

An Assessment of the Effect of Leadership Styles on Divisions in the Church:
Insights from Selected Pentecostal Assemblies of God in Bahati District

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ABSTRACT

From the historical account of divisions experienced by PAG church in Kenya, the church has disintegrated into nearly ten different denominations. This division is a symptom of problems in the church. The broad objective of the study was to make an assessment of the effect of leadership styles on divisions at PAG. The study sought to achieve the following specific objectives: to identify the causes of division in church from the perspective of leaders and members of local Assemblies in Bahati District; to establish the leadership styles practiced by church leaders as perceived by fellow leaders; to determine the relationship between perceived leadership styles and division in the church; to propose a model for effective Christian leadership for church unity.

The researcher applied descriptive research design. Multi-stage sampling technique was used. A sample of 8 local Assemblies, representing 20% of the population size was targeted. Data was collected from a total of 48 respondents comprising of board members of the 8 local Assemblies using a structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed using percentage frequencies as well as mean scores and correlation analysis.

The major findings showed that church property and finances were the leading causes of division in church, followed by leadership wrangles and church doctrine. Majority of the respondents identified charismatic leadership, servant leadership and democratic leadership styles as the dominant styles adopted by church leaders at PAG. The relationship between division in church and leadership styles was not statistically significant.

Division at PAG was caused by poor financial stewardship. This manifest in disagreements associated with the management of church property and finances. The second leading cause of division at the church was perceived leadership wrangles by

some church leaders that sow seeds of discord in the church. To some extent, division at the church is also caused by disagreement over doctrinal issues. However, church constitution did not cause division in the church.

It was concluded that Church leaders at PAG practiced a combination of three leadership styles. However, neither charismatic leadership, democratic leadership, servant leadership nor political leadership styles was significantly related to division in the church. In order to consolidate the unity fostered by church leaders, it was proposed that Biblical Stewardship that puts emphasis on spiritual accountability be practiced as a model for effective Christian leadership for church unity and for stemming potential future divisions at Pentecostal Assemblies of God churches in Kenya. Further study was recommended on the area of corporate governance as a dimension of good stewardship.

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENT	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS	xi
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xii
 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	 1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study	5
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Scope of the Study	6
1.8 Limitation of the Study	6
1.9 Assumptions of the Study	6
1.10 Limitations of the Study	7
 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	 8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 The Concept of Unity and its Importance to the Church	8
2.3 Causes of division in the church	9
2.4 Leadership Styles and the Context of the Church	11
2.4 Relationship between Leadership Style and Division in Church	15
2.5 Theoretical Framework	17
2.6 Conceptual Framework	19

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	21
3.1 Research Methodology	21
3.2 Research Design	21
3.3 Location of the Study.....	21
3.4 Target Population.....	22
3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size	22
3.6 Research Instruments.....	23
3.7 Validity of the Research Instruments	23
3.8 Reliability of the Research Instruments.....	23
3.9 Data Collection	23
3.10 Data Analysis.....	24
3.11 Logistical and Ethical Consideration.....	24
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	25
4.1 Introduction.....	25
4.2 General Information.....	26
4.3 Causes of Division in Church	32
4.4 Leadership Styles that Manifest among Church Leaders of PAG	33
4.4 The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Division in the Church.....	36
4.5 Effective Model of Christian Leadership for Fostering Church Unity	37
4.6 Discussions	37
4.7 Summary of Findings	41
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	42
5.1 Introduction.....	42
5.2 Summary.....	42
5.3 Conclusions.....	43
5.4 Recommendations for Improvement	44
5.5 Recommendation for Further Studies.....	45
REFERENCES	46
APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE	50

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 <i>Respondents' Views on Manifestation of Leadership Styles at PAG</i>	35
Table 2 <i>Relationship between Perceived Leadership Styles and Division in Church</i>	36