket Books, 2015), 6

Given that in the past, the church has been a pillar for social change, its current struggles in leadership has created numerous gaps that have not only affected the church, but also vast societies.¹¹⁷

Moreover, unlike in the past, the ongoing ministry is dwindling, and the hold of the African American church is less than it was in the past decades. This reality is due to a combination of factors such as an increase in the black middle-class creating class tensions, scandals related to leadership struggles and sexual orientation among members, inclination towards personal interests and increased monetary contributions from members and the rigidity of the church to evolve in solving long-standing community issues¹¹⁸. Cumulatively, these issues have demonstrated the gaps in the church and, in some ways, have contributed to co-occurring factors that require extensive evaluation, intervention, and, lastly, implementation of new strategic, evidence-based leadership opportunities. This chapter will thus focus on the arising issues about African American church by using a research methodology that seeks to understand the extensiveness of the current problem, methods that can have a transformational impact on the community, and lastly, modalities that can achieve better outcomes for communities. It will offer an extensive and elaborate plan to determine and affirm the research objectives.

3.1.1 Participants and Sampling Approach

According to Fertman & Allensworth¹¹⁹, it is necessary to select a team of participants who are able and willing to provide essential information, as well as support the overall goals of a research project. Within a community, the selection of teams must be mindful of the multiple

¹¹⁷ Jones 2010, 20

¹¹⁸ Williams 2005, 63

¹¹⁹ Fertman, Carl I., and Diane D. Allensworth. *Health promotion programs: from theory to practice*. (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 254

interactions that exist within the environment and the individual within the religious settings. The conditions that many communities live in based on the structures of their church leadership is such that it causes a plethora of issues to regard the overall dysfunction within the church. The very fabric of the intervention approach is dependent on the capacity of the community to take part in practices that can assist in arriving at a better leadership solution than the existing one. Moreover, the target population, as per the findings of Fertman & Allensworth¹²⁰, is that which will have the most impact on the selected group.

This selection process, as with other scientific means, must foster transparency, consistency, and documentation of the interplay of a variety of inclusion criteria that makes the selected sample a sufficient representation of the target community. Moreover, selection teams must focus on existing power dynamics and decision-making processes. It has been noted that in some communities, churchgoers feel unable to criticize or analyze the leadership of their church leaders for fear of stigmatization or ostracization by their church community, according to Fitcher, Gaunt, Perl & Hoegeman¹²¹. Such dynamics may skew the findings of research studies as the accuracy of the results may be biased towards the existing social structures

For this study, the sample size or the target population is within Central Virginia, which is primarily a rural region. The ideal nature of this community lies from the vast cultural dynamic that exists within its society due to the inclusion of parties who are on active military duty, retired military staff, and civilians. This study posits that the presence of this group will give more convenient access to congregations and seek to understand the functions and place of religiosity

¹²⁰ Ibid, 253

¹²¹ Fitcher, Stephen J., Thomas P. Gaunt, Paul M. Perl, and Catherine Hoegeman. *Catholic Bishops in the United States: Church Leadership in the Third Millennium*. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2019), 6

within the community, depending on factors such as age and gender. Notably, this area lies within the Bible Belt¹²². The attendance of church services and involvement in religious activities is much higher than the national average. Moreover, it is within such communities where the presence of divergent views of the leadership structures within the city are likely to show up the most given the broad biblical interpretations of what it ought to be¹²³.

3.1.2 Buy-in strategies

Researchers must work on establishing effective relationships between them and the communities that they have selected for the study. Primarily, it is vital to explore methods that can encourage participation. One of the primary techniques to encourage participation was via communication and facilitation by the community and church leaders¹²⁴. The study targeted older members of the congregation who would have insight into the history of the leadership of the church to identify potential support for the research and attract participation through word of mouth referrals. Secondly, the researcher had to focus on the arising cultural influences that arose in the community. By engaging in culturally sensitive dialogue and investing in understanding the role of the church for the African American community, members were willing to join the study¹²⁵.

The main target of the study will be the lay leaders within the central Virginia and Tide Water Peninsula. The preferred sampling technique will be the snowball method. Its application, according to Bryman, Bell, and Harley¹²⁶, is necessary to reach samples that are often outside

¹²² Locke, Joseph L. *Making the Bible Belt: Texas Prohibitionists and the Politicization of Southern Religion*. (Oxford University Press, 2017), 22

¹²³ Ibid, 52

¹²⁴ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 25.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 26

¹²⁶ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 85

within the sampling scope of other methods due to the reliance on referrals. Secondly, it is affordable and time-efficient in the selection of the respondents. Additionally, unlike different approaches such as stratified sampling, it requires less planning and workforce. Moreover, due to the dominance of community and church ties, this sampling technique is likely to encourage increased participation and involvement.

The focal problem with this approach is that social networks have some degree of bias, according to Palinkas et al¹²⁷. Hence, it is likely that the referrals will lead to a pool of likeminded people from whom it may be difficult to extract any viable information. Secondly, it may be problematic to keep participants in the study as a secret. The referral method creates a chain of evidence where one can track the source of information. Researchers, therefore, must be mindful of each of these eventualities, and especially their impact on the outcomes. In this case, the study will aim to achieve higher levels of confidentiality by selecting randomly from an array of referrals to ensure an extensive pool of participants and ease the possibility of concealing their identities¹²⁸.

3.2 Design of the study

This study utilizes a qualitative research design. According to Sutton & Austin¹²⁹, the use of the qualitative method is based on the necessity for researchers to achieve a holistic picture of the nature of a social problem. The participants get to detail their experiences, offer extensive elaborations, and provide detailed reports on the quality of leadership within their churches. It

¹²⁷ Palinkas, Lawrence A., Sarah M. Horwitz, Carla A. Green, Jennifer P. Wisdom, Naihua Duan, and Kimberly Hoagwood. "Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research." *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research* 42, no. 5 (2015): 533.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 536

¹²⁹ Sutton, Jane, and Zubin Austin. "Qualitative research: Data collection, analysis, and management." *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy* 68, no. 3 (2015): 226.

immerses the researcher in the knowledge of the participants while allowing them (researchers) to access the necessary tenets of information that are part of their investigation.

It is for this purpose that the qualitative approach best fits in with the phenomenological design. The latter, according to the findings of Gill¹³⁰, create a paradigm to understand the lived experiences of others, the meaning, and essence of their experiences. Given that the participants are clergy and lay members of the church, they have different worldviews on church leadership but may have skills that have similar religious undertones. The researcher within this approach relies on their inability to detach from the research processes. As such, as Gill¹³¹ recommends, they need to utilize methods that will make them conscious of their individual biases in the interpretation of the information presented to them.

3.3 Instrumentation and Materials

Terrell¹³² explains that the process of instrumentation refers to the tools that a researcher uses to measure the variables within the data collection processes. They are related to the concepts of design, sampling, and the conditions within which the instruments will be administered. This process is impactful in qualitative studies such as this one as it allows the creation of open-ended questions. The manner of questioning is indeed influential to the results of an investigation due to the underlying risks of biases. Kvale & Brinkmann¹³³ denote that the choice of instrumentation

¹³⁰ Gill, Jeff. *Bayesian methods: A social and behavioral sciences approach*. Vol. 20. (CRC press, 2014), 12

¹³¹ Gill, Jeff. *Bayesian methods: A social and behavioral sciences approach*. Vol. 20. (CRC press, 2014), 56

¹³² Terrell, Steven R. "Mixed-methods research methodologies." *Qualitative report* 17, no. 1 (2012): 254.

¹³³ Brinkmann, Svend, and Steinar Kvale. "Ethics in qualitative psychological research." *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* 24, no. 2 (2008): 264.

typically relies on the mental comfort of a researcher, and this aspect may pose a threat to the accuracy and validity of the final results. Chenail¹³⁴ argues that researchers use the tools with which they can express ultimate familiarity. When they lack appropriate skill sets in some of the processes, they may rely on their biases.

Chenail¹³⁵ elaborates that when undertaking a discovery-oriented research approach, they must come up with questions that not only study the specific terms articulated in the research questions but also allow an open-minded attitude that enables the participants to idea, knowledge, and experience to be elaborate and definitive. This approach, according to the findings of Fusch & Ness (2015), may not be useful in the administration of closed-ended questionnaires, where there is hypothesis testing. Instead, they would apply in methods of research such as the one prescribed here that allows the voice of the respondent to guide discussions, themes, and the identification of potential theories.

This study, while being mindful of the potential loopholes in its instrumentation processes, as Chenail¹³⁶ recommends, will utilize an interview approach. It will offer semi-structured questions that will be within five categories. The interviews will focus on the assessment of the history of the church, an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Leadership selection processes, issues with leadership, resolution protocols, and the overall perceptions of who leaders are. These questions deal with a variety of contextual issues that form the foundation of leadership within the African American church. This investigative process will take about 30

¹³⁴ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 255.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 1722

¹³⁶ Chenail, Ronald J. "Ten Steps for Conceptualizing and Conducting Qualitative Research Studies in a Pragmatically Curious Manner." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 6 (2011): 1725.

minutes to an hour. It will use audio recorders that will capture the responses for each interview and later transcribe them for analysis.

Any research study needs the use of resources that can best achieve the desired results¹³⁷. As per the research, the paper has two core methods that it hopes to utilize in the evaluation of change. Principally, the study will take on an implementation and intervention method to systematically assess the possible means for dealing with the issue of leadership within the church. Fundamentally, this approach will allow the study to create a pre-intervention interview process that will determine the baseline of the positions of the clergy and the lay leaders on the leadership practices within the church. On the other hand, there will be a systemic intervention via workshops that will focus on the critical areas of discussion highlighted in chapter 2. After this process, the researcher will offer a final assessment to determine the degree to which the assertions on leadership and areas of improvement have changed throughout the intervention. Executing this process will need a workshop, participants, course, and reference material for education on leadership, multimedia devices that will foster learning approaches, notepads, pens, books, and activity guides. The researchers will also provide facilitation, such as snacks and beverages.

3.4 Process of the research

3.4.1 Intervention

The development and conceptualization of an intervention program in leadership is part of the processes that culminate in creating awareness, according to Fertman & Allensworth¹³⁸, on the most effective approaches that church leaders can use to increase their stakes as spiritual and

¹³⁷ Chenail, Ronald J. "Ten Steps for Conceptualizing and Conducting Qualitative Research Studies in a Pragmatically Curious Manner." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 6 (2011): 1713.

¹³⁸ Fertman, Carl I., and Diane D. Allensworth. *Health promotion programs: from theory to practice*. (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 259

community leaders within the African American community. The core purpose of this intervention program is to communicate and integrate learned and shared experiences to create better approaches towards the concepts of leadership that are likely to be impactful on the welfare of the church. This process may entail the introduction of skills that may be new to the participants. Hence, the measurements of success are ideally dependent on the transformational impact of the in-service training that they will receive via the seminars the study intends to carry out. The intervention approach will focus on the introduction of participatory learning methods that can significantly improve the abilities of the participants to practice what they learn within the workshops actively and implement them in the church contexts.

The study took place via several intervention stages, as per the recommendations of Rothman & Thomas¹³⁹. It employed the intervention design and development to map critical areas of discussion that the participants had to handle. Each city had unique issues that it had to address and distinctive activities in which participants had to be involved. The processes in these contexts focused on the methodology that provides critical “ingredients” to effective planning for interventions.

3.4.2 Purpose and Objectives of the Intervention

The findings of Rothman & Thomas¹⁴⁰ indicate that the process of intervention research focuses on the identification of a problem and its consequent analysis. It is fundamental to map the issues that arise within projects such that it becomes easy to achieve a logical framework of

¹³⁹ Thomas, Edwin J., and Jack Rothman. "An integrative perspective on intervention research." *Intervention research: Design and development for human service* (1994): 4.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas, Edwin J., and Jack Rothman. "An integrative perspective on intervention research." *Intervention research: Design and development for human service* (1994): 3.

the course of action to take¹⁴¹. The process of identifying the problem requires reconnaissance and extensive research to determine the degree to which the issue is affecting the community, what are the possible solutions, and the best mitigation strategies for the problems and the arising risks.

In the case of this study, the core issue was the assessment of the struggle for leadership within the context of African American churches. The research indicated that there were extensive gaps within the pastoral leadership styles, support of the people, and strengthening the lay ministry while achieving the goals of serving the community and the church. Presently, the reduced efficacy of leadership has led to declining in the development of African American communities, being that they have been very dependent on the role of the church in being a symbol of hope and advocacy for their needs. Moreover, there is a notable reduction in the sizes of the church, which is a threat to the goals of the ministry. The study decided to take on a workshop where it would create a space for communication and engagement on the current conditions that the leadership of the churches in Central Virginia was facing. This workshop would go on for a five-week period within which there would be elaborate discussion, sensitization, and education on the leadership struggles that were part of the community.

Thus, as the guiding pillars in the identification of the scope of the leadership problems, the intervention protocols utilized the following:

- Identification of the struggles that the African American church is facing within their leadership.

¹⁴¹ Fertman, Carl I., and Diane D. Allensworth. *Health promotion programs: from theory to practice*. (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 198

- Identification of the struggles of the church in meeting its commitment to Godly activities and service
- Analysis of the extent to which the African American church leaders are generous in their calling
- Determination of the concept and value of servant leadership to the church leaders
- Isolation of methods that can assist the church in circumventing its leadership issues and focus on dealing with existing struggles and challenges.

Under these primary activities, it was necessary to facilitate effective isolation of approaches that would mitigate these issues and focus its efforts on strengthening the position of leadership within the community. The core analysis of this process entails research from observational and literature to get an evidence-based information pool that can lead to actionable information and the improvement of outcomes. Moreover, it would be fundamental to find functional elements of successful models of leadership interventions that have worked for other conditions (Fertman & Allensworth, 2015)¹⁴². It is, therefore, primal to invest in data and information at this stage, as the primary guide to effective choices on actions to take on each of the above issues.

3.4.3 Tasks to be done

The assessment of the validity of specific tasks requires an identification of the particular outcomes of the intervention. According to Fertman & Allensworth (2017)¹⁴³, efforts in interventions must operate from a focal point of SMART goals. This acronym stands for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely goals that are in line with core purposes set by

¹⁴² Ibid, 358

¹⁴³ Fertman, Carl I., and Diane D. Allensworth. *Health promotion programs: from theory to practice*. (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 358

stakeholders within interventions. According to Conger & Toegel¹⁴⁴, when learning, as in the case of this intervention, it is necessary to ensure the acquisition of skills that will have a transformational impact on the skills, attitudes, and competencies of the participants who are involved. These outcomes are in line with smart goals but are less specific. They are crucial in laying the foundational groundwork that can significantly identify the tasks that ought to take place.

Thus, for this specific study, the researchers focused on the identification of critical outcomes of objectives that would have significantly improved in the selected participants.

- Improve the capacity of leaders to name leadership struggles affecting the church to about 12, among 80% of the respondents by the end of the first week.
- Engage 80% of the members to list at least six issues that are a direct impact of the struggles on their commitment to Godly service by the end of the second week
- Ensure that 75% of the participants can explain altruism and express at least three forms of altruistic calling and how leaders in the church can demonstrate it by the end of the third week.
- By the end of week 4, 75% of the participants will understand what servant leadership and its application within churches is by listing at least seven scenarios on where it is applied
- By the end of week 5, 85% of the respondents will identify problems that will provide at least two solutions to the issues that they identified in week 1 to increase the

¹⁴⁴ Conger, Jay, and Ginka Toegel. "Action learning and multi-rater feedback as leadership development interventions: Popular but poorly deployed." *Journal of Change Management* 3, no. 4 (2002): 332.

knowledge pool on the potential solutions to leadership challenges in the African American Church setting.

For each of the above tasks, there was a breakdown of other smaller activities. These issues were handled every week, with an evaluation of the overall change in perceptions throughout the workshop. Before the start of the session, the participants will have interviews that will act as the baseline for their current positions. The results will undergo comparisons with a similar discussion at the end of the sessions.

Task 1: Improve the overall awareness of the leadership struggles affecting the church

This process would involve an interactive session on the struggles of the church.

- a. Use a hypothetical case study on the issues affecting the church.
- b. Encourage discussions within two groups and seek to understand the issues that are causing problems
- c. Share findings with the rest of the workshop
- d. Discuss and hold elaborate talks on the problems that arise
- e. Dissect the potential conditions that give rise to the problem
- f. Denote any new issues that arise among the members
- g. Conceptualize on why these events are taking place.

These activities are integral in increasing the capacity of the clergy and the laymen to identify the issues that they are facing within their communities. It is common to find that within social settings, and especially in the church, there is a tendency to put a veil of silence on uncomfortable

issues¹⁴⁵. By fostering the capacity to dissect potential problem areas, it is easy to encourage honest dialogue. On the other hand, some may have a problem identifying a problem unless one points it out to them. These activities allow the participants to formulate potential methods for problem analysis as one of the critical pillars in getting to understand what is ailing the church.

Task 2: Increase the capacity of the members to acknowledge the impact of the struggles on their commitment to Godly service

This task aims to understand the implication of the leadership struggles that the community faces and how it is affecting the role of ministry and service. The following activities will guide the actions:

- a. Create a forced debate on issues that are implications of leadership struggles.
- b. Each of the participants has to offer a unique point in support or rejection of the motion
- c. Create a parallel session where the group will assess the various issues that arose as implications of a failing church.
- d. Based on the identified issues, focus on extensive evaluation
- e. Introduce psychological and sociology-based themes that can best explain the observable phenomenon.
- f. Engage in an interactive session that will offer a theological insight into the identified implications
- g. Hold discussions on the potential solutions for the problems and the possible methods that would assist the community.

¹⁴⁵ Fichter, Stephen J., Thomas P. Gaunt, Paul M. Perl, and Catherine Hoegeman. *Catholic Bishops in the United States: Church Leadership in the Third Millennium*. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2019), 52.

- h. End the week's session with an evaluation of what the participants have learned.

Task 3: Increase the understanding of altruistic calling and how leaders in the church can demonstrate it.

The concept of altruism is based on the principles of morally practicing concern for the happiness of others and, thus, engaging in activities that are likely to improve their welfare as Guinot, Chiva & Mallen¹⁴⁶ explain. The calling of church leadership is primarily to serve. Leaders must be selfless in their pursuit of a better society, more so, those who are engaged in religious doctrines. The identification of this trait among the church can improve their overall capacity in selecting leaders who can serve the community while putting aside individual interests. Leaders within the African American church must, therefore, seek to be helpful, empathetic to the needs and suffering of others, and above all, proactive, according to Samuel & Pandey¹⁴⁷. Religious leaders who have altruism are more likely to demonstrate a higher degree of life and career satisfaction than those who rank poorly in altruism.

In facilitating the achievement of the above goals, the following tasks will take place:

- a. Present a PowerPoint presentation on altruism focusing on elements within alien altruism ideal atriiums and real altruism. The discussion will take a lecture format; however, there will be an interactive session after every 30 minutes of instruction to seek questions and relook on the critical areas that some may not understand.

¹⁴⁶ Guinot, Jacob, Ricardo Chiva, and Fermín Mallén. "The effects of altruism and relationship conflict on organizational learning." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 26, no. 1 (2015): 85.

¹⁴⁷ Samuel, Priyanka, and Smita Pandey. "Life satisfaction and altruism among religious leaders." *International Journal of Indian Psychology, Volume 6, Issue 1,(No. 2) 6* (2018): 89.

- b. The group within a pair-think-share model will discuss the perceived benefits of altruism and the purpose that it seeks to offer within the church context
- c. The teams will engage in an interactive session where they will analyze the conditions that can improve within the current settings by working on altruism within the African American church.
- d. Discuss within a group session the perceived altruistic traits that may be beneficial to leaders and why.
- e. Conduct a group identification of persons with altruistic traits such as Jesus and Martin Luther King Jr, and other church leaders.
- f. Conduct an evaluative segment at the ends of the session to assess the group's understanding of the subject matter.

The usefulness of these tasks is to ensure that the participants understand the necessity of this trait within leadership positions¹⁴⁸. The lack of empathy among church leaders has created a shift away from the core issue of the church, which is service and the improvement of welfare. Regenerating interest in this manner may refocus the leadership strategies towards communal gain as opposed to personal or class gain within the African American church.

Task 4: Increase awareness to servant leadership and its application within leadership within churches

¹⁴⁸ Ball, Robert. "Altruistic Leadership in The Book of Daniel." *American Journal of Biblical Theology* 17 (2016): 41.

Servant leadership is a crucial part of leadership. It entails the facilitation of leaders in understanding that their role in the church is to serve the community as opposed to gaining from the people within their congregation.

During this section, the workshop will entail activities that relate to strengthening institutions within the church and focusing on the creation of better opportunities. The following tasks will be part of the intervention

- Conduct a brain-storming session on the characteristics and nature of servant leadership. Assess the viable traits that culminate in servant leadership and why they matter to the African American Church
- Conduct a lecture session on the theoretical frameworks that focus on leadership, such as transformational leadership, grand man theory, among others.
- Set a case study to evaluate leadership styles and which are most impactful in the church process
- Create a discussion on the necessity of servant leadership within the African American Community church setting.
- Brainstorm on the various gaps seen in the leadership frameworks today and how the church can resolve them with the core purpose of reimagining the meaning of leadership within African American community settings.
- Use discussions to address the role of relationships in leadership strategies that will lead to the empowerment of the black community in its spiritual and communal affairs.
- Finish the session with an evaluation test to assess the amount of learning via role plays on servant leadership.

The purpose of these tasks is to create a perspective of what leadership in church settings ought to be as opposed to management. These activities aim to develop a reconceptualization of the mandate that church leaders must be impactful, empowering, and supportive to the community and personal goals of their congregation to allow them to thrive.

Task 5: Increase the knowledge pool on the potential solutions to leadership challenges in the African American Church setting.

This phase entails a candid discussion on the solutions that can actively resolve leadership challenges in the church. It involves taking on a proactive approach towards the identification of potential solutions to numerous problems facing the church over and above praying.

The core tasks in this phase will entail;

- Use the pair-think-share model to come up with solutions found in task one.
- Create a discussion for the comparison of the differences between the viable alternatives in task one and those that are viable within this session.
- Use the lecturing model to incorporate methods of risk assessment and conflict resolution when handling emerging problems.
- Provide case studies played out in roleplays or simulations to allow the identification of problems and the isolation of potential solutions.
- Formulate a session of creating a solution and decision-making protocols based on the socio-economic determinants within the community, such as race, violence, class, poverty, education, and access to opportunity. This session will encourage the workshop to understand the interconnectivity between various issues in the community and the need for multifaceted conditions in seeking out appropriate solutions.

- End the session with an evaluation and monitoring session where the participants will respond to the issues that they have learned and the impact it will have on their understanding and practice of leadership. Also, provide an assessment of the researcher and whether the intervention method met the desired outcomes of the study. Moreover, to assess their change over the sessions, the study will provide the same questionnaire that it did at the start of the workshop.

This task will mark the final session of the intervention. It will entail extensive monitoring and evaluation of all the activities that took place. The intervention phase will end, and members can freely mingle with each other.

3.4.4 The people

The people involved in this intervention will be the lay and clergy leaders within the church community. This session will allow them to mingle with each other and isolate areas within which they may need to work on their leadership capabilities. The study will take place within the church-based fellowship hall. The choice of this facility is based on its convenience and affordability to the research group. Moreover, it is necessary from a research standpoint to assess the respondents within their natural or a comfortable environment for them, as it will allow more natural interactions to take place.

3.4.5 Timeline/ Duration of Activities

Nature of Activities	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Conduct research and find sample group for intervention,								
Plan for task activities, find location and source learning materials								
Start session (introduction and familiarity with the course								

material, objectives, and expected outcomes) Conduct the first interview session								
Discuss struggles in African American Churches								
Discuss issues facing the church in meeting its commitment to Godly service								
Discuss the exhibiting of altruistic traits among church leaders.								
Discussions on the concepts of servant leadership								
Discussion on the circumventing issues facing leadership in the church								
Evaluation and monitoring of the overall objectives met and the fulfillment of the expectations of the sample size.								
Exit interviews and end of the session								

3.4.6 Ethical issues

Within the realm of research, it is imperative to focus on maintaining ethical expectations set by codes of ethics and other regulatory standards, according to Bell & Bryman¹⁴⁹. Ethics in research operates by ensuring that no harm comes to the participants who have undertaken the study and that they can gain from the implications of the research. Choices of ethical approaches can lead to the validity of a study or its unfortunate dismissal. First, for this study, it was necessary to ensure the provision of informed consent. The researchers asked participants to demonstrate in writing that they were willing to partake in the study.

¹⁴⁹ Bryman, Alan, and Emma Bell. *Research methodology: Business and management contexts*. (Oxford University Press Southern Africa, 2014), 31

Moreover, before this process, they had full disclosure on the expectations that the study had on them, and those that they had on the researchers in return. It would introduce the scope of discussion and questioning, the time it would take, and the resources necessary for the sessions. The researchers educated the participants on their rights¹⁵⁰. They could leave the project at any time; they were to receive transparent information on any of their concerns and that the data collected would be within this specific academic project. This informed consent, according to Bell & Bryman¹⁵¹, is instrumental in the creation of rapport within the members of the team. Furthermore, it reduced the legal liability that the researcher must bear if they did not consult with the participants beforehand.

Fostering confidentiality is a critical issue within research ethics as well (Miller et al., 2012¹⁵²; Smith, 2015¹⁵³). It is fundamental to ensure that there is the protection of the rights to privacy for the group that is involved in the study, in addition to maintaining their information within permissible constraints. The study will not seek any private information from the group, such as names, addresses, places of work, or any other information that quantifies as personal-identifiable information according to the confines of the privacy laws in America. As part of the processes of full disclosure, it is fundamental to ensure that the respondents are aware of the uses to which the information that they offer will be put. In the case of this study, the data is for academic purposes. It will not be exposed to any third parties that the participants will not have

¹⁵⁰ Miller, Tina. "Reconfiguring research relationships: regulation, new technologies and doing ethical research." *Ethics in qualitative research* (2012): 29

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 31

¹⁵² Miller, Tina. "Reconfiguring research relationships: regulation, new technologies and doing ethical research." *Ethics in qualitative research* (2012): 29

¹⁵³ Smith, Jonathan A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. (Sage, 2015), 16

expressly allowed access (Miller et al. 2012)¹⁵⁴. The study will additionally store all the information collected within secure softcopy documents whose access will be controlled via manual controlled access to limit the persons who can investigate the data. Preservation protocols will be founded on the provisions of the law. See Appendix III for IRB approval.

3.4.7 Resources required

The facilitation process of the research needs the use of projectors, videos, and computers to facilitate lecture-based methods of learning. The participants will also receive handouts at the start of the session that will inform them about the scope of the intervention process, case studies, and other questions. There will be notebooks, pens, and other materials to support taking down notes. The intervention will also necessitate a printing service to print the written documents instrumental for teaching.

3.4.8 Collection of data

The study will focus on the collection of data that focuses on the leadership activities in the church. The core aim of the process is to assess the degree to which the participants understand the gaps in the leadership within their communities and what are the potential solutions to the issues they face. The interviews will collect data on the Soul Winning Action Team SWAT analysis of the church, conduct an evaluation of the history of the church, assess the leadership selection processes, issues with leadership, resolution protocols, and the overall perceptions of who leaders are. In the second phase of the research in the post-intervention period, the questions will deal with leadership qualities within the contexts of servant leadership and altruism.

¹⁵⁴ Miller, Tina. "Reconfiguring research relationships: regulation, new technologies and doing ethical research." *Ethics in qualitative research* (2012): 29.

The study will use recorders to collect information. The researcher will then transcribe the data via software and later via proofreading to ensure that the data collected is accurate. In cases where there is a lack of clarity, the study will allow the researchers to consult and seek further clarification from the respondents. For the sessions, the study may involve the use of videos for the session to assess the interactions between various people in the intervention.

3.4.9 Analysis of the data

Upon the completion of the data collection procedures, the study will undertake a thematic analysis of the findings, as Bell & Bryman¹⁵⁵ suggest. It will seek to isolate the frequency of the common issues and dissect them based on additional observational data, and the available literature. On the other hand, there will be a graphical representation of demographic data based on essential characteristics such as who took part in the study, their age, gender, longevity in a leadership position, and their position within the church. This information will be critical in tracking possible variations on the perceptions of the struggle of the African American church based on these elements.

3.5 Implementation of the Intervention Design

Over the process of implementation, the study found that it was vital to keep records of the happenings at each of the sessions. These reports were an essential part of the analysis of the effectiveness of the methods used in the intervention, evident interactions among the various people who attended the workshop, and the identifiable gaps that were visible in the duration of the research. Moreover, according to the findings of Rose & Glass¹⁵⁶, the utilization of the

¹⁵⁵ Bell, Emma, and Alan Bryman. "The ethics of management research: an exploratory content analysis." *British journal of management* 18, no. 1 (2007): 63.

¹⁵⁶ Rose, Jayln, and Nel Glass. "The importance of emancipatory research to contemporary nursing practice." *Contemporary Nurse* 29, no. 1 (2008): 8

journaling process in research is necessary for facilitating the identification of potential biases within the researcher. It is noteworthy that given the conditions of the qualitative research methods, a researcher can transfer preferences in their questioning to the participants and hence, skew their results to a specific agenda¹⁵⁷. Nonetheless, the use of the journal could act as a reference point, especially when incorporated with peer-evaluation to diminish biases.

The observation in this study was during the workshop sessions. The exercises created spaces that would allow the researcher to note the relationship that the members had with each other. Who were the dominant parties, how did they conduct themselves, what was the reaction of the subordinates, were people afraid to share their ideas, how was the overall ambiance, did some parties seek to influence the issues under discussion? These were some of the questions that the researcher would use a guidance tool in observation. The journaling process would come in handy in mapping the identifiable variations that existed within the intervention group throughout the sessions.

Researchers need to ensure that the data that they provide is accurate, according to Bryman, Bell & Harley¹⁵⁸. It is, therefore, imperative to conduct an extensive triangulation of data. Primarily, this method focuses on integrating differing perspectives of various information sources to assess those who may have deviations and to indicate some of the possible explanations for an

¹⁵⁷ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 255-262.

¹⁵⁸ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 96

observable phenomenon. Triangulation is part of the methods that evaluate the validity and reliability of the data that researchers collect as per Gibson¹⁵⁹.

The study focused on the utilization of observational data and the interviews to come up with more comprehensive perspectives on the leadership issues within the sample population. These two methods would culminate in a knowledge base that would be later assessed via methods established in public literature to find the reasons for the collected observations and possible interactions in then the data.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, the journaled notes would be an essential addition in tracking the daily and following records in the intervention session. The researcher would later involve the services of members of the university faculty to delve into deeper contextual issues that arose from the data. The input of the faculty member would be necessary for instilling an academic and theological assessment of the findings. Based on their experience as researchers, they would provide a peer-based review of the processes used in the research, their effectiveness and potential loopholes the methods of instrumentation may have put in the data, and how to work around it¹⁶¹. In a show of appreciation, the study would give credit to the faculty member on their contribution to the research. Again, it would provide them updates on the findings of the paper.

The findings of the research ought to be in such a way that they can be generalized to larger groups, according to Smith¹⁶². Lacking this trait portends that the study was flawed in its design and thus cannot be replicated. The introduction of triangulation sidesteps these problems. It

¹⁵⁹ Gibson, Cristina B. "Elaboration, generalization, triangulation, and interpretation: On enhancing the value of mixed method research." *Organizational Research Methods* 20, no. 2 (2017): 193.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 194

¹⁶¹ ¹⁶¹ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 255

¹⁶² Smith, Jonathan A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. (Sage, 2015), 52

increases awareness among the researchers on the workable approaches that they can deploy in the analysis of information, especially in cases whereby the responses provided are somewhat subjective. It enforces the practice of counterchecking against other sources to give credit to the works and observations of others while adding to the existing knowledge pool. Moreover, according to Palinkas et al.¹⁶³, it helps identify critical flaws in the design, intervention, and modeling of the research outcomes and corrective steps that the researcher can undertake.

3.6 Analysis of the collected information

Chenail¹⁶⁴ explains the methods of instrumentation that a researcher uses are likely to impact the quality of their findings. Thus, the choice of analytical tools is as essential as the methods chosen for data collection or the data design. The analysis of the data would take part in several processes. The interviews would have five major focal points of discussion that would be the main themes in the study. The study assessed the findings of the initial questionnaires by the church clergy and laypeople. Under each of the five titles, the study would build a mass of observational information collected throughout the intervention. The participation of the respondents in this process would provide additional data on the struggles facing leadership in African American churches. The researcher would then include data from the interviews at the end of the intervention period. Lastly, the study added triangulated information. This last form of input and analysis would give meaning to the findings among all the processes that took place. It would create room for the identification of meaning, context, patterns, and other inclinations within the data. The outcome

¹⁶³ Palinkas, Lawrence A., Sarah M. Horwitz, Carla A. Green, Jennifer P. Wisdom, Naihua Duan, and Kimberly Hoagwood. "Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research." *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research* 42, no. 5 (2015): 533

¹⁶⁴ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 255

of this stage would be the creation of a study that not only communicates the critical issues presented in the research study but offers mechanisms on how to interpret the information.

Based on this structure, the project would then detail a thematic analysis of the findings. This process involved the sensitizing of concepts whereby there would be the identification of the critical issues that have emerged over the research period, according to Bowen¹⁶⁵. These frameworks would allow the final output of the data to endow the overall agendas that seem to be problematic in dealing with leadership struggles from the church. The final production and implications for future research will peg on these core ideas.

3.6.1 Dealing with slippages in the data

Chan et al.¹⁶⁶ articulate that within the research frameworks, variations in data occur due to the methodological choices. However, there can be those that arise due to reasoning differences based on how respondents perceive, process, and value information. Anandarajan¹⁶⁷ proposes the utilization of data quilting. For this study, this method will involve the use of analysis of data via different approaches to support the reporting and decision making on whether to include or disallow certain forms of information. Data quilting will be instrumental in reducing the existing dissonance between the data. It entails layering the data within various approaches and seeking to find commonalities that are within the acceptable range of other current forms of data. It would

¹⁶⁵ Bowen, Glenn A. "Grounded theory and sensitizing concepts." *International journal of qualitative methods* 5, no. 3 (2006): 12.

¹⁶⁶ Chan, Lisa, Mary Ellen Macdonald, Franco A. Carnevale, Russell J. Steele, and Ian Shrier. "Reconciling disparate data to determine the right answer: A grounded theory of meta analysts' reasoning in meta-analysis." *Research synthesis methods* 9, no. 1 (2018): 25.

¹⁶⁷ Anandarajan, Murugan, and Chelsey Hill. "Data quilting: Art and science of analyzing disparate data." *Cogent Business & Management* 6, no. 1 (2019): 1629095.

isolate the parallelism that exists within the data findings or the responses to allow the inclusion of viable answers.

3.6.2 Silences in the data

Poland & Pederson explain that data silences are frequent in the analysis of qualitative research methods¹⁶⁸. What the respondents say, may be as vital as the information that they do not say. In the use of interview transcripts, which is the approach that will be applicable in this case, some hallmarks may indicate some degree of reluctance and careful choosing of words. This paper will focus not only on the verbalized responses but also features of contexts and the structures of the talk. The researcher would aim to read in between the lines to come up with apparent theoretical and epistemological inclinations to what was the meanings of the answers provided.

In conclusion, the research process will allow the evaluation of data through instruments that the study feels will be most applicable to the setting of the research. As part of the methodology, it will use a qualitative structure with interviews. It will also foster an intervention session with a sample size that constitutes the leadership of Central Virginia clergy and laymen in African American churches. The intervention will encompass a series of tasks that aim to address the core research questions of the study. The analysis of the data will be thematic, and in the case of data slippages and silences, the researchers will utilize data quilting and reading between the lines, respectively.

¹⁶⁸ Poland, Blake, and Ann Pederson. "Reading between the lines: Interpreting silences in qualitative research." *Qualitative inquiry* 4, no. 2 (1998): 293

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the evaluation of the intervention research model. It will analyze the collection of data from the interviews as it assesses the replication of the intervention as prescribed by Rothman & Thomas¹⁶⁹. The paper will go on to provide an analysis of the findings and later discuss the implications of the same. The researcher aims to find the links between the data, instrumentation, and the results based on the intended purpose of the study. In the period before and after the evaluation of data, the paper collected a significant amount of descriptive data. The various research methods have provided an array of information. According to Rothman & Thomas¹⁷⁰, it is fundamental to choose the information that is most relevant and impactful to the core objectives of the study.

4.2 Assessment of the Design

The study used the snowballing sampling method. This process entails seeking members of the sample size to look for other members within their circle who could facilitate in answering some of the critical issues in the research. According to Bell, Bryman & Harley¹⁷¹, this approach is impactful in the sampling of individuals who are typically not visible when assessing sample sizes. Moreover, it gives access to a large group of participants within a short period and without having to invest in too many resources.

¹⁶⁹ Thomas, Edwin J., and Jack Rothman. "An integrative perspective on intervention research." *Intervention research: Design and development for human service* (1994): 3.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 4

¹⁷¹ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 5

The sample size comprised of ten participants from the Mount Bethel Baptist Church. The lay and clergymen who have experience with church leadership were varied in their duration of service to the church and their ages as well. The table below is indicative of the demographic data utilized in the study.

CHARACTERISTICS	N=9
Gender	Men-6 Women-3
Duration in church leadership	
0-5 years	2
5-10 years	1
10-15 years	1
15-20 years	2
More than 20 years	2
Ages of the participants	
Less than 25	1
25-35	1
36-45	2
46-55	1
56-65	2
Above 65	2

The sample size indicates that the number of men far outdid the number of women. The use of the sample size aimed to be in line with the core objectives of the study, whose aim is to investigate the issues of leadership within the contexts of the African American church community in Virginia. In the course of the intervention plan, it was fundamental to examine before and after their critical thoughts on the processes of leadership within the church. The intervention phase would then lead to systematic learning processes that would best imply the most favorable approaches to the management of leadership strategies within the church. During the intervention phase, there were additional evaluations that acted to assess the overall effectiveness of the procedures that were part of the process to improve the outcomes of the intervention by turning it towards the needs and preferences of the participants.

4.3 Data Collection

The assessment of the intervention phase requires the collection of data that will act to create the foundational details in the evaluation of the degree to which the intervention plan has been effective. Fertman & Allensworth¹⁷² indicate that a researcher must use research methods that are likely to offer positive results as well as report on what are the actual issues that are happening within the target population. The intervention program had several areas of contact and data collection by the researcher, as indicated below.

4.3.1 Participant Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Questionnaire

Bell & Bryman (2014) discuss that the use of pre-intervention and post-intervention evaluation measures act as tools for the determination of the minimum standards of the outcomes of the program. They map the thoughts of the participants before the process, and at the end of the period, act to determine if there are any visible changes, as per the expected goals and objectives set for the intervention process. Researchers such as Smith¹⁷³ indicate that the lack of comparison testing can be somewhat problematic because it would fail to establish a threshold for the assessment of outcomes. Moreover, the choice of design is impactful to the overall triangulation of findings in line with the established methodologies and the available research in the area.

The test questionnaires focused on the five main pillars of discussion as set in the research objectives. They aimed to assess the leadership struggles within the church, challenges to meeting commitment within the church, sensitivity to the altruistic calling among leaders, understanding, and implementation of the value of servant leadership, and the methods that church leaders can use in circumventing leadership issues within the church setting. The participants were to answer

¹⁷² Fertman, Carl I., and Diane D. Allensworth. *Health promotion programs: from theory to practice*. (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 252

¹⁷³ Smith, Jonathan A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. (Sage, 2015), 8

from multiple choice questionnaires where they could agree with the statements provided or provide the frequency based on their personal experience.

The assessment of these measures is necessary for the evaluation of the overall experiences, actions, and activities of the participants in leadership within the church settings. Findings by Palinkas et al.¹⁷⁴ indicate that it is fundamental to have researchers utilize methods that are explicit on what they aim to measure. The choice of instrumentation creates a significant issue regarding the validity and reliability of the testing, where it is vital to look at whether the methods used do assess what they claim to do¹⁷⁵. The use of the pre-test approach was significant in finding some of the core areas that the intervention had to touch on, and specifically the planning process for the intervention plan¹⁷⁶.

4.3.2 Participant Session-To-Session Assessment Questionnaire

Based on the intervention plan, five main task areas were divided into smaller mini tasks. Interventions and other programs require an extensive evaluation of the process outcomes to determine the effectiveness of the program. It creates room to assess whether the project is impactful and if it is not, what are the corrective measures that the research team can invest in and execute to ensure the intervention meets its targets. This process, in this study, focused on the assessment of feedback from the participants and the observational data by the research team during the intervention.

¹⁷⁴ Palinkas, Lawrence A., Sarah M. Horwitz, Carla A. Green, Jennifer P. Wisdom, Naihua Duan, and Kimberly Hoagwood. "Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research." *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research* 42, no. 5 (2015): 533.

¹⁷⁵ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 262.

¹⁷⁶ Fertman & Allensworth 2016, 235

The process evaluation focused on the use of a questionnaire that provided open-ended questions, closed-ended questions, and an interval scale. The combined data from these methods would give a clear picture of the sentiments shared by the participants on the value of the intervention process. Smith¹⁷⁷ advises that one of the critical elements in the creation of any questionnaire is relevant. The questions must be measured and, in the case of the study, be in line with the core objectives of the intervention and the overarching goals, as discussed in chapter 3 and chapter 1, respectively. The researcher must hence make attempts to state the questions as clearly and objectively as possible to avoid incidences of confusion, and above all, the propagation of biases, according to Chenail¹⁷⁸. Bryman et al.¹⁷⁹ also suggest that the questions ought to be of reasonable length, that asks the required issues, while avoiding unnecessary wording that may reduce the effectiveness of the questionnaire.

In this case, the use of open-ended questions was to ensure that the researchers did not subject the results provided by the study to undue biases. Bell & Bryman¹⁸⁰ assert that the use of this approach is impactful, especially in allowing the respondents to share their views freely. Its use can unearth issues that closed-ended questions can overlook. Participants in this study were, therefore, able to use their words and opinions to give a valid assessment of their lived experience without the limitations that the research team may impose. Additionally, the church leadership team also had an interval scale whereby they would circle the number that the best felt described

¹⁷⁷ Smith, Jonathan A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. (Sage, 2015), 25

¹⁷⁸ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 255.

¹⁷⁹ ¹⁷⁹ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 12

¹⁸⁰ Bryman, Alan, and Emma Bell. *Research methodology: Business and management contexts*. (Oxford University Press Southern Africa, 2014), 45

their assessment of the session on various terms. The findings would add to the pool of information. This method, as Bryman et al.¹⁸¹ find, is easy to interpret by the research team. The scales must be simple and measured in their wording to ensure that participants can respond efficiently and clearly.

4.3.3 Participant Retrospective Evaluation

After the intervention process, researchers undertook an evaluation of the participants. The final questionnaire would address the sentiments that the participants shared as their lived experiences in the Mount Bethel Baptist church as leaders. The survey would offer their assessment of how they understand the modalities of the leadership processes, and if there is room for improvement in some of the areas. This questionnaire contained about 20 structured questions. The respondents would have several categories within which they had to respond to the questions. This method was necessary to allow the process of coding the statements. It would additionally ensure that respondents were less likely to leave questions blank due to the variety of options that they would have¹⁸². This method of using structured questions is essential in the evaluation of respondent replies in the face of the conceptual framework. The responses fit logically within the parameters that the research team articulates in the core objectives of the study. Thus, it becomes easy to see the degree to which the leadership of the African American church within the church setting can establish effective leadership.

This process is additionally necessary for the overall assessment of the themes found in the research due to the literature review. It helps in the classification of the experiences shared by the

¹⁸¹ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 12

¹⁸² Smith, Jonathan A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. (Sage, 2015), 8

participants within a shared scope¹⁸³. Though it is limiting, its findings build on the body of knowledge that is prevalent within the other existing methods of data collection. It assists in the triangulation of the results, further aiding the process of evaluation and justification of the themes and process of leadership and the existing gaps.

4.4 Data Analysis

4.4.1 Pretest and Post Test comparison

Before the start of the intervention, the participants had to answer a series of questions regarding their experiences at the church.

Evaluative statement	Group Averages Mean		
	Before the workshop	After the workshop	Differences
The African American Church is facing leadership problems	3.5	4.5	+1.0
I believe that I am well acquainted with the depth of these issues	3.0	4.0	+1.0
The church is struggling to meet altruistic calling	3.5	4.5	+1.0
I can identify altruistic tendencies within church leadership	3.0	4.5	+1.5
I believe that the church is struggling to meet its commitment activities to God.	2.5	3.0	-0.5
I believe the church leaders have embraced servant leadership	3.5	3.4	-0.1
I can identify the traits of servant leadership	3.5	4.5	+1.0
The church has put in place mechanisms to circumvent leadership issues	3.0	3.0	0
I can make a positive contribution towards dealing with the leadership issues facing the African American church	3.5	4.5	+1.0
Average of the items	3.222	3.989	+0.767
Notes: N=9			
According to the scale: 1-strongly disagree 2-agree 3-neutral 4-agree 5-strongly agree			

¹⁸³ Palinkas, Lawrence A., Qiaobing Wu, Dahlia Fuentes, Megan Finno-Velasquez, Ian W. Holloway, Antonio Garcia, and Patricia Chamberlain. "Innovation and the Use of Research Evidence in Youth-Serving Systems: A Mixed-Methods Study." *Child Welfare* 94, no. 2 (2015); 2

Each of the elements discussed is in line with the core learning areas in the intervention program. In each of the cases, there was evidence of positive or negative change except in the case of the church putting in place mechanisms to deal with leadership issues. The group average remained neutral. For the other areas, except leadership embracing servant leadership and the commitment of the leaders to activities to God, there was a notable increase in positive responses. The two cases showed a slump. Hence, in most of the areas, there was some variance or improvement in the pre-test and post-test evaluation of the responses.

As requires, the study utilized the analysis of the Wilcoxon rank-sum tests with similar findings. This method is a well-established non-parametric technique that is applied in cases where there is one sample case. According to Triantafyllou (2019),¹⁸⁴ this approach enables researchers to denote the differences between the values of pairs. Typical methods show the direction of the difference. However, the procedure set by Wilcoxon allows further study of the weight of the couples that have contributed to the variations. When values differ very much from their expected values, the adoption of the no difference hypothesis is rejected. The differences force the researcher to provide evidence of why the differences exist, according to LaMorte¹⁸⁵.

4.4.2 Interpretation of the pre-test post-test results.

The evidence suggests that there is a degree of variation in each of the values, and in 6 out of the 9 cases, there is a positive outcome. This assessment alone indicates that the intervention methods did meet their goals of improving the capacity of the sample population to be aware of

¹⁸⁴ Triantafyllou, Ioannis S. "Wilcoxon-type rank-sum control charts based on progressively censored reference data." *Communications in Statistics-Theory and Methods* (2019): pp. 12-13.

¹⁸⁵ LaMorte, Wayne W. "Mann whitney u test (wilcoxon rank sum test)." (*Boston University School of Public Health*, 2017); 52

the issues of leadership within their church setting. The core area in which there was variation in the negative, it is likely that further understanding of the problem of altruism and servant leadership could have assisted in shifting the positions of the participants to a higher level of disagreement. The research assumes that the intervention protocols acted to facilitate a better understanding of the core issues discussed based on the leadership. Hence, the group could identify some underlying problems better than they did before the intervention.

In all the cases, the improvement ranged from 0-1.5. This increment was primarily significant, as indicated by the signed-rank test for the sample size ($p \leq 0,01$). The identification of altruistic tendencies showed the most significant difference, and perhaps this change is linked with the variation observed on the question that sought to determine if the church leaders were altruistic. As the knowledge of the traits increased, the perception of the character as being present in the leadership declined. The sample size additionally denoted that the mechanisms in dealing with the leadership issues within the church had similar values before and after the intervention. Both times, the team did not feel as if the leadership has invested in conflict resolution mechanisms that would best improve the outcomes of the church. Nonetheless, there is an overall indication of improvement in the ability of the participants to identify leadership issues, servant leadership, altruism, and problem-solving.

From the intervention process, it met its core objectives, as set out in chapter 3. The groups demonstrate the capacity to understand the issue of leadership better and to invest in methods that could significantly improve the outcomes. The existing variations denote a change that reflects upon the impact of the intervention. The process met its overarching goals, in addition to offering the core areas of intervention that the team had to focus on.

4.4.3 Participants Retrospective Questionnaire

This section offers an analysis of the data collected from the final session of evaluation after all the intervention program. The corresponding questionnaire is part of the appendix section. The findings of this assessment were critical inputs for the evaluation of the overall leadership mechanisms in the target population. For better contextualization, the study would include supplementary information from the qualitative findings of the session by session evaluation of the intervention. The two would additionally require supplementary information from the observation within the intervention settings and other secondary data. Cumulatively, gathering this information would better improve the accuracy of the research data by enhancing the overall validity and its reliability by counterchecking across various methods¹⁸⁶.

4.4.3.1 Reliability Analysis

The level of deficiency of leadership competencies was found significant after running correlation tests among the key variables as well as the reliability test that resulted in the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. As shown in the correlation results, the leadership themes that were found to be eminent were the length of most church meetings, level of education, type of job for your spouse, and Number of hours worked in a week. The figure below shows the descriptive statistics of the variables: the respective mean, frequency, and standard deviation of each variable. The total number of respondents was 9. Some of the missing values in questions that responses were not provided have been assigned a missing system that does not, however, affect the computation of mean and standard deviation.

Descriptive Statistics

¹⁸⁶ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 10

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sex	9	0	1	.11	.333
Age	9	1	4	2.67	1.118
Educational Level	9	1	3	1.89	.601
Number of years in the ministry	9	1	6	3.11	1.616
Number of congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service	9	1	3	2.22	.667
Number of hours worked in a week	6	1	4	2.17	1.169
Number of times you deliver a sermon or assist at the church in a week	7	1	3	1.86	.690
Pastoral annual income from your church	1	1	1	1.00	.
Comparison of your income with other pastors	1	3	3	3.00	.
type of job for your spouse	6	1	2	1.50	.548
How often do you have one day a week off from your church ministry job	8	2	5	4.38	1.061
witnessed arguments among church leaders	9	0	1	.78	.441
Length of most church meetings	9	1.5	2.0	1.889	.2205
Church comprehension of pastor's problems	9	1	2	1.56	.527
ever thought to move to another ministry place by leaving the church	9	1	3	2.11	1.054
ever felt an impulse to quit your ministry to escape from the crisis of ministry	9	1	3	1.67	1.000

How much are you pressed in your ministry	9	1	2	1.11	.333
How much is your spouse pressed in your ministry	6	1	1	1.00	.000
How much are your children pressed in your ministry	3	1	2	1.67	.577
Have you ever experienced stress-related illness	9	0	1	.33	.500
Valid N (listwise)	1				

The reliability analysis findings are below. The syntax attached is for reference. The following results are as follows.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.840	.840	7

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient has a value of .840, which is closer to 1.0. With the rule of George and Mallery¹⁸⁷ in mind, a coefficient of greater than .8 is good. This implies that since the coefficient is closer to 1.0, there is a tremendous internal consistency of the variables in the scale.

The following variables were used to compute this coefficient.

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N

¹⁸⁷ George, Darren, and Paul Mallery. "SPSS for Windows step by step: A simple guide and reference. 11.0 update . 2003." (2016); 4

Number of hours worked in a week	1.667	.5774	3
Number of times you deliver a sermon or assist at the church in a week	1.667	.5774	3
Church comprehension of pastor's problems	1.667	.5774	3
type of job for your spouse	1.667	.5774	3
Have you ever experienced stress-related illness	.667	.5774	3
Educational Level	1.667	.5774	3
Number of congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service	2.333	.5774	3

To illustrate the effect on Cronbach's alpha and the scale mean after the deletion of an item, the following results were obtained.

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	1.619	.667	2.333	1.667	3.500	.238	7
Item Variances	.333	.333	.333	.000	1.000	.000	7
Inter-Item Covariances	.143	-.333	.333	.667	-1.000	.093	7
Inter-Item Correlations	.429	-1.000	1.000	2.000	-1.000	.836	7

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Number of hours worked in a week	9.667	5.333	1.000	.	.750

Number of times you deliver a sermon or assist at the church in a week	9.667	5.333	1.000	.	.750
Church comprehension of pastor's problems	9.667	5.333	1.000	.	.750
type of job for your spouse	9.667	5.333	1.000	.	.750
Have you ever experienced stress-related illness	10.667	5.333	1.000	.	.750
Educational Level	9.667	5.333	1.000	.	.750
Number of congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service	9.000	12.000	-1.000	.	1.000

From the above results, we can tell that the deletion of items does affect Cronbach's Alpha value. The variable that contributed highly to the Cronbach's Alpha was the Number of congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service, and consequently, the rest of the variables follow. Conducting a multivariate correlation analysis yielded the following results. Different variables were used, and depending on their significance, those found to be insignificant were dropped.

Spearman's rho		Sex	Age	Educational Level	Number of years in the ministry	Number of congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service	Number of hours worked in a week	Number of times you deliver a sermon or assist at the church in a week	type of job for your spouse	How often do you have one day a week off from your church ministry job	witnessed arguments among church leaders	Length of most church meetings
Sex	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.072	.082	.070	.459			.447	-.381	-.661	-.661
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.854	.834	.858	.214			.374	.352	.052	.052
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9
Age	Correlation Coefficient	.072	1.000	.163	.153	-.088	.091	-.471	-.527	-.136	-.109	-.109
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.854		.676	.695	.821	.864	.286	.033	.749	.780	.780
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9
Educational Level	Correlation Coefficient	.082	.163	1.000	.061	-.256	-.175	-.011	.707	.291	-.124	-.557
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.834	.676	0.04	.876	.506	.740	.981	.116	.484	.004	.119
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9

Number of years in the ministry	Correlation Coefficient	.070	.153	.061	1.000	-.305	-.281	-.041	-.422	-.106	-.106	-.264
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.858	.695	.876		.426	.589	.930	.405	.802	.787	.492
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9
Number of congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service	Correlation Coefficient	.459	-.088	-.256	-.305	1.000	-.539	0.000	-.333	-.008	-.694*	-.231
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.214	.821	.006	.426		.269	1.000	.519	.986	.038	.549
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9
Number of hours worked in a week	Correlation Coefficient		.091	-.175	-.281	-.539	1.000	.609	0.000	-.803		.539
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.864	.740	.589	.269		.199	1.000	.102		.269
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	5	6	6
Number of times you deliver a sermon or assist at the church in a week	Correlation Coefficient		-.471	-.011	-.041	0.000	.609	1.000	0.000	-.730		-.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.286	.981	.930	1.000	.199		1.000	.099		.808
	N	7	7	7	7	7	6	7	4	6	7	7
	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

type of job for your spouse	Correlation Coefficient	.447	-.527	.707	-.422	-.333	0.000	0.000	1.000	.115	0.000	-.447
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.374	.283	.116	.405	.519	1.000	1.000		.828	1.000	.374
	N	6	6	6	6	6	4	4	6	6	6	6
How often do you have one day a week off from your church ministry job	Correlation Coefficient	-.381	-.136	.291	-.106	-.008	-.803	-.730	.115	1.000	.073	.381
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.352	.749	.484	.802	.986	.102	.099	.828		.864	.352
	N	8	8	8	8	8	5	6	6	8	8	8
witnessed arguments among church leaders	Correlation Coefficient	-.661	-.109	-.124	-.106	-.694*			0.000	.073	1.000	.357
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042	.780	.751	.787	.038			1.000	.864		.345
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9
Length of most church meetings	Correlation Coefficient	-.661	-.109	-.557	-.264	-.231	.539	-.114	-.447	.381	.357	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	.780	.119	.492	.549	.269	.808	.374	.352	.345	
	N	9	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	8	9	9

The Null hypothesis is that the variables are not correlated/correlation is equal to zero, and the alternative explanation is that the variables are correlated/relationship is not equal to zero, and an alpha of 5%. (0.05 level of significance). This is a two-tailed test since we do not know and can't tell if the correlation will be positive or negative.

Most of the variables that were found to have a p-value higher than 0.05 hence leading to failure to reject the null hypothesis, therefore there was no correlation among these variables. For the variables whose p values are marked in yellow, we ended up rejecting the null hypothesis since the p-value was less than 0.05. This led to the conclusion that these variables are correlated at a 95 % confidence level.

4.5 Discussions of The Result Findings

The main aim of the study was to determine the struggles in leadership that the African American church faces. The role of the church among this group is significant, given the numerous functions that it plays in creating a flourishing society. However, based on the findings by Cincala & Chase¹⁸⁸, the church has been facing a plethora of issues in its leadership, which led this study to examine various facets of the underlying problem. The core issues of discussion would focus on the capacity of the leaders to understand their mandate within the church, and most of all, to focus on the core issues that would contribute to better outcomes for the church community and the service to God.

4.5.1 Overview of The Intervention-Implementation Phase

The findings from the pre-test and post-test questionnaire indicated that the use of the intervention has been significant. It had helped in changing some of the perspectives that the leadership teams had held regarding the assessment of critical issues facing the church. Thus, the study could reject the hypothesis that the intervention was not instrumental.

However, according to the findings of the session to session evaluation, the initial weeks of the study were somewhat problematic in the delivery of content. The interactive approach was, at first, not popular with the group. However, with several tweaks into establishing engagement with

¹⁸⁸ Cincala & Chase 2018, 85

the participants and fostering an understanding of how to work the intervention plan as desired, there were better outcomes during the rest of the period.

The second issue that arose was that some of the participants in the team demonstrated some degree of dominance. The older members received more reverence and consideration than the younger ones. The study attributed this condition to the existing protocols within religious settings that call for the respect of the old and obedience to their ideas. The research group had to encourage interactions that would ensure all members contributed during the intervention period and that their ideas received fair consideration.

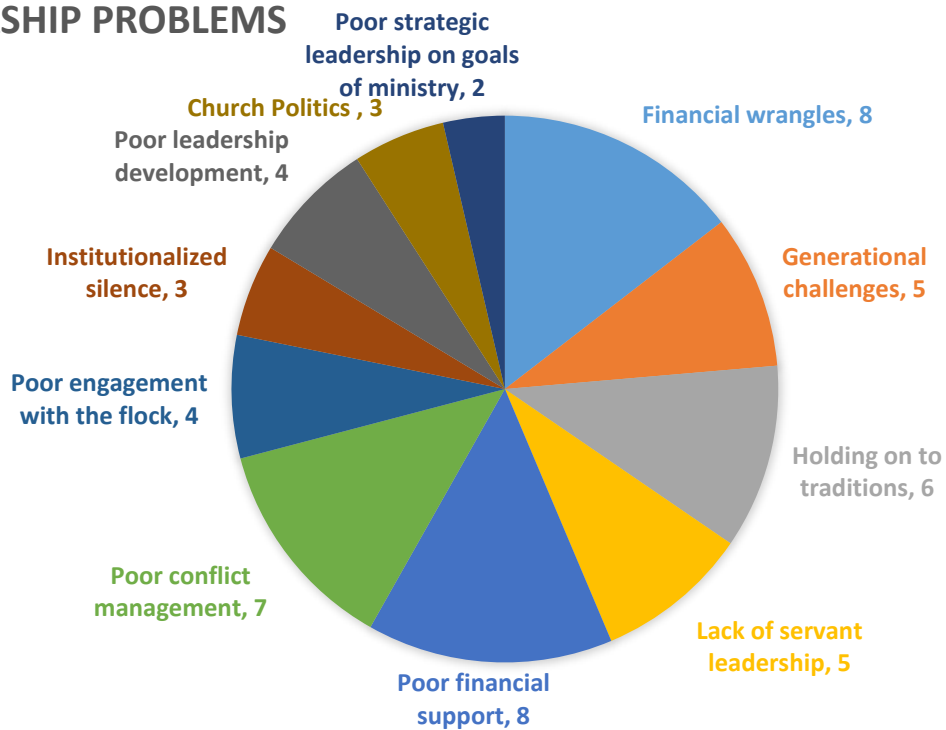
The research team observed that as time went by, the intervention group demonstrated increased rapport. The discussions became more animated, and the participants were vocal. There was more vibrancy within the sessions. The sessions had contributed to substantial engagement within the settings whereby the leaders could rebuild their relationships. Moreover, they could discuss freely on issues facing the church and work towards mediated positions. The dominance of some groups slowly declined.

4.5.2 Thematic Analysis.

Identification of the struggles that the African American church is facing within their leadership

The leadership within churches is facing numerous issues as shown in the figure below

LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS



The pie-chart above affirms that the intervention process led to the identification of a wide range of issues that were facing the church. One of the main problems that arose was the perceived exploitation of the masses by the church leadership. Some of the respondents indicated that they felt as if the direction of the church focused primarily on tithing and other financial contributions as opposed to dealing with their core calling. The struggle for finances led to numerous issues among church leadership¹⁸⁹. The highest number of participants indicated that funds were a significant issue that caused problems. 80% felt the financial support was not enough, and thus, it was a prime cause of many of the evident struggles in the church. According to Baumann¹⁹⁰, the excessive demand for money has created church politics that contribute to dismal relations between the warring factions. Poor conflict management was another issue that arose, with 70% indicating

¹⁸⁹ Clark 2008, 6

¹⁹⁰ Baumann, Roger. "Political Engagement Meets the Prosperity Gospel: African American Christian Zionism and Black Church Politics." *Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review* 77, no. 4 (2016): 359.

so. This number correlated with the pre-test post-test assessment that showed the participants felt that the church did not have enough mechanisms to deal with the issues of conflict.

The issues of leadership management arose, as well. 50% and 60% of the respondents felt that there were generational challenges and holding on to tradition. The data suggests that it is likely that the church did not have methods that allowed them to focus on the new generation. The reverence of tradition could perhaps lead to shooting down ideas, according to Davis¹⁹¹. This case is in line with the observations of the dominance of the older groups within the leadership. Their power led many of the perceived young groups to shy away from making suggestions or communicating¹⁹². It is, therefore, likely that the management of succession is relatively weak, given that 30% of the participants mentioned problems with strategic leadership development.

This finding is in line with the data by Bengston, Harris & Putney¹⁹³. These authors discuss that sometimes the tenets of religion make it harder for it to evolve and encompass the changing needs of society. The dominance of the older generation may act as significant inhibition to the exploration of new ideas and the intake of better methods to deal with generational issues. For instance, the leadership of the church may deem it as worldly in investing in approaches that would encourage the youthful generation from being active members¹⁹⁴. The inability of the church to evolve may be due to the stringent and rigid adoption of leadership approaches that do not focus on their call to expand their ministry. The church, according to the findings in the research, does not set practical ministry goals, and hence its reach is limited. Ferguson¹⁹⁵ supports this position

¹⁹¹ Davis 2017, 6

¹⁹² Clark, 2008, 45

¹⁹³ Bengston, Vern L., Susan Harris, and Norella M. Putney. *Families and faith: How religion is passed down across generations*. (Oxford University Press, 2017), 52

¹⁹⁴ Davis 2017, 5

¹⁹⁵ Ferguson, Riley. "Where Are We Going?: A Critical Analysis of Millennials and the Traditional Church." (Augustan. edu, 2018).4

being that poor leadership within the church may be unable to instill austerity measures that can help intergenerational propagation of the church.

One of the unexpected outcomes that were part of this process was the discussion on institutionalized silence. 30% of the participants indicated that the churches operate with some degree of secrecy. This assertion is in line with the findings of Vela-McConnell ¹⁹⁶that suggests that religious organizations sometimes act in ways that encourage hiding information. The church may be unwilling to call out their leaders when they work in ways that are contrary to the ethical and religious standards set by the bible. Moreover, they may be unwilling to speak openly about vices. Ituma et al. ¹⁹⁷ denote that the failure to discuss issues such as sexual health, institutionalized racism, financial greed, and other negative traits has led to the African American church failing to offer leadership to the community when they are most in need of it.

Identification of the struggles of the church in meeting its commitment to Godly activities and service

As per the findings in the evaluation after the intervention, the respondents demonstrated that they were enthusiastic about serving as a ministry leader. The respondents also felt that they had to do a great job and excel at every part of their ministry (M=2.5 SD=0.972; M=3.2 SD=1.135). However, despite these assertions, the intervention process demonstrated that their enthusiasm did not match the expectation of meeting their Godly activities and commitments. 80% were emphatic

¹⁹⁶ Vela-McConnell, James A. "Behind Closed Doors: Organizational Secrecy, Stigma, And Sex Abuse Within The Catholic Church." *Oppression and Resistance: Structure, Agency, Transformation* 48 (2017): 19À49.

¹⁹⁷ ¹⁹⁷ Ituma, Ezichi, Enobong I. Solomon, and Favour C. Uroko. "The cleansing of the leper in Mark 1: 40–45 and the secrecy motif: An African ecclesial context." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 75, no. 4 (2019): 11.

that the leaders were committed. The discussions highlighted several issues. Notably, the prioritization of finances was cited as a critical hindrance. Some of the participants indicated that despite an overall willingness to meet the requirements of Godly service, the lack of resources acted as a crucial inhibitor to the process. On the other hand, church politics arose whereby certain leadership factions within the church act to impose their interest as the identifiable church policy. Thirdly, self-interests in issues such as power and prosperity had taken away the focus on the leaders from their role in strengthening the flock of Christ and empowering the community to meet their needs.

These assertions are in line with the findings by Asea¹⁹⁸. The authors articulate that the focus on self-interest and lack of commitment to the core message of the church are problematic to the leadership objectives of the church. Notably, there is a likelihood that the clamor for leadership positions is lined with personal interests rather than the spiritual growth of the community. Hence, focus shifts on what would be the peripheral issues, such as the accumulation of wealth. This paper feels that this shift could be at the underbelly of the class division within African American churches. Pastors and clergy prefer the wealthier communities leaving those that are lower-income and disenfranchised being underserved¹⁹⁹. Notably, because this section of the society faces numerous social, cultural, and economic disparity within the broader social setting, the removal of church leaders who, in the past, acted to support their courses further puts them in more problems.

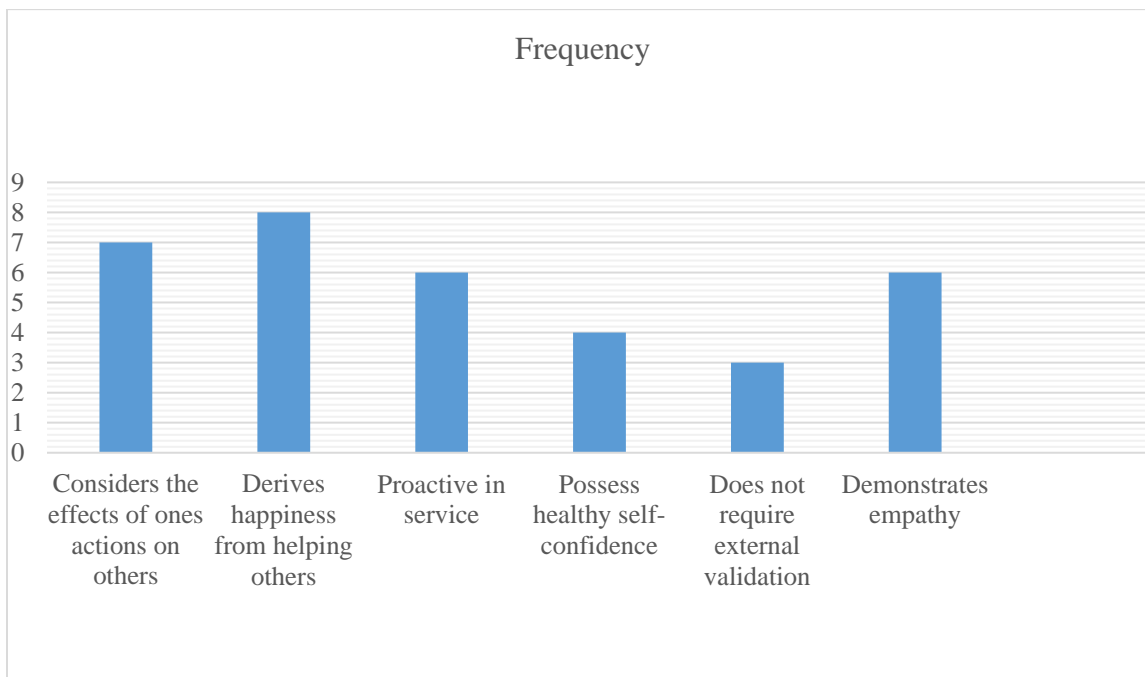
¹⁹⁸ Asea, Wilson B. "Combating political and bureaucratic corruption in Uganda: Colossal challenges for the church and the citizens." *HTS Theological Studies* 74, no. 2 (2018): 1-14.

¹⁹⁹ Vaughn, Danica Timia. "Scandal in the black church: an ethical analysis of public moral failure and a vision for renewed black pastoral leadership." (PhD diss., Boston University, 2018), 254.

Analysis of the extent to which the African American church leaders are altruistic in their calling

The discussion on altruism was an essential part of the intervention plan. Findings by Guinot et al.²⁰⁰ assert that altruistic leaders are those that are willing to improve the welfare of the community by working on fostering the happiness of others. The intervention discussions entailed the need for leaders to be selfless in service.

The figure below demonstrates the common traits that the leaders indicated were akin to altruism.



Despite the identification of these traits as necessary, the pretest and post-test intervention data showed that there was a decline in the recorded degree to which the participants believed that these traits existed. Perhaps, these findings are an indication that some of the leadership within the church is focused more on internal satisfaction than meeting the needs of the community.

²⁰⁰ Guinot, Jacob, Ricardo Chiva, and Fermín Mallén. "The effects of altruism and relationship conflict on organizational learning." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 26, no. 1 (2015): 86

Nonetheless, the self-reported evaluation of the study indicated that some of the participants stated that they sacrificed for the ministry (M=0.9; SD=0.316). This variation exists despite an understanding of the vision and mission statement of the church (M=1 SD=0). The leaders in the church, just as seen in the preceding section, could likely be having problems engaging in selfless activities for the good of the Christian community and the society. As Francies (2013, 25) denotes, the leaders are aware of what the calling of Christ entails and what they need to do. However, they demonstrate some degree of unwillingness to do as asked over and above their needs.

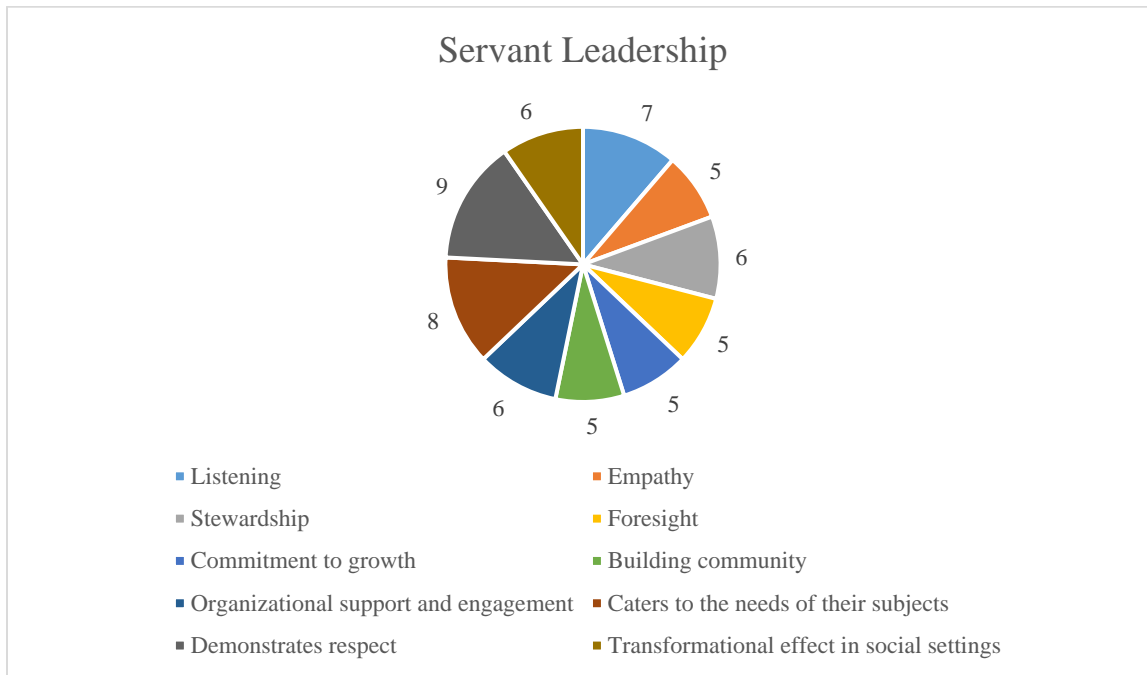
Vaughn²⁰¹ discusses that in the past, leaders in African American churches such as Martin Luther King and Al Sharpton acted to preach to their flock as well as engage in extensive community services. Their role in the black community is well documented, and they faced numerous discomforts such as arrest and discrimination while fighting for the rights of the city. However, the leadership of the present church, according to the findings, is not particularly willing and able to face the same, even when there are a significant number of issues. According to Ituma et al.²⁰², the practice of institutionalized silence in addition to the motivations to avoid discussions on thorny societal issues that ensure some leaders do not anger some sections of society has pushed out altruism. Corruption and vested interests are part of the organizational structure within the church, and hence, it is unlikely that the leaders will act to stop injustice for fear of biting the hand that feeds them.

Determination of the concept and value of servant leadership to the church leaders

²⁰¹ Vaughn, Danica Timia. "Scandal in the black church: an ethical analysis of public moral failure and a vision for renewed black pastoral leadership." (PhD diss., Boston University, 2018), 254.

²⁰² Ituma, Ezichi, Enobong I. Solomon, and Favour C. Uroko. "The cleansing of the leper in Mark 1: 40–45 and the secrecy motif: An African ecclesial context." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 75, no. 4 (2019): 11.

Servant leadership was a critical issue within the research process that was crucial to the assessment of leadership. The intervention method focused on engagement on servant leadership to create better opportunities within the church setting. The intervention isolated the following traits as necessary for a leader to be characterized as a servant leader.



Just as in the case with altruism, the assessment of this trait changed before and after the intervention. There was a decline from 3.5 to 3.4. This shift took place as the capacity of identification of the characteristics associated with servant leadership grew by +1.0.

Additionally, the individual aspects of the tenets of servant leadership, as shown in the questionnaire, followed a similar trend. The mean for those who asserted that they consulted with those in ministry for decision making was 3.6 (SD=.966). Those who shared information in ministry had a mean of 3.3 (SD=0.483). The provisions of clear and concise explanations were at a mean of 3.3 and SD of 0.675.

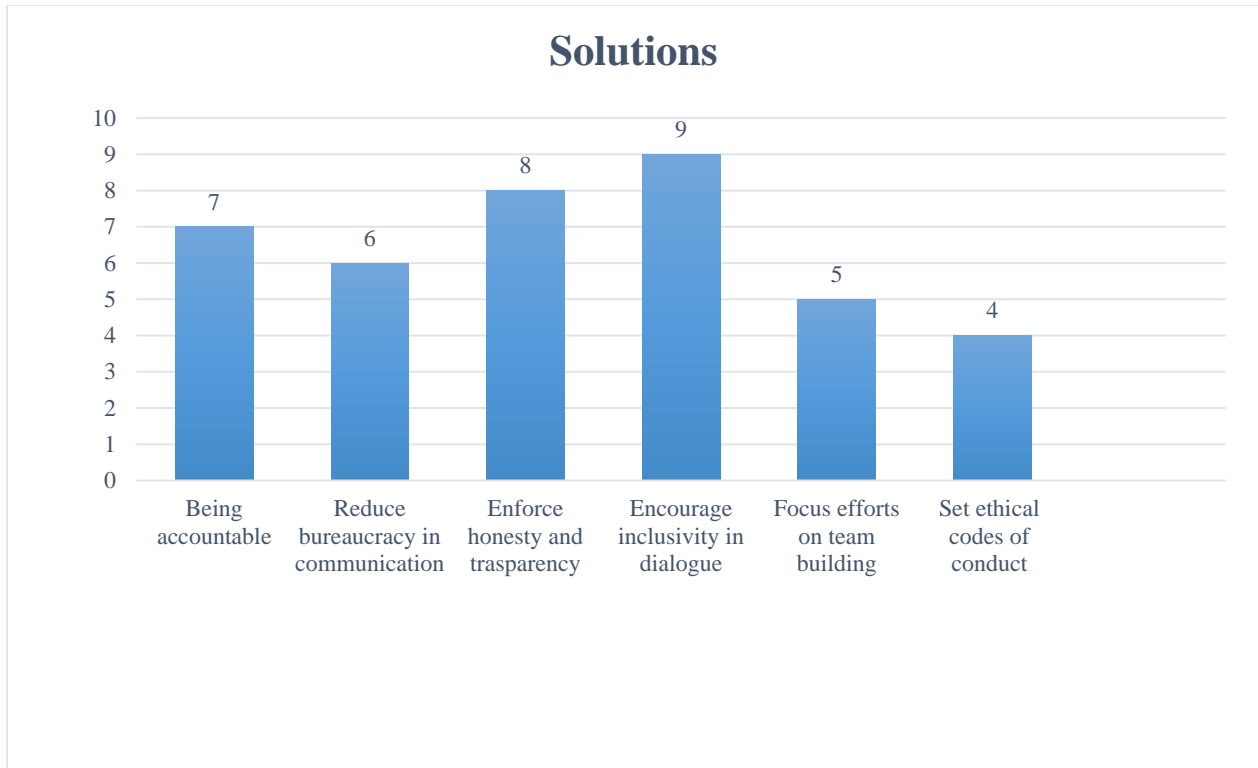
These findings indicate that there are some gaps in the servant leadership within the church. In line with other findings in the study, the church is unable to roll out some of the crucial measures that would facilitate the achievement of servant leadership. Diaz-Saenz²⁰³ denotes that leaders often use various leadership methods based on what they perceive as acceptable methods to maintain order. The challenges that the church is facing from sticking to tradition, failure to engage in strategic planning and financial wrangles indicate systemic problems where the church as an organization is not working towards serving the best interests of the community, but rather on satisfying individual or factional positions. The problem with this disposition, as per Hopkins²⁰⁴, is that it shifts the church ministry from the insights that Christ provided on the ideal way to lead the church. The competing interests may be perhaps one of the reasons as to why there is a decline in the number of people who go to church. The leaders seek to benefit from the flock, rather than the other way around, which makes going to church feel like an additional charge²⁰⁵.

Isolation of methods that can assist the church in circumventing its leadership issues and focus on dealing with existing struggles and challenges.

It is undeniable that the existing church setting has several critical issues that it ought to address. The intervention plan found several problems indicated in the figure above that matched the literature review in chapter 2. The participants had as part of their tasks, a session to discuss what were the potential solutions to the leadership crisis. The figure below indicates some of the issues that came up.

²⁰³ Diaz-Saenz, Hector R. "Transformational leadership." *The SAGE handbook of leadership* 5, no. 1 (2011): 299.

²⁰⁴ Hopkins, Dwight N. "The Black Church and Its Mission for the Twenty-First Century." In *The Black Church Studies Reader*. (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2016), 270.



90% of the participants agreed on the overall necessity to encourage inclusivity in dialogue. This solution is likely to arise when there are feelings of exclusion of various points of view and the dominance of some actors within the decision-making process. McShea²⁰⁶ calls for a reduction in bureaucracy is especially crucial in streamlining the flow of communication. All parties within the church setting can access information, have their voice heard, and achieve respect for their opinions. The necessity to set an ethical code of conduct was the least supported idea. Perhaps due to the setting being religious, the adoptions of some methods that were not part of the biblical values may be unwanted.

²⁰⁶ McShea, Bronwen. "BISHOPS UNBOUND: Bronwen McShea tells the history behind today's crisis of church leadership." *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* 289 (2019): 33.

Nonetheless, as Senander²⁰⁷ suggests, it is an impactful tool in the establishment of protocols on how to deal with conflict and how leaders ought to behave as they dispense their mandate. Fostering transparency, honesty, and accountability will reduce the impacts of institutional silence and blame games²⁰⁸. It will create legitimacy within church structures by enforcing clear and coherent messages that cater to the needs of the community and the society at large. The use of these methods can, therefore, act as a steppingstone for the formulation of robust practices that can redeem the leadership of the church to its past glory²⁰⁹.

4.6 Conclusion

This section focused on the evaluation of the research method. This process aimed at finding out the effects of the intervention regarding the leadership methods of the church leaders and the clergymen and the degree of change that they demonstrate that can be attributed to the response. The report conducted a systematic evaluation of outcomes in the implementation process. The accumulation of the findings found that the implementation and intervention process did register positive results irrespective of the initial problems that it faced during the early weeks.

Furthermore, in mapping the changes, very few instrument-related issues arose. The massive triangulation of data, as suggested by Chenail²¹⁰ and Bell, Bryman & Harley²¹¹,

²⁰⁷ Senander, Angela. "Beyond scandal: Creating a culture of accountability in the Catholic Church." *Journal of Business Ethics* 146, no. 4 (2017): 859.

²⁰⁸ Ituma, Ezichi, Enobong I. Solomon, and Favour C. Uroko. "The cleansing of the leper in Mark 1: 40–45 and the secrecy motif: An African ecclesial context." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 75, no. 4 (2019): 11.

²⁰⁹ Wilcox, Clyde. "The Black Church and Politics." *The Bible And The Ballot Box: Religion And Politics In The 1988 Election* (2019). 25

²¹⁰ Chenail, Ronald J. "Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research." *Qualitative Report* 16, no. 1 (2011): 255.

²¹¹ Bell, Emma, Alan Bryman, and Bill Harley. *Business research methods*. (Oxford university press, 2018), 36

contributed to the minimization of these issues. Hence, on further statistical analysis, it was clear that the questions used in tandem with the approaches have a high degree of correlation and the methods were valid, as they measured what they indicated that they would. Based on the findings, the paper demonstrated an evaluative approach to the overall effect of the research methods chosen for the article, and the impacts they had on the outcomes to offer satisfactory results.

Some of the core issues of discussion were the mission and vision of the church, the calling to serve, regular time spent in devotion, the degree to which the leaders feel that they can serve as ministry leaders, optimism, feedback, and engagement by those in ministry with the participants. The analysis found that indeed the African American church did face a plethora of issues just as the literature review had indicated²¹². There were notable differences between generations and the conceptualization of altruism and servant leadership. The participants, however, demonstrated improvements after the workshops on the five core pillars of leadership, as indicated in the research objectives and questions. The respondents worked to address potential solutions to the problems they faced. Issues such as dealing with bureaucracy, increasing inclusivity, honest engagement, and ethical practice are some of the core issues that arose. Nonetheless, as Clarke²¹³ proposes, there is a need for the church to invest in modalities that can significantly change its stakes in leadership.

²¹² Avent, Janeé R., and Craig S. Cashwell. "The Black Church: Theology and Implications for Counseling African Americans." *Professional Counselor* 5, no. 1 (2015). 81

²¹³ Clarke, A. 1D. *A Pauline theology of church leadership* (Vol. 362). (A&C Black, 2008), 52.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Implications

Leadership within the church setting requires extensive consideration. The role that the church plays within the society is essential and hence, must entail leadership methodologies that support the overall objectives of its existence. Human beings believe that their church and, consequently, their faith is a crucial part of their journey towards heaven. Their devotion premises on the hope that it will lead to a favorable outcome in the afterlife. Thus, when churches fall short of the expectations of the Christians that they serve, the consequences can be demoralizing. In the black church, where leaders play elaborate roles in facilitating and advocating for the social and political empowerment of the community, leadership wrangles can be disillusioning²¹⁴. The lack of common ground on issues such as politics, health systems, and social changes have imperiled sections of the community leading to the fracturing of a marginalized society. The church is unable to breed a new generation of leaders who will match the conviction and action of Andrew Young and Martin Luther King, according to Jones²¹⁵.

The research findings indicate that there are significant problems with the leadership within African American churches. The very foundations on which the African American church stands upon is unable to withstand the wrangles between leadership²¹⁶. First, the leaders do not create avenues where they can dialogue about the challenges that they face as leaders in line with the church's needs. The lack of engagement creates room for the proliferation of church politics, which

²¹⁴ Avent, Janeé R., and Craig S. Cashwell. "The Black Church: Theology and Implications for Counseling African Americans." *Professional Counselor* 5, no. 1 (2015): 85

²¹⁵ Jones Sr, Anthony D. "Leadership and Spirituality: The Indivisible Leadership of African American School Administrators as Pastors." *ProQuest LLC* (2010); 741

²¹⁶ Barnes, Sandra L. "'The Alpha and Omega of Our People': A sociological examination of the promise and problems of the contemporary Black Church." In *Free at Last?*, (Routledge, 2017), pp. 150-152

may sensationalize positions. Secondly, lacking conflict resolution mechanisms create a perpetual cycle of issues that the church prefers to silence. According to Rainer²¹⁷, within some dominations, it is not permissible to critique the actions and positions of leadership members in the church, such as the clergy. This lack of accountability on their part precipitates crisis because even when their opinions remain problematic, the congregation supports them. Thirdly, the inhibition of altruistic calling has allowed selfish gains to control the nature of sermons and the degree of pastoral and congregation interaction²¹⁸. The rise of the prosperity gospel has led to preachers seeking enrichment and encouraging members to give in a manner akin to preying on their desperation for hope.

These findings, as seen in the research, denote that perhaps the crisis within the leadership in churches lies with the identity that they possess, and the inability of leaders to meet the competencies desired to deliver. One can look at it from the history of slavery. Jones²¹⁹ denotes that the church gave the slaves hope for change. This narrative for liberation exists even today as many black people struggle with finding their place in American society²²⁰. The increase in calls for social justice and church leadership that seeks to capitalize on materialism and maintaining favorable positions such that they cannot upset their financiers gives room for conflict. Unfortunately, the voices of those who seek reform do not achieve the traction that they need.

²¹⁷ Rainer, Thom S. *Who moved my pulpit?: Leading change in the church*. (B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 63

²¹⁸ Benefiel, Margaret, and Michelle Abbott. "SPIRITUALITY AND LEADERSHIP." *The Routledge International Handbook of Spirituality in Society and the Professions* (2019); 22

²¹⁹ Jones Sr, Anthony D. "Leadership and Spirituality: The Indivisible Leadership of African American School Administrators as Pastors." *ProQuest LLC* (2010); 741

²²⁰ Moore, Arlesha S. "The role of the Black church in Black Lives Matter, (Ferguson, MO." 2017), 98

Not only is the church failing through its leaders, but the members as well. Perhaps in what seems like desperation, they do not ask for more accountability, responsibility, and steadfastness from their clergy. They focus on peripheral issues such as finances as opposed to character, systems, and structures that would foster good leadership and governance in the church. Clergy have additionally used their position to manipulate their congregation by giving false promises of hope²²¹.

It would be imperative for the African American church to re-evaluate the position of the church and its leaders, according to Wilcox²²². The clergy require support structures that would allow them to focus on developing their altruistic calling, cementing their place with God, enabling the congregation to lead more spiritual and meaningful lives, and guide the community in times of adversity. The development of leadership programs can be a credible solution in assisting the achievement of these goals; however, they must be contextually specific to the needs of the African American population. Notably, they must break the barriers to communication and allow open discussion on the problems facing the church, and the best solutions which are based on Christian teachings. The church must deal with the derailing factors of leaders decisively by acting on issues such as mistrust, narcissism, and poor relationships (McCall & Lombardo, 1983).

Lastly, it would be necessary for the church to evolve with the social changes that are visible in the community²²³. Some of the positions of religious leaders have alienated them not only from the church but also the calling they have on the community. The handling of the

²²¹ Ibid, 95

²²² Wilcox, Clyde. "The Black Church and Politics." *The Bible And The Ballot Box: Religion And Politics In The 1988 Election* (2019); 85

²²³ ²²³ Price, Veronica. "Challenges Posed by Traditional Ordination Processes for Female Ministers in the Black Church and an Exploration of Alternatives." (PhD diss., Drew University, 2019), 10

HIV/AIDS crisis is one such instance, where misinformation and poor stances led to further disenfranchisement and stigmatization of the black community amongst themselves according to Pingel & Bauermeister²²⁴. On the other hand, the millennial generation thinks and acts differently from the boomers. The church can work on leadership methods that encourage the former to share their ideas, while still imparting Christian values in them. Being different, therefore, must not allow blanket condemnation. Therefore, clergy must explore inclusivity in their efforts to encourage a unified church.

5.2 Comparativeness

The analysis of the findings and those of the literature review are very similar. The results identify that there are significant leadership challenges in the church that pertain to calls, values, and approach to issues facing the community. The data shows that a lack of participation is a significant challenge. As notes that at the start of the implementation of the intervention, some leaders showed extensive control over the group; however, as sessions encouraged communication, the team was successful in sharing ideas and opinions. As Williams²²⁵ posits, the lack of communication breeds numerous problems that include poor relationships and the inability to resolve conflicts. Hence, the leadership approach motivates or inhibits the occurrences of struggles.

Based on the great man theory, church leaders get their authority from God. However, the research has shown, they require more than a calling to be leaders. They must cultivate and plan

²²⁴ Pingel, Emily S., and José A. Bauermeister. "‘Church hurt can be the worst hurt’: Community stakeholder perceptions of the role of Black churches in HIV prevention among young Black gay and bisexual men." *Culture, health & sexuality* 20, no. 2 (2018): 218.

²²⁵ Williams, Dean. *Real leadership: Helping people and organizations face their toughest challenges*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005); 36

for what they wish to achieve as clergy and as a ministry²²⁶. The exhortation of everything falling into place via prayer must have corresponding actions to build capacity. Halliman²²⁷ explains that the variables within leadership needs in the church are thus impactful to the struggles of the church. A great leader can look at the variables and see the opportunities for change, but they must do so with an understanding of the consequence of their actions.

The lack of support structures to cultivate leadership within churches is a cause for concern. The intervention method identified that some of the leaders lacked self-awareness that would facilitate the identification of problems facing the church, as well as the solutions. Johnson²²⁸ presents that toxic leaders are likely to hold wrong positions, abuse their power, and use deception to maintain their authority. These antics undermine Christian values as well as what a leader ought to be. Leaders must work on building the capacities to increase their self-efficacy as individuals called to do God's work. Moreover, they must receive training that would allow them to make strategic plans for their ministry, resources, and growth trajectory while maintaining their servant leadership. As Hartwig & Bird²²⁹ pose, leaders must work towards their teams being effective in their management roles in the church.

5.3 Learning from Process implementation

Implementing an intervention requires extensive planning and comprehension of the issues that it ought to tackle. In this case, one of the outstanding lessons was on the need for collecting accurate data that can help in anticipation of the conditions that are likely to affect the project.

²²⁶ Samuel, Priyanka, and Smita Pandey. "Life satisfaction and altruism among religious leaders." *International Journal of Indian Psychology, Volume 6, Issue 1,(No. 2) 6* (2018): 89.

²²⁷ Halliman 2014, 68

²²⁸ Johnson, Craig E. *Meeting the ethical challenges of leadership: Casting light or shadow*. (SAGE Publications, Incorporated, 2019), 52

²²⁹ Hartog & Bird 2015, 96

Fertman & Allensworth²³⁰ discuss that data is crucial in interventions. The assessment of information on similar endeavors can help better map the risks that it would involve seeing the project through. Analysis of past project data and other knowledge pools can further sensitize a project designer on the critical areas of focus on the study. This study learned within the process that its risk assessment and methodology were somewhat faulty and hence, would have imperiled the entire process. Such information was foreseeable, but without proper education became a challenge.

The second core lesson learned was the necessity of evaluation methods that are in line with the interventions. Each process, according to Fertman & Allensworth²³¹, requires an ongoing review regarding its formative, impact, and outcome stages. This evaluation ought to happen consistently and continuously. It assesses the degree of resource utilization and the degree to which the current actions align with the anticipated outcomes of the study. While the project did conduct this analysis, it was not as detailed as it ought to be over the sessions. While in later episodes, there was a significant improvement, it would have been beneficial to start earlier.

The third major learning issue was regarding the respondents themselves. At the start of the session, some dominant parties emerged and seemed to control the narrative. This occurrence was in line with predictions by Johnson²³², which asserts that some leaders may superimpose their authority on others. This setting allowed investigating the impact of power relationships within the church. The study denoted that the reverence of older members in the church, and, according to

²³⁰ Ibid, 255

²³¹ Fertman, Carl I., and Diane D. Allensworth. *Health promotion programs: from theory to practice*. (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 252

²³² Johnson, Craig E. *Meeting the ethical challenges of leadership: Casting light or shadow*. (SAGE Publications, Incorporated, 2019), 52

scripture, acted as an impediment to leadership²³³. The bible demands respect for elders. While this is noble, the conditions within leadership encourage the inclusion of various parties irrespective of age, who can offer information on an issue. Perhaps, the dominance of older groups may be the core reason why the church is unable to evolve and serve the current generational needs of millennials²³⁴.

A second trend emerged as well, whereby the role of women had less reverence²³⁵. The sample size was at a ratio of one woman for every two men. The study used word of mouth to get the respondents, and hence, this composition was not moderated by the researcher. However, in biblical teachings, women ought to respect men. Their credibility lies in their support role, and this conceptualization of their mandate could explain why women are not in many leadership positions²³⁶. Within the broader African American context, women are running households and moving up the career ladder. It would be appropriate for them to acquire such positions of power in the church and perhaps create a community that is more sensitized to the needs of the most considerable portion of their congregation. The leadership gap in women is an issue of concern, and the church and community can work together to find the best ways they can ordain women into leadership²³⁷.

²³³ Reeves, Kenneth. *The Whole Church: Congregational Leadership Guided by Systems Theory*. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), 63

²³⁴ Davis, Melvin Andrew. *The millennial generation: Building a legacy in the African American rural faith community through connectional relationship*. (Drew University, 2017), 52

²³⁵ Price, Veronica. "Challenges Posed by Traditional Ordination Processes for Female Ministers in the Black Church and an Exploration of Alternatives." (PhD diss., Drew University, 2019), 10

²³⁶ Price, Veronica. "Challenges Posed by Traditional Ordination Processes for Female Ministers in the Black Church and an Exploration of Alternatives." (PhD diss., Drew University, 2019), 10

²³⁷ Ibid, 20

The implementation process demonstrated the necessity to cultivate an understanding of various concepts in leadership. The participants showed better responses to ideas of servant leadership and altruism when they understood what these terms meant and their applicability²³⁸. This process enlightened on the nurture versus nature argument. While leaders may have natural talent and God's calling that has put them in that position, they may require the cultivation of skills to fathom better what strategies will work (Bell, 2019). Interventions, therefore, must not make assumptions on these concepts, but rather conduct sessions that build on the literacy of their respondents on the tenets of their campaign according to Fertman & Allensworth (2016).

5.4 Application in other Settings

The findings of the leadership struggles mirror those within organizational settings. Despite having to contextualize the environment within the church or the office, the underlying factors of leadership are mostly similar. The results reflect the necessity of investing in conflict resolution mechanisms that are evidence-based and tackle the observed problems directly. The lack of awareness of issues can lead to inadequate methods of intervention and resolution. It is critical to get to the fundamental problem areas to the structure support systems. For instance, as Slater & Mallett ²³⁹argues, conflict can be an opportunity for growth and development. The existence of the current issues facing the leadership of the African American church is perhaps the best place to start in finding ways to deal with current problems as well as mitigate future effects.

²³⁸ Crowther, Frank, Margaret Ferguson, and Leone Hann. *Developing teacher leaders: How teacher leadership enhances school success*. (Corwin Press, 2009), 13

²³⁹ Slater, Rachel, and Richard Mallett. "Recovering From Conflict." *People, Aid and Institutions in Socio-economic Recovery: Facing Fragilities* (2017): 19.

Secondly, churches, just like other organizations, must invest in strategies that can increase the effectiveness of leadership interventions²⁴⁰. The lack of adequate planning for ministerial functions goals and objectives imperil the achievement of goals. Similarly, when the approaches used by a business to navigate a market are faulty, their trial and error approach is likely to lead to a plethora of issues and eventual business collapse. The creation of plans as part of the strategic leadership role is vital to the survival of any entity²⁴¹. Moreover, it permits the isolation of the best areas to encourage resource investments and optimization for better outcomes. The inductive approach to business functions can then help one to think back to what they need to achieve their goals.

Thirdly, organizations must consider the socio-economic conditions within which they operate, as Tur-Porca et al.,²⁴² propose. The analysis of the church denotes a change in the needs of African American communities and their spiritual and material needs. They require a place that serves immediate needs for better social justice and the achievement of equality. The leadership deficiencies have left them lacking persons who can help this role and perhaps led to a decline in church numbers. Businesses operate under the same modalities. The change in attitudes of the consumer markets can shift the scales for companies making their influence as brands less effective²⁴³. Preparation and assessment are vital in creating a plan that has both reactive and

²⁴⁰ Scholey, Jeanine. "The Impact of Self-Leadership on Performance: A self-leadership intervention evaluation." (PhD diss., ResearchSpace@ Auckland, 2017), 85

²⁴¹ Ackerman, Gary L. "Leadership and the adoption of innovative planning." In *Strategic Leadership in PK-12 Settings*, (IGI Global, 2020), 65.

²⁴² Tur-Porcar, Ana, Norat Roig-Tierno, and Anna Llorca Mestre. "Factors affecting entrepreneurship and business sustainability." *Sustainability* 10, no. 2 (2018): 452.

²⁴³ Thekdi, Shital A., and Terje Aven. "A methodology to evaluate risk for supporting decisions involving alignment with organizational values." *Reliability Engineering & System Safety* 172 (2018): 84.

proactive strategies that can best align values, attitudes, and needs of the persons who patron churches and businesses with organizations and institutions from which they seek brand equity.

5.5 Emerging and future research areas

In understanding the core issues of assessment in leadership within the African American church, it is vital to look at the rapidly changing social tide. George & Bird²⁴⁴ denotes that there is a decline in the church numbers over the past few years. One may look at this shift by asserting that the role of the church has failed to evolve with the needs of the society. The identity of the black person in America is shifting, especially among the youth. For instance, in yesteryears, they had much fewer rights and freedoms. Despite their current disenfranchisement, today, they have better prospects at getting jobs, education, live in good neighborhoods, and mingle with white people with far less restriction²⁴⁵. The identity of the church has primarily been to give hope for a better day since slavery. However, the conditions of slavery are long gone, and the community is slowly achieving rights that those 200 years ago could barely imagine.

Again, Thomas²⁴⁶ argues that globalization and the internet have created exposure to new ideas and ways of thinking. Access to information has encouraged innovation and adoption of scientific methods and data and interculturalism whereby one can be open to the diversity that the world has to offer. People are no longer confined to the narratives that have been passed down unto them from their elders but are seeking new worldviews that, in some cases, challenge the church.

²⁴⁴ George, Carl F., and Warren Bird. *How to Break Growth Barriers: Revise Your Role, Release Your People, and Capture Overlooked Opportunities for Your Church*. (Baker Books, 2017), 32

²⁴⁵ Thomas, Ashley Christina. "The millennial experience in the Black Church: A mixed methods study on communicating religious and racial/ethnic identity." (PhD diss., 2017), 12.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 21

The leadership of the African American church is perhaps yet to awaken to this new condition, or instead, their evolution is much slower, according to Eliasson²⁴⁷. The changing identity of the black man finds that the rigidity of the church can be an inhibitor to their actualization and spiritual expression²⁴⁸. Leaders are unable to see an opportunity to take on new roles as they condemn some of the innovations and ideas under the information age. For instance, the initial association of AIDS/HIV with sin, despite information on the ways the virus spreads, could be an example of the diminishing understanding of leaders of new age challenges and how to contextualize them²⁴⁹. With more people willing to question the position of the church leaders, clergy must be welcome to this scrutiny and encourage it to create rapport and fathom engagement in the church. Researchers in the fields of theology can investigate how the conflict between the identity of African Americans and the church contributes to leadership struggles.

5.6 Summative Conclusion

For the study, it has become apparent that many leaders of the church are facing an excessive number of problems in their quest to achieve better control and management of their churches. The Black church has had challenges within the social and political landscape within which it operates. The church has been falling on its civic responsibilities of offering support and generating advocacy for issues facing the community. Again, the proliferation of classism has signaled divisions where there exist stratifications in the willingness of pastors to work with certain communities that seem to be better off. However, the leadership of the church has sometimes taken

²⁴⁷ Eliasson-Nannini, J. M. (2017). *Pastoral Misconduct: The American Black Church Examined*. (Walden University, 2019), 41.

²⁴⁸ Cone, James. *Black theology and black power*. (Orbis Books, 2018) 8.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 25

steps to alienate themselves from the core issues facing black people by taking stances that have imperiled marginalized groups within the community.

The findings indicate that at the liturgical and pastoral level, church leaders have let their responsibility to be servant leaders slip. The lack of altruism, demand for monetary compensation via the spread of the prosperity gospel, poor leadership skills, misuse of power, and failure to adopt servant leadership have diminished their effectiveness in handling issues related to spiritual growth in the church. Nonetheless, there is hope. The use of interventions that teach the core principles of leadership and generate genuine conversations on the power dynamics and problems facing the church is crucial. It is necessary to enforce open community-wide dialogue on how to facilitate leaders of Black churches to take on their spiritual and social mandates as they ought to, and the benefits it would bring in improving the lives of African Americans.

i

APPENDIX I
Participant Session by Session Questionnaire

What were the key things that grew on you in the session today?
What were things easy to comprehend?
What were the issues challenging to understand?
What are your sentiments towards today's content?
Did you enjoy the session? Why or why not?
In what ways would you wish the sessions would improve? Provide suggestions

Please indicate the degree to which you assess the session today, which five being the most favorable and one being the least favorable

Interactive	1	2	3	4	5
Educative	1	2	3	4	5
Enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5
Effective	1	2	3	4	5
Useful	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX II

The Liberty University Institutional
Review Board has approved
this document for use from
9/18/2019 to 9/17/2020
Protocol # 3871.091819

CONSENT FORM

The Struggle for Leadership in the Black Church: Developing Relationships that Foster Positive Change

Curtis L. Johnson

Liberty University

School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study on the struggle for leadership in the African American church. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a 30-65-year-old African American pastor or lay-leader within an African American church. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Curtis L. Johnson, a doctoral student at Liberty University's School of Divinity, Doctor of Ministry program.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to examine the complementary phenomena of leadership struggles among pastors and lay leaders. The mission also consists of developing and implementing leadership support systems that promote harmony within the ministry.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: 1. Participate in an interview that will take approximately twenty-five minutes to complete. 2. Complete a questionnaire that will take approximately ten minutes.

Risk: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participating in this study.

This research may offer help for African American pastors and leaders to create healthy leadership environments that promote harmony and growth within the ministry. Without effective leadership, it is challenging to manage an athletic department and lifestyle in this demanding profession and remain productive.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report, I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the documents.

Your name and other identifying information will be requested as part of your participation. Pseudonyms will be used to conceal participant identities. Any information will be kept confidential. I will conduct the interviews in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation. All information collected electronically will be stored on a password-locked computer in a locked file with password access only. All other information will be stored in my office at Mount Bethel Baptist Church behind two locks. Exactly three years after this research project is completed, all documents will be destroyed. The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 9/18/2019 to 9/17/2020 Protocol # 3871.091819

Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision about whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any questions or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you decide to remove, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contact and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Curtis L. Johnson You may ask any questions you have now. If you have problems later, you are encouraged to contact him at cljohnson6@liberty.edu or by cell at 254-319-6559. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Mario Garcia, at mgarcia3@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Green Hall 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

APPENDIX III IRB Approval Form

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 18, 2019

Curtis L. Johnson
IRB Approval 3871.091819: The Struggle for Leadership in the Black Church: Developing Relationships That Foster Positive Change

Dear Curtis L. Johnson,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. [45 CFR 46.101\(b\)\(2\)](#) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

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