



Leadership Challenges and Performance of the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya



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ABSTRACT

Leadership studies continue to elicit approaches from many quarters; documented evidence demonstrates the existence of leadership studies in a number of organizations but there are limited studies carried out on the leadership practices in the church. This study, examines leadership practices and the performance of the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya. It uses the Transformational leadership theory, Behavioural theory and the Emotional intelligence theory. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design, with 90 questionnaires being

distributed randomly among the members of the church within Meru County. The study finds out that, there is a strong relationship between leadership styles, the educational levels of leaders, the communication style of leaders and the performance of the church.

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Introduction

Leadership has quite a number of definitions. In fact [Stodgill \(1974\)](#) claims that there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it (7). Since there are so many researchers who are interested in this field who are always seeing it from different perspectives. In fact, Northouse claims that leadership has become one of the most sought after discipline with a lot of attention; [Burns, 1978](#)) believes that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth (2). [Fleishman, Mumford, Zaccaro, Levin, Korotkin, and Hein \(1991\)](#) concur with burns by noting that in the past 50 years there as many as 65 different classifications systems developed to define leadership. This means that the field is interesting and continues to draw different dimensions on how to look at it from different scholarships.

[Northouse \(2015\)](#) categorizes the definitions of leadership according to centuries. He claims that the definitions of leadership appearing in the first three decades of the 20th Century emphasized control and centralization of power with a common theme of domination. While in the 1930s the traits or focus of defining leadership was influence rather than domination. During this era, leadership was also identified as the interaction of an individual's specific personality traits with those of a group. In the 1940s, leadership was defined as the behaviour of an individual while involved in directing group activities ([Hemphil, 1949](#)). In the 1970s the group focus gave way to the organizational behaviour approach, where leadership became viewed as 'initiating and maintaining groups or organizations to accomplish group or organization's goals.' ([Rost, 1991](#)). At this time however, [Burns's \(1978\)](#) definition was widely accepted and adopted. He defined leadership as the reciprocal process of mobilizing persons with certain motives and values, various economic political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers' (425). According to Northouse, the 1980s were infiltrated by a large number of scholarly and popular works on the nature of leadership this came up with a number of definitions in the discipline which anchored on themes like: do as the leader wishes, influence; where a leader was looked at with the word influence from all angles, traits and transformation.

[Northouse \(2015\)](#) claims that there are still debates over the difference between leadership and management in the 21st Century; he however, argues that emerging research state that the process of leadership whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal rather than developing new ways of defining leadership. According to [Northouse \(2015\)](#) the emerging leadership approaches include: Authentic leadership, spiritual leadership, servant leadership, and adaptive leadership.

Activities of leadership behaviours help clarify expectations for direct reports, help direct reports achieve desired rewards and avoid punishments; and help facilitate desired outcomes. Effective leaders make use of both transformational and transactional leadership in that transformational leader behaviours enlist enthusiasm and commitment, while transactional leadership behaviours achieve compliance with leader requests ([Avolio and Bash, 1988](#)). Leaders therefore have to be more skillful in evaluating followers' motives, anticipating their responses to an initiative and estimating their power bases to ensure success of such initiatives. These leadership skills are necessary if implementation proper management of

organizations. Faced with a number of backdrops leadership in churches today fail to achieve its mandated core values.

Leadership approaches have a direct impact on the performance of any organization; be it a financial or non-financial organization. Many studies have been carried out in the field of leadership but there are significantly few documented studies on the impact of leadership and church performance.

According to [Anneli Jerkku \(2012\)](#), the modern era of protestant Christianity was introduced in East Africa in 1844 by a German Lutheran missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf who was an employee of the Church Missionary Society ([Jerkku, 2012](#)). Later on there was the proliferation of other missionaries and especially after the colonization of Africa ([Barrett et al 1973](#))

The Africa Inland Mission (AIM) is recorded in history as having been one of the earliest missions begun in Kenya. Which was then followed by the Pentecostal assemblies of God which was began in 1910 by Kenyan Christians and was subsequently supported by the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) ([Jerkku, 2012](#)). The Pentecostal Evangelistic fellowship of East Africa (PEFA) is recorded to have been founded in 1962; this united the International Missionary Assemblies which were founded in 1963 and the Elim Missionary Assemblies which were founded in 1942. According to Soderland, Ake, and Pirkko Sodurlund in 'Letter from Vantaa to author' it is the American evangelist T.L Osborn who founded PEFA. The East African Revival Fellowship which started in Rwanda earlier reached Kenya in 1937 ([Jerkku, 2012](#)). It is documented that many other denominations including, the Presbyterians, the Babtists, and the Salvation Army.

The PAOC which had established base in the western parts of Kenya organized for the Kenyan entry permits for the first Finnish Free Foreign Mission (FFFM) missionaries in Kenya. The FFFM had degenerated from The Finnish Pentecostal Movement (FPM). The first missionaries of FPM went to field without an organized institution behind them and therefore their support was irregular and hence the formation of FFFM. According to [Jerkku \(2012\)](#), the first FFFM missionaries in Kenya were two sisters namely; Alma and Eava Raatikainen; and Paavo Kusiman and his wife Vieno who began their work in 1949. The arrival of these missionaries was the introductory journey to the formation of the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya. However, before the formation of the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, the FFFM laid foundation which included: planting the first church in Oluso, in South Nyanza in 1950. This work was done by Mzee Hezron Ouko and missionary Paavo Kusmin. Later they rented out some other premises at Koru since they could not buy land in Kenya then, ([Jerkku, 2012](#))

Although the FFFM worked for sometimes with the PAOC, they got to a time when they wanted to work on their own. This required them to have their own charter which they applied for in 1952 and subsequently got in 1953. This application coincided with the purchase of the Koru property ([Toivio, 1966](#)). After its establishment, the missions sought out more missionaries who helped expand its faith across Kenya where they met new challenges including polygamy, clitoridectomy, early forced marriages, eating blood among many others, ([Jerkku, 2012](#)).

According to ([Jerkku, 2012](#)), The FFFM's rapid expansion in Kenya was brought about by its reliance on the Holy spirit and its leading which was the most remarkable characteristic of the FFFM missions in Kenya. The second factor according to ([Kosgei 2000](#)), the FFFM

missionaries came to Kenya at a transitional time where a large number of Kenyans was yearning for freedom since no one knew what awaited them, the zealous missionaries' worked hard to reach out to a large number of Kenyans. And then finally, there were new Christian groups who evangelized in outlying areas and even the opposition from the Catholic missionaries did not hinder people from accepting Christ wherever the gospel was preached, (Oyugi,2000)

The rapid expansion of the church meant that people came from different tribes in Kenya and hence the need to change the name and structure of the organization to accommodate Kenyan names and Kenyan which were desired for the organization. Lauri Pesu suggested that the name be changed to "Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (FGCK) (Soderlund, 2000) which was accepted unanimously although it did not mean that everything was going to change to Kenyan. On March 2, 1962, the Full Gospel Church of Kenya was exempted from registration under certificate (no. 1151) which meant that no one else would use that name in Kenya as a society. This was the origin of the name Full Gospel Churches of Kenya. And although it uses this name, is still operates under the FFFM only that now under the management of the nationals.

Full gospel churches of Kenya (FGCK) is a locally registered church. It was started by missionaries from Finland in 1949. Presently, it has over 700,000 members. The church leadership is organized in the following structures: the national pastoral council (NPC) which is the highest decision making organ with the national executive council NEC as its executive arm comprising of the general overseer, general secretary national treasurer and 11 regional overseers. The church is organized in 11 regions, 75 districts and 545 local church assemblies and 5000 branches spread across all national administrative district except Mandera district in North Eastern Kenya. This study examines the leadership challenges facing this church in Meru town.

Statement of the problem

Leadership determines the performance of any organization. Organizations are mostly set up to achieve specified goals; be it financial or non-financial. This study was set up to establish the effects of leadership on the performance of The Full Gospel Churches of Kenya with a selected area of study being Meru County.

Purpose of the Study

This study was intended to establish leadership challenges facing the full Gospel Churches in Meru County.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to investigate the effects of leadership on organizational performance. The specific objectives of the study are to;

1. Establish the influence of leadership styles of leaders involved in the management of the church affairs in Meru County.
2. Determine the influence of the behaviour of the leaders involved in the management of the Full Gospel Churches in Meru County.
3. Examine the influence of the education level of the leaders involved in the management of the Full Gospel Churches in Meru County.

4. Determine the influence of communication skills with the leaders involved in the management of the Full Gospel Churches in Meru County.

Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

1. The leadership styles employed by leaders of the church has a strong influence on its performance
2. There is no relationship between the behaviour of the leaders and the performance of the church
3. The education levels of the leaders of the church has no impact on the performance of the church
4. The communication skills employed by the leaders of the church have a lot of influence on its performance

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions;

1. Do the leadership styles of church leaders affect the church's performance?
2. Does the behaviour of leaders involved in the management of the church affect its performance?
3. Does the education level of leaders involved in the management of the church affect its performance?
4. Do the communication skills of the leaders in the church affect the running of the church?

Justification for the Study

The church is the pillar of moral growth in any society. The number of churches which are being established off the missionary churches like The Full Gospel Churches of Kenya is on the rise in Kenya today. Today, this begs the question why? Do the leadership styles of the leaders contribute to these growths? Out of discontentment from the member followers? This study will seek to fill this gap on the question of leadership and the mushrooming churches so as to find an effective way of growing the church but under one umbrella.

This study is important because it would give a scholarly contribution on what is ailing the churches today and offer possible solutions to the continuing gap between the leadership and the followers.

We have had very few documented studies on the leadership the church, many studies are interested in political and business organizations, yet the church, just like any other organization has leadership structures and challenges which seek attention and solutions. This study was intended to give the church and its leadership a scholarly attention so as to find solutions to the challenges it faces

Literature review

Overview of Leadership

Mills (2005) defines leadership as a process by which one person influences the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours of others. Leaders set a direction for the rest; help others see what lies ahead; help in visualizing what might be achieved; encourage and inspire others. Without leadership a group of human beings quickly degenerates into argument and conflict, because individuals see things in different ways and lean toward different solutions. Leadership therefore helps to point in the same direction and harness efforts jointly. Leadership is hence the ability to get other people do something significant that they might not otherwise do and it energizes people toward a goal. A leader is only a leader if there are followers, although followers may only come after a long wait. A leader will not only walk at the front but also chose the direction.

Mills further asserts that organizations without leadership move too slowly, stagnate, and lose their way, and if decision-making is timely, complete, and correct, then things will go well. However, a decision by itself changes nothing unless its implementation is done in a timely and effective way.

Challenges Faced by leaders in churches today

Small churches have many problems which they have to tackle. Different authors have tried to list the main problems that small congregations face. Peter Wagner, *Leading Your Church to Growth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979), 2017 Presentation by Rev. Joseph Toomey at a small church “Makeover Over” seminar held at North hills Alliance Church in Pittsburgh, PA, March 2006, author’s notes, Wampum, PA. Rev. Toomey works at the Western PA District Office as the district’s church planter and revitalization director. And their thoughts represent just a portion of those that have weighed in on defining these challenges.

Mavis, in his book, came up with three limitations that a number of churches face. Describing these limitations, he says, “Most of the smaller churches, whether tiny or larger, carry on their work in a social-psychological atmosphere that is characterized by limitations.” (18) He then states the three limitations that he found. There is usually a lack of denominational or community status, shortage of manpower and that there is usually limited finance in smaller churches.”¹⁹

Anthony Pappas, gives what he feels are the “Six Challenges for leaders in Churches today.” (20) The first of these challenges is “Traditionalism threatens the future of our small churches.”²¹ By this he holds that what the church has always done will continue to be the way things will always be done. Nothing will change, and the church will continue to function under the same rules, programs, and government. The second challenge he presents that small churches must overcome is “Niceness’ threatens our small churches.” (22) He means here that we are so closely bound to one another in smaller churches, either because of being related to one another, or because we consider ourselves a family, that we are afraid of hurting one another’s feelings. Therefore, we would never say anything to someone where they might be offended even if they needed.

Anthony G. Pappas,(Herndon, VA: An Alban Institute Publication, 2000), 7.to hear it. The third challenge that Pappas feels is that the small church faces is “a ‘club’ mentality threatens our small churches.” (23) Here, he talks about the idea that churches become so

much like a family that the members do not want to grow because that would require adding new people to the family, and that is not acceptable. The fourth challenge that he feels small churches must overcome is “paralysis in the face of conflict threatens small churches.” (24) He discusses the fact that when conflict comes up in small churches that they do not know how to deal with it. They are a family and those that lead the family (the patriarch and matriarch) have not allowed them to fight, or discuss, think as adults, but as children with their parents. He states, “Progress is frozen in many small churches because the members have never learned to fight in a Christ-like manner, that is, they haven’t learned to speak their truth with love, to strive for win-win outcomes, or to subordinate their positions to God’s will.” (25) The fifth challenge for small churches is “negative ‘scripts’ threaten small churches.” (26) His thought here is that small churches get this “woe with me” attitude. They feel the denomination does not care about them, but only the larger churches. They feel that any new person who begins to attend their church will be lured away by a larger church. They feel that they cannot compete with the larger churches, so why try. There is just a strong negative attitude that has to be overcome. The last challenge he gives for small churches is “the cost of our buildings is a threat to small churches.” (27) By this, he means that smaller churches have a hard time with the finances of their church. Just the basic costs of running their church building can become overwhelming for some small churches.

Lyle Schaller describes six areas of the church that need to be looked at, and adjusted before growth can come to churches of any size. Each of these points he presents as a chapter in his book, (44) *Ways to Increase Church Attendance*. They are: Worship services, Review the schedule, Operational policies, Power of programs, Real estate considerations and church buildings, Institutional factors. (28) He breaks down the different things that churches need to do to increase their attendance as he moves through these chapters. He believes that if these areas are improved, then growth will naturally follow.

Dean McIntyre, in his article on the growth of churches listed eight challenges for small-membership churches. These are: Psychology; by this he means that there is an attitude that pervades small churches that hinders them from growing, buildings; small churches are many times stuck in buildings that don’t have good facilities, leadership development and training; this is a problem because the talent pool is so small, money for conferences and training; Finances are a problem in small churches, yet they are expected to pay the same price for conferences that larger churches pay, the struggle for technology; again, finances play a major role in being able to pay for new or better technology, the travel gap; finances again hinder the small church from sending leaders for training if it requires airfare or hotel reservations, burnout and over commitment; everyone has to be involved, and therefore, it creates opportunities for some to suffer from burnout and being overcommitted, the shallow talent pool; not enough people to do the things that larger churches are able to do (choirs, musicians, etc.).²⁹

Joseph Toomey, a pastor who has done extensive work with pastors of small churches and is the current director of church planting and church growth in the Western Pennsylvania District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, stated to the author what he perceived to be the five biggest problems that small churches face as (in no particular order): Finances, Lack of workers, Tradition, dominant personalities and Church buildings.³⁰

He also stated that pastors in small churches get dragged down by the church. They end up feeling useless, and not feeling that they can accomplish anything. The negative attitudes of the church are passed onto the pastor, and he becomes defeated.

The four main problem areas identified by the above authors and experts of small congregations are: Dominant Families and/or Individuals, Tradition, Finances, and Lack of Trained Personnel in the Church. It is evident that in the above studies researchers have majorly focused on the external sources in the management and leadership of the church. This study, seeks to fill the gap that has been left out by these studies by focusing mainly on leadership and the aspects of leadership and how it affects the growth of the church.

Organizational Performance

Defining and predicting organizational performance remains a complex task and a research objective in management (Pearce & Robinson, 2011). Performance is the integration of three broad dimensions of efficiency, effectiveness and adaptability in the delivery of organizational results. It assures that an organization contributes to its mission and remains responsive to the needs of its stakeholders (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Performance is the strife to outdo an organization's competitors in an effort to satisfy its stakeholders (Porter, 1987). It relates to how the entire organization successfully undertakes specific functions to achieve the desired outcomes or results as measured against its pre-defined targets that are unique to its mission. Conceptualization and operationalization of organizational performance in church leadership is somehow elusive because many people look at the financial performance of an organization as the key determinant of its success and argue that churches are not supposed to be for profits. Review of related literature indicates that different approaches and methods have been utilized to measure and conceptualize an organization's performance (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1986; Kaplan & Norton, 1992; Harris & Mongiello, 2001; Neely et al., 2002; Phillips & Parry, 2006; Ottenbacher, 2007).

Sink & Tuttle (1993) argue that the performance of an organization is made up of a complex of various interrelated criteria including effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, innovation and profitability. However, there is a rich variety of performance initiatives and debates taking place within the church sector. The financial and non-financial indicators that could be used to operationalize performance include: infrastructure, increasing numbers, financial strengths, efficiencies in operations, and followers' satisfaction

Organizational performance is tracked and measured in multiple dimensions such as financial performance, improved production, innovative cost reduction, customer satisfaction, internal business processes, learning and growth (Venkatraman & Prescott, 1990; March & Sutton, 1997). Hubbard, (2009) argue that measurements of organizational performance beyond financial indicators are still in its formative stages. We claim that this could be an explanation as to why there are few studies in the performance of the church globally.

Organizational performance cannot be divorced from its driving forces and this construct has become a recurrent empirical research theme, with scholars and practitioners tirelessly endeavouring to establish its predictor variables and measurements (Lenz, 1981; Grant, 2003). Organizations in the same environment have demonstrated varying performance, with some being more successful than others. Indeed variability in the performance of

organizations in the same industry and environment can be partially attributed to the different leadership styles employed by the leaders.

Continuous performance is the objective of any organization because only through performance, organizations are able to grow and progress. Knowing the determinants of organizational performance is important especially in the context of the current environmental changes because they enable the identification of those factors that should be treated with an increased interest in order to improve organizational performance.

Theoretical framework

This study was guided by the Transformational leadership theory, Behavioural theory and the emotional intelligence theory.

The Transformational leadership theory makes assumptions that people will always follow a person who inspires them. That a person with great vision and passion can achieve great things and that the way to get things done is by injecting enthusiasm and energy to the led. This theory helped us to find out the influence of the leaders in management of the churches in Meru County. Since a transformational leader, seeks overtly to transform an organization, where there also comes a tacit promise to the followers that they will also be transformed in some way- perhaps to be more like the amazing leader. Whereas there have been outcries at various churches and conflict in leadership where the blame mostly has been thrown back to the congregant this study looks at the role of the leaders in the effective management of the church.

The behavioural theory makes assumptions that leaders can be made rather than being born and that successful leadership is based in definable, learnable behaviours. One of the main challenges that the literature review has revealed is that churches are held like clubs with members and that is believed that the club membership is hereditary. This study sought to look at the behaviours of the church leaders in Meru County and how they contribute to the challenges in the church.

The emotional intelligence theory assumes that to be successful one requires the effective awareness, control and management of one's own emotions and those of other people. Emotional intelligence links strongly with concepts of love and spirituality: bringing compassion and humanity to work and also and also to multiple intelligence which illustrates our efforts in human resource planning, job profiling, recruitment, interviewing and selection, management development and many more.

Conceptual Framework

Both leaders and those being led have needs which must be taken care of. It is important that leaders perform their roles not just to their advantage but also to the fulfilment of the vision of their subjects as well as their organizations. The absence of leadership is equally dramatic in its effects. Without leadership, organizations move too slowly, stagnate, and lose their way. Much of the literature about organizations stresses decision-making and implies that if decision-making is timely, complete, and correct, then things will go well. Yet a decision by itself changes nothing. After a decision is made, an organization faces the problem of implementation—how to get things done in a timely and effective way. Problems of implementation are really issues about how leaders influence behaviour, change the course of

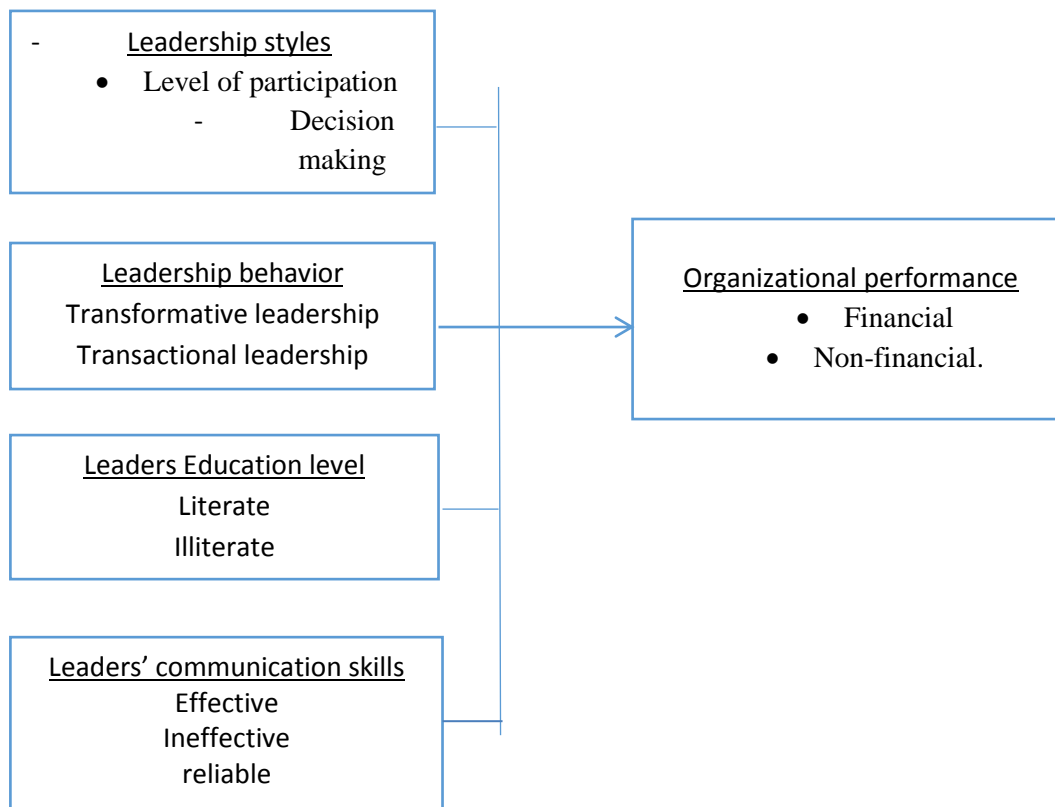
events, and overcome resistance. Leadership is crucial in implementing decisions successfully (Mills, 2005).

The main objective of the church is spiritual nourishment, growth and development of souls and nurturing talents. While the other objectives may include numerical growth, infrastructure, financial stability and establishment of income generating projects. However, this may not be realized if the leadership involved in the running of the churches is not effective. Leaders use different styles in their day to day activities. Some leaders accommodate participation of others; others have the know it all and say it all attitude; while still others have a do not care attitudes. These are commonly known as democratic, autocratic and laissez faire leadership styles. A leader may be transformational or transactional. This can only be shown by the way they behave as they interact with their followers or others leaders. Transformational leaders are more attached to the welfare of their followers including achievement of higher needs while transactional leaders are more concerned with achievement of the objective of that which is being implemented. Effective leaders make use of both transformational and transactional leadership in that transformational leader behaviours enlist enthusiasm and commitment, while transactional leadership behaviours achieve compliance with leader requests. These different leadership styles impact differently in implementation of programmes or projects (Burns, 1978). The research sought to establish how the leadership styles by the various leaders involved; the behaviour of leaders involved; the literacy level of the leaders involved in the leadership of the churches in Meru County.

Some level of literacy is required which can be through academic qualifications or through support training in any kind of leadership. Academic qualification in this case refer to literacy achieved in a school setting leading to awarding of academic certificates while support training refer to formal or informal training not necessarily leading to awarding of certificate but rather to create awareness and understanding.

This study made an assumption that, education levels of the leaders involved in church and that effective communication influence the running of day to day church activities. The study also made assumptions that communication skills used by the leaders have direct influence on the performance of the church. The leadership styles and the leaders' behaviours were also the other components that the study made assumptions that they have a direct influence on the performance of the church.

This concept is represented in Figure I below;



As indicated on the conceptual framework, leadership styles, leaders' behaviour, Leaders' educational level and leaders' communication skills are the independent variables that the study will seek to find out their influence on the performance of churches in Meru County. These are the variables that the study will concentrate on although there might be other moderating variables like government policies including on the churches; the contextual issues and the availability of funds as discussed in the literature review but the focus of the study is on the mentioned areas.

Methodology

Research Philosophy

Chisholm (1911) argues that philosophy has two main branches, namely: ontology and epistemology. These two main viewpoints inform how people come to know what they know. Ontology is concerned with the overall nature of things and identifies what actually exists. It is the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming, existence, or reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations (Harvey, 2006). Ontology deals with questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

Epistemology is concerned with the study of human knowledge, explaining its origin, possibility, nature and scope (Saunders et al., 2009). The debate on what constitutes reality and how we can know about such reality still continues. Scholars in social sciences such as Goll and Sambharya (1995), Weber (2004), Guo and Sheffield (2006) hold that epistemology and empirical research revolve around two philosophical paradigms, namely phenomenology (qualitative) and positivism (quantitative).

Phenomenology holds that the subject matter of social sciences, people and institutions, are fundamentally different from that of natural sciences. This philosophy believes that reality and the individual who observes it cannot be separated and does not begin from an established theory (Nachmias and Nachmias, 2004). It reflects an inquiry process of understanding social problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, reporting detailed views of informants – building knowledge. The researcher draws meanings by interpreting experiences that are observed during his/her involvement in the phenomena and gains understanding of the situation under study (Blau, 1964).

Positivism philosophy, on the other hand, is a scientific objective approach of hypotheses testing with the intent of either rejecting or failing to reject the null hypotheses (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). It is based on objective methods that allow for the operationalization of concepts, generalisation of results and replicability (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). According to Riley et al. (2000), the methods employed by such research are objective, impartial as well as value free (free from human values and beliefs). This implies that, the focus must be on that which is observable. It also seeks to explain and predict relationships between variables and believes that the researcher is independent from what is being researched (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008).

Science is the superior way of knowing, understanding and predicting human experiences and that the positivistic scientific method rules must be adhered to else the researchers and their findings will be disregarded (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). The study adopted the positivism philosophy based on the fact that in order to empirically establish the relationships between variables, hypotheses were formulated and tested and findings generalized (Gupta, 2008).

Research Design

We adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. This research design presents a snap shot of manifestation of variables in a large number of subjects at one point in time (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). It is used to describe characteristics of variables, analyse their frequency, distribution, features and observable phenomena of the study population. The purpose of the study was to examine leadership challenges facing the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya. The adopted design offered the researcher the opportunity to collect data across a number of churches in the selected region.

Population of the study

To avoid bias in the study; data was collected from nine (9) different churches that are spread within Meru County, Where at least ten (10) respondents were selected from different churches from each of which meant that a whole population comprised of ninety (90) samples drawn from the church members.

Sampling Procedure

If a study has to cover the whole target population, a lot of resources would be required. Slavin (1984), observed that due to limitation of time, resources and energy, a study can be carried out from a carefully selected sample to represent the entire population. It has been recommended that at least 20%-30% sample is a good representation (Borg and Gall,

1989). On this aspect we felt, due to the constraint of time and resources, there would be a challenge in acquiring the ninety (90) targeted populations across the county since the entire county is vast and therefore, we used random sampling in selected churches to determine the church leaders who will participate in the study.

Data collection

Although the initial plan was to use both primary and secondary data, this study heavily relied on primary data because accessing secondary data was quite challenging. Secondly, the data collected was not from the entire region but a selected sample due to reasons explained above. Primary data on leadership styles, leadership behaviour, leaders education level, leaders communication skills and organizational performance was gathered using a structured questionnaire based on the concepts of the study and other instruments used by previous researchers (Awino, 2011; Machuki and Aosa, 2011; Letting 2011; Ongore, 2008). The questionnaire, with five sections dedicated to general information and each of the study variables, was administered through drop and pick later method. We designed a questionnaire that used a 5-point Likert type scale ranging between (1), not at all, and (5), to a very large extent.

Data Analysis

Several techniques and tools are used to prepare, analyse and report the collected data. Data preparation for completeness and consistency included: questionnaire checking, sorting, editing, coding, transcription, cleaning and finally analysing to derive information related to each of the study variable. Data is analysed using descriptive statistics, multivariate regression and correlation analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores and standard deviations, are computed to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest in the study.

Inferential statistics like simple, multiple and stepwise regression analysis, hypotheses testing and other means of comparing study elements, was also be used. Pearson's coefficient correlation (r), which ranges between -1 and $+1$, is applied to establish relationships between study variables. Correlation reveals the strength and direction of the relationships (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Canonical correlation analysis (CCA) is the general procedure for investigating the relationships between two sets of variables. CCA is a way of measuring the linear relationship between two multidimensional variables. It finds two bases, one for each of the co-aligned variables that are optimal with respect to correlations. It finds the corresponding correlations in which the correlation matrix between the variables is diagonal and the correlations on the diagonal are maximized. The dimensionality of these new bases is equal to or less than the smallest dimensionality of the two variables. Multiple analyses of variance (MANOVA) was then be used to yield the coefficient of determination (R^2). Multiple linear regression analysis is used in the model to express the relationship between the dependent variable (performance) and the study predictor variables. This provided the proportion of variance in the independent variable accounted for by the combination of predictors (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

Response Rate

A total of ninety (90) questionnaires were distributed to different followers of the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya within Meru township, out of which seventy four (84) were returned giving a response rate of 84.09 per cent. According to [Awino \(2011\)](#), a response rate of 65 per cent is acceptable. According to [Mugenda et al. \(1999\)](#) a 50 per cent response rate is adequate, 60 per cent is good and above 70 per cent rated as very good. Based on this assertion the response rate of 84.09 per cent for the study can be said to be very good.

Reliability and Validity Test

Reliability and validity tests are key indicators of the quality of the data collection instrument. A measure is reliable when different attempts at measuring something converge on the same result ([Zikmund et al., 2010](#)). Impliedly, reliability is therefore an indicator of an instrument's internal consistency. Findings of the pre-tests' reliability and validity are presented under this section.

Reliability Test

There is consensus among researchers that for a scale to be valid and possess practical utility, it must be reliable ([Peterson 1994](#)). Reliability is the quality of measurement that tests consistency and repeatability of study measures. It is a measure of the degree to which instruments yield consistent results after repeated trials ([Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003](#)). A measure is considered reliable if it is consistent and able to yield the same results over and over again assuming that what is being measured is not changing, or other researchers have similar observations. One of the most popular reliability statistics used in social sciences is alpha coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) is the most commonly applied estimate of a multiple-item scale's reliability ([Kaliappen & Hilman, 2013](#)).

A pilot study using leaders from different churches was subjected to alpha coefficient. The three leaders were randomly drawn from the population of ninety. The test was done to gauge the internal consistency or average correlation of the study tool. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges between zero (0) and one (1). The closer the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to one (1), the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale, while the closer the coefficient is to zero (0), the less the internal consistency of the items in the scale ([Cooper and Schindler, 2011](#)).

Different research authorities use different cut-off points of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. [Davis \(1964\)](#) recommends a minimum of Cronbach's coefficient of 0.5 for predictive research where the population group is between 25 and 50. [Kaplan and Saccuzo \(1982\)](#) on the other hand postulate that basic research and applied research should have minimum Cronbach coefficients of 0.7. These authors suggest that any values between 0.5 and 0.8 are adequate to accept internal consistency while [Nunnally \(1978\)](#) proposes that a value of not less than 0.6 should be acceptable. The study adopted a cut-off value of 0.6 and the results of reliability test were as presented in the table below

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Coefficient	Alpha	Decision
Leadership styles,	9	0.95		Reliable
Leadership behaviour	9	0.94		Reliable
Leaders education levels	5	0.76		Reliable
Leaders communication skills	5	0.88		Reliable
Performance	8	0.76		Reliable
Overall		0.86		Reliable

The Cronbach's coefficient results for all the study variables were above 0.75 with an overall value of 0.86. The reliability tests carried out in the table above show that the lowest alpha was 0.76 on education level and performance and the highest was on leadership with alpha of 0.94. The measurement scale for leadership behaviour, leaders education levels, leaders communication skills, and performance of The Full Gospel Churches of Kenya confirmed high consistency and reliability.

Validity Test

Validity is the extent to which a research instrument is able to measure what it is expected to measure (Kaliappen and Hilman, 2013; Cooper and Schindler, 2011). It is the amount of systematic or built-in error in measurement (Norland, 1990). Validity is the accuracy of a measure, the extent, the degree or the criteria to which evidence and theory truthfully represents a concept (Zikmund et al., 2010).

There are four ways of establishing validity namely, content, construct, face and criterion related validity (Zikmund et al., 2010; Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Kaliappen & Hilman, 2013). Content or logical validity measures the extent to which the instrument provides adequate coverage of the all the important aspects of the study variables. Construct or concurrent validity is about whether results of a new questionnaire are consistent with results of established measures. Face validity establishes whether at face value, the questions appear to be measuring the construct. This is largely a "common-sense" assessment, but also relies on knowledge of the way people respond to survey questions and common pitfalls in questionnaire design. Criterion or predictive validity confirms whether scores on the questionnaire successfully predict a specific measure. The choice on the type of validity to use depends on the objectives of the study.

The main issue was to answer the question of whether or not the research instrument was comprehensive enough to collect all the information needed to address the purpose and objectives of the study. To answer this concern, validity of the structured questionnaire was established through literature review, feedback from a panel of experts and field tests. In order to validate the research questionnaire, an extensive literature review was done to ensure a good operationalization of the study constructs. Friends and colleagues too helped in assessing the validity of the tool.

The questionnaire was then piloted by administering it to three (3) respondents to establish if the respondents could answer with ease. Pilot testing of the tool helped in

establishing readability, identifying items required to measure the concepts, and ensuring that questions cover all the areas of study.

Findings and discussions

The broad objective of the study was to establish to leadership challenges facing the full Gospel Churches in Meru County. To achieve this objective, four specific objectives were set and corresponding hypotheses formulated. To test the hypotheses, data was obtained using a structured questionnaire. For each study variable, respondents were presented with descriptive statements in a 5-point Likert scale and were required to indicate the extent to which the statements applied in their various churches.

Leadership styles

Leadership styles are related to the different approaches that leaders use in the running of the day to day affairs of the church. There are numerous styles that leaders use at various levels of management and organizations. On the basis of the implications of leadership styles at the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, respondents were requested to provide rate several statements on a 5-point Likert scale of either 1 (Not at all), 2 (Less extent), 3 (Moderate extent), 4 (Large extent) or 5 (Very large extent) in the last three years

Leadership styles

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	CV %	(t-value)	Sig. (2-tailed)
A) Transparency						
The leaders do not have underhand dealings in management	71	4.07	.834	20.5	41.14	.000
There is a clear roles to different categories of leaders	70	4.04	.751	18.6	45.07	.000
There mechanisms that regulate leaders within the organization	70	4.10	.745	18.2	46.04	.000
Allocation, alignment and deployment of the church resources is determined by a number of leaders involved.	71	4.01	.837	20.9	40.43	.000
B) Accountability						
The leaders bear full answerability on the functioning and performance of the organisation.	70	3.76	1.109	29.3	28.34	.000
Members declare their interests when joining the leadership of the church and avoid conflict of interests with the organisation.	69	3.93	1.019	25.9	32.01	.000
Leaders transact openly when it	68	4.00	1.270	31.8	25.98	.000

comes to the church operations.						
Minutes and records of the church deliberations are available to the top management.	68	4.34	1.045	24.1	34.22	.000
There are clear organisational performance indicators that guide the management.	70	4.17	.851	20.4	41.02	.000

Average mean score

4.04

The results in the table above indicate that the overall mean score for leadership styles was 4.04. From the Likert scale this meant that the respondents agreed to a large extent with the statements on leadership styles. This indicates that there is a strong relationship between the leadership styles and the performance of the church.

Leaders' behaviour

These are related to the general presentation of the leaders and how they carry out their day to day activities in relation with their followers. On the basis of the implications of leaders behaviours at the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, respondents were requested to provide rate several statements on a 5-point Likert scale of either 1 (Not at all), 2 (Less extent), 3 (Moderate extent), 4 (Large extent) or 5 (Very large extent) in the last three years

Leaders Behaviour

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	CV %	(t-value)	Sig. (2-tailed)
A) Personality						
The leaders are well groomed	71	4.07	.832	20.5	41.14	.000
The leaders handle their own affairs with decency	70	3.04	.851	18.6	45.07	.000
The leaders representation is a true reflection of the teachings	70	3.40	.6 45	18.2	46.04	.000
The leaders do not quarrel anyhow in public	71	4.01	.837	20.9	40.43	.000
B) Mentorship						
The leaders are concerned with mentoring their followers	70	3.76	1.109	29.3	28.34	.000
The leaders are concerned with the personal growth of the followers	69	3.93	1.019	25.9	32.01	.000
Leaders do not participate in gossips with other church members	68	4.00	1.270	31.8	25.98	.000
Leaders do their work effectively	68	4.34	1.045	24.1	34.22	.000
There are clear leadership indicators that guide the leaders on their work	70	3.17	.851	20.4	41.02	.000

Average mean score

3.74

The results in the table above indicate that the overall mean score for leaders' behaviour was 3.74. From the Likert scale this meant that the respondents did not agree to a large extent with the statements on leaders behaviours. This indicates that the null hypothesis 'There is no relationship between the behaviour of the leaders and the performance of the church' was rejected.

Leaders' education levels

This basically relates with the training that the leaders at The FGCK have; whether it is formal or non-formal as discussed earlier. On the basis of the implications of leaders education levels at the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, respondents were requested to provide rate several statements on a 5-point Likert scale of either 1 (Not at all), 2 (Less extent), 3 (Moderate extent), 4 (Large extent) or 5 (Very large extent) in the last three years

Leaders' educational levels

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev	CV %	(t-value)	Sig.(2-tailed)
Did not attend school	68	2.9	.832	20.5		
Did not go beyond primary school	69	3.3	.851	18.6		
Attend post-secondary training	67	3.5	.645	18.2		
Holds a degree	68	2.2	.645	18.7		
Holds a post-graduate training	66	2.0	.837	20.9		

Average Mean score 2.7

The results in the table above indicate that the overall mean score for leaders' educational level was 2.7. From the Likert scale this meant that the respondents did not agree to a large extent with the statements on leaders behaviours. And therefore the null hypothesis 'the education levels of the leaders of the church have no impact on the performance of the church' was rejected.

Leaders' communication skills

This relates with the ability of the leaders at the FGCK to communicate effectively and efficiently. On the basis of the implications of leaders education levels at the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, respondents were requested to provide rate several statements on a 5-point Likert scale of either 1 (Not at all), 2 (Less extent), 3 (Moderate extent), 4 (Large extent) or 5 (Very large extent) in the last three years

Leaders' communication skills

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	CV %	(t-value)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Comprehensiveness						
The leaders approach to communication is apprehensible	72	4.26	.856	20.1	42.28	.000
There are well laid down communication channels by the leaders	72	4.42	.801	18.1	46.82	.000
Leaders are well understood when communicating	72	4.17	.822	19.7	43.00	.000
The leaders use approaches that are suitable to all the followers while communicating	72	3.72	.967	25.9	32.65	.000
There are place that followers can get the leaders' information easily in the church	72	4.21	.918	21.8	38.89	.000

Average mean score

4.156

The results in the table above indicate that the overall mean score for leaders' communication skills was 4.156.7. From the Likert scale this meant that the respondents did not agree to a large extent with the statements. And therefore this means that the hypothesis 'The communication skills employed by the leaders of the church have a lot of influence on its performance' was accepted.

Organizational performance

Organizational performance is referred to as efficiency and effectiveness in the utilization of resources to achieve desired objectives (Pearce and Robinson, 2011). Organizational effectiveness is the measure of how successfully organizations achieve their missions whereas efficiency is the cost per unit of output (Porter, 1987). There are various measures of organizational performance that have been identified for both short and long-term objectives between financial and non-financial performances as illustrated in the tables below.

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	CV %	(t-value)	Sig. (2-tailed)
A) Financial Perspective						
Generated revenue is adequate for the churches operations	69	2.86	1.115	38.9	21.269	.000
There has been substantial income from new donors.	70	2.23	1.206	54.1	15.462	.000
The church member's contributions sustain the churches operations.	70	3.33	1.176	35.3	23.679	.000
The churches operations do not need external funding	67	3.10	1.046	33.7	24.284	.000

B) Non- Financial Performance						
The church has opened branches in many other areas.	71	3.21	1.013	31.6	26.712	.000
The numbers of the members to the church have been increasing steadily	71	3.51	1.107	31.5	26.700	.000
The church has acquired more assets for its own use.	70	2.71	1.276	47.1	17.802	.000
The church has grown considerably, with good asset base.	70	3.33	1.176	35.3	23.679	.000

Discussions

There are high entries in the leadership styles which affects the standard deviations. This is indicative that there are different leadership styles which the leaders have been employing in the leadership of the church. However, the component of accountability received fewer entries while the component of record keeping received the highest standard deviation. The leaders' education levels received the least entries in the entire component which is again indicative that most of the leaders in the church leadership were least educated while the leaders approach to communication received a high mean score with the largest deviation of < 0.802 which is a clear indication that the church is performing dismally. This can be attributed to the leaders' education levels and the leaders' behaviours since they are the hypotheses that received the least entries in the entire study.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study, set out to examine Leadership Challenges and Organizational Performance at the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya in Kenya with Meru region being its cases study. It uses the Transformational leadership theory, Behavioural theory and the Emotional intelligence theory. To carry out the study in selected number of Churches in Meru County; it concludes by justifying that leadership styles, the educational levels of leaders, the communication style of leaders and the leaders behaviours have direct influence on the performance of an organization. While this study may not be conclusive in the church leadership studies, we might recommend that future researches may carry out studies on leadership within its context in the church rather than looking at leadership from the leaders' perspectives but the environment in which they lead.

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