

The Role of Elders in AIPCA Church Leadership

By

Wambui Samuel Mburu

B.Th., South Africa Theological Seminary, 2009

Major Research Project
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Leadership



Pan Africa Christian University

October, 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role elders ought to play as far as church leadership is concerned. This was done in line with reference to credible references from literary works that have the Bible as the main source. These provided the theoretical framework against which the findings were analyzed and conclusions drawn.

The researcher used questionnaires to collect primary data from the targeted group of people. Those targeted were members of the church, elder, pastors and both current and retired bishops from all over the country where AIPCA Church is established. From the study, it was evident that AIPCA as a church does not have specific role for elders in the leadership of the church and that the initial purpose to commission elders was not clear. It also emerged that there was specific role they were to play but the tradition of commissioning elders without a clear leadership mandate has been carried from generation to generation. Contrary to the biblical prescription for elders' role as leaders of local churches, AIPCA elders only assist anywhere when requested to do so by pastors.

The research recommends that the role of elders be clearly defined and included in the church constitution to guide future commissioning. In order to address those already commissioned as these may be too many to serve on clear leadership roles as in the biblical model, it is recommended that they be referred to by a different title and assigned a clear ministry or service role rather than as elders. It is also recommended that the church provides a framework for elders to serve and to be accountable as leaders of local congregations.