

The Effect of Pastor's Theological Training on the Growth Challenges of Pentecostal Churches in Kenya: A Case Study of Selected Churches in Nairobi

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Abstract-*This study aimed at determining the effect of pastor's theological training on the growth challenges Pentecostal churches in Kenya focusing on selected churches facing growth in Nairobi. The objectives of the study were to investigate the extent the pastors have received theological training, establish effect of theological training on equipping pastor for the ministry, and evaluate effect of pastors' theological training on church growth. The study was conducted in the branches of four study churches namely, Kenya Assemblies of God, Worldwide Gospel Church of Kenya, Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, and the Pentecostal Evangelism Fellowship of Africa which experienced growth challenges. The study adopted qualitative research design. The study targeted church leaders with more than two years of stay in the church. The study used proportionate stratified sampling to select 84 respondents with equal representation from the study churches. Face-to-face individual interview guides were used to collect data. The findings were analyzed thematically using content analysis. The study established that most of the pastors had theological training. However, three pastors lacked theological training. The study established that respondents noted that the training was important in equipping the pastors for the ministry. Respondents also noted that the theological training was important in enabling the pastor deal effectively with all issues in the church. The trainings according to respondents were important in building the pastors' confidence in analyzing the bible and bringing the truths and misconceptions that members may have on spiritual matters, besides the pastor is able to articulate the word of God in a better way. Respondents noted that theological training has helped the pastors to provide leadership in a better way. The respondents noted that pastor's theological training enhanced church growth as the pastor was vast in skills necessary for running the church. The study found that the pastors with o training had their churches experience frequent conflicts which negatively affected the church. The study recommended that theological training should be made mandatory for pastors.*

Key Words: Pentecostal churches, Conflicts, conflict resolution, church Growth

Introduction

Pentecostalism is continuing to attract attention world over, but more particularly among the theologians and specifically those interested in missiology (Thiga, 2021). This has prompted call for research to determine its growth and or effects. This is since Pentecostalism is the fastest growing in the contemporary world (Atoyebi 2010). It has been found to have large followings in Northern part of America, South America, the Asian world, Africa, and the world at large

(Asamoah-Gyadu 2007:128; Anderson, 2013). Andersons (2013) notes that Pentecostalism is not only acknowledged as a global movement but has emerged as a third world or non-western movement particularly a massive growth has been witnessed in Africa.

Pentecostalism spread widely in Africa because it is about the Holy Spirit which in resonates many African beliefs and practices, they were more connected with the unseen spirits. Atoyebi (2010) listed flexibility of the spirit, the communal participation in worship and spontaneity in worship and the manifestation of the Holy Spirit as the reasons why Pentecostal churches spread in Africa.

Kenya witnessed remarkable growth of the Pentecostal churches overtaking even the mainstream churches like Anglican and Catholic (Gathuki, 2015; Thiga, 2021). As a result, the movement has become a prominent feature in the country. In the urban area, it is found in every corner in nearly every tenth building, in classrooms, open fields, uncompleted buildings, garages and so on (Jando, 2014). As such, PFRPL (2006) notes that Pentecostalism constitutes a big number probably half the Kenyan population.

However, a closer examination reveals that there has been significant growth (Lamb, 2016; Thiga, 2021). The decline in the growth in the church has been recorded in both the developed and developing countries (Parsitau, 2014). For instance, in Germany, the situation has been described as a church crisis due to declining membership (Olson, 2008). In America, Christianity is no longer influential, thus creating an emergence of a new cultural condition, which Olson (2008) calls the American church crisis. The decline has been recorded in the areas of church attendance only 17.5% of US population attending Sunday church services (Olson 2008), prayers, religious affiliation, bible study and generally belief in God for decades (Thiga, 2021).

In Africa, there are churches which are enjoying growth particularly numerical growth, for instance in Nigeria there is the Redeemed Christian Church of God and Winners Chapel and in Ghana is the International Central Gospel Church. The South African Assemblies of God has equally experienced tremendous numerical growth (Thiga, 2021). There and many more others have experienced numerical growth in which their membership has continued to increase. However, in most of the urban centers in and major cities, there are tens of thousands of smaller churches found in every street with little sign of growth (Thiga, 2021; Atoyebi, 2010; Greenway & Mashau, 2007).

In Kenya, it's no difference. While other churches have consistently recorded growth, where they have grown from a humble beginning to rise to the category of mega churches, for instance the Mavuno Church which in 2005 had just 100 members today has over 2,000 memberships. The other is the Bishop Alan Kiuna's Jubilee Christian Church with over 8,000 members. Other churches in the urban centers have been experiencing challenges in church growth (Thiga, 2021). For instance, The Kenya Assemblies of God, Karen Branch folded up in 2008 after the number of its congregation dwindled to extinction (Shaw & Gitau, 2016). The Calvary Worship Center has also been experiencing growth challenges as its membership has remained 150 members for a long time (Show & Gitau, 2016).

Theological training has been cited as one of the determinants of church growth challenges. According to Masamba (2013) church growth was directly affected by the theological training of the pastor. Theology is to know God and His will along with His action. The knowledge of God then is the primary content of theological education or training. According to Teji (2014), the most

ignored doctrine today in the churches is sound teaching on pneumatology. There are inadequate regulations about starting a church and anyone can start a church without theological training or even without a strong academic qualification. Most charismatic believers may not see the need for theological training after the infilling by the Holy Spirit and being anointing for various gifting and ministries (Masamba 2013).

Statement of the Problem

The expansion and growth of Pentecostal churches in Kenya in general and in the urban areas have for long been described as tremendous. They are attracting many individuals to their churches through their acts of miracles, mass media, charisma, and prosperity gospel, among others. These churches grow into mega churches in just a few years of establishment. A case in point is the Neno Evangelism of Pastor Ng'ng'a, the Jubilee Christian Church of Bishop Kiuna, PEFA church at Githurai 45 Kimbo, among others (Thiga, 2021). However, in the recent past, the case is not the same as many churches are either experiencing taunted or declining growth of its members. These churches started by family members as congregation remain small several years after with membership hardly exceeding 10 members (Kagama and Maina 2014). Participation in church/Christian activities such as giving, attending fellowships and evangelizing are declining with statistics showing that less than 10% of the faithful participate in the church activities. The congregations today including the Pentecostal churches have changed due to education and higher literacy levels; and now have professionals from different fields and academicians. Members are more inquisitive and interrogate their own church teachings, beliefs, and traditions. Church members are no longer accepting the mantra "thus says the Lord" at face value; neither are they accepting all that is said by the pastor as "gospel truth". They are increasingly demanding for pastors that they feel can minister to them effectively. Theological training therefore becomes important as lack of it may be a source of conflict between the congregation and the pastor. It is upon this backdrop that the current study embarked on investigating the effect of pastors theological training on the growth challenges of the Pentecostal churches in urban Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the extent which the Pentecostal church pastors have received theological training,
2. To establish effect of theological training on equipping Pentecostal church pastor for the ministry
3. To evaluate effect of pastors' theological training on growth of Pentecostal Churches in Kenya.

Significance of the Study

It is anticipated that this study will be beneficial first to the Pentecostal Church Leadership as they will get to understand how the pastors theological training influence the growth of Pentecostal churches in urban centers in Kenya and probably take action to address the problems. Secondly are the Pentecostal church members will gain understanding of the effect pastors theological training has on the church growth and as such acknowledge the importance of the pastors theological training to the church. Thirdly, the stakeholders such as the congregation or partners will benefit from the study as they will understand why some of these churches fail to grow despite

the support they receive and therefore will direct their energies on the pastors theological training. Finally, to the scholars, the study will contribute to the existing body of literature on the effect of pastor's theological training on growth challenges of Pentecostal churches in urban centers in Kenya.

Literature Review

Overview of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism has transformed Christianity a great deal with the movement tracing its origin to the 1st Century after Jesus' disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost when they spoke in other tongues, performed miracles, and prophesied and began to spread the church to the whole world (Acts 2) (Dayton, 1987). However, the present Pentecostalism has its origin in Topeka Kansas in 1901 January when students at Bethel Bible School, under the tutelage of C. F. Parham were filled and spoke in other tongues (Parsitau, 2014; Thiga, 2021). The message of the Holy Spirit baptism was taken to William J. Seymour, a black Holiness preacher in Houston, who caused the famous Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles in 1906 after preaching to a small gathering of people who started speaking in tongues, prophesying, and healing (Adogame, 2010; Burgess and Van-der-Maas 2002; Anderson 2004; Synan 2001).

Just after a short a period, the Pentecostal ministries was in every part of the world, marking the launch of the movement (Anderson, 2013; Thiga, 2021). The manifestation of the movement was in Latin America, Russia, India, Finland, England, and Africa (Anderson, 2013; Thiga, 2021). In a nutshell, the movement had established itself in every part of the world just after the 1906 upsurge. Today, majority of the Pentecostalism is dominant in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. For instance, survey by PFRPL (2006) on religious demography among 10 countries namely South Africa Kenya and Nigeria among others has shown how three blocks, Asia, Africa, and Latin America have become the world leaders in Christianity and Pentecostalism in particular (Adogame, 2010).

Pentecostalism in Africa started more than a Century ago, but radically shook the religious land scape in the 80s (Anderson, 1980; Thiga, 2004). The birth of the Pentecostalism in Africa is equally traced on the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles in 1906 with more activities in South Africa and Liberia (Kalu, 2008). Most Pentecostal churches in the sub-Saharan Africa were established in the early 20th Century (Kalu, 2008; Kay, 2008). During the period, the Assemblies of God in Africa recorded tremendous growth (Wilson, 2006; Thiga, 2021).

According to Parsitau (2014), Pentecostal churches and ministries have come up in Kenya from 1980 with local founders and international founders mainly from Europe and America. The international evangelists who came to Nairobi and other towns in Kenya with charismatic powers to preach and perform miracles are Benny Hinn, Morris Cerrullo, Emmanuel Eni, and Reinhard Bonnke, among others. During this time there was tremendous growth in Pentecostalism in Kenya where all the Pentecostal churches gained as these preachers did not have denominational boundaries.

Overview of Church Growth Challenges

According to McGavran (1970) church growth refers to the planting and care of self-propagating churches. The theological perspective is that to be saved, people must hear and receive the Gospel (1 John 5:12). McGavran therefore place evangelism as a top priority in the definition of church growth. The aim of evangelism for that matter is to convert people to believe and become committed members of the church leading to increase in the numbers of members (Wagner 1981).

Church growth refers to both the qualitative and quantitative growth (Bontrager and Showalter 2006). In the biblical context, mostly the church growth is founded and recorded in Act and some in the epistles for instance in Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, and Thessalonica. Church growth is mentioned mainly in numerical terms in Acts 1:15 and 2:41. Spiritual growth is found in Acts 4:43 and 4: 23-30. The church growth is described in terms of fellowship in Acts 4: 42; 4: 32 and 4: 34-37 (Cotton III 2006).

Pastor's Theological Training and Churches Growth

The responsibility of training is largely placed under the care of secular authorities. However, unlike the secular education, Christian education goes beyond the normal training as it is beyond the training standards set by man. According to Molongola (2002), the Bible is a source and complete curriculum from which Christian institutions, Bible schools and seminaries organize their training materials. It is through the ministry of teaching that the believers are equipped to witness Christ to the world. Theological education should enable Christians to know their God. It helps them to understand their purpose thus fulfilling their theological task, and further to exercise their faith more effectively. Further, theological education helps in carrying out of ministry effectively. This study adopts the latter purpose of the theological training due to its usefulness in the effectiveness in carrying out the ministry.

Little is known about the education of Jesus. However, there is no doubt that the family lived up to its responsibilities ensuring that the young child Jesus was taught matters of the law and the prophets. This was evidenced when the Pharisees and Sadducees questioned Jesus' authority to teach and preach while at the same time marveled at His mastery of the scriptures and interpretation when He started to preach and teach, this is even though Jesus 'never studied' in a Rabbinic school (John 7:15) (Kanagaraj March 2005, Jeyaraj 2002). It was the practice that only disciple of an accredited teacher was entitled to expound scripture the law (Barely 2001).

Jesus together with his family made several trips to Jerusalem where they attended the temple. It is through these visits that He was being educated and on one occasion He astounded His elders with His learning (Luke 2:47). He also used to go to Synagogue (Luke 4:16). Thus, His education consisted of the teaching He received in the Synagogue services and the temple at Jerusalem on the Great festival occasions (Morton, 2008). Most of the pastors today take John 7: 15 and say that Jesus was uneducated, and His teachings were from His father. But according to Anderson (2007) it can be assumed that Jesus was educated through available Jewish traditional ways where He lived. These included the informal instruction in the home, community life, visits to Jerusalem and the Temple, the synagogue, and its school in Nazareth, and learning a trade were all among His educational experiences. When He followed His calling into public ministry He was known as teacher.

Paul's schooling also equipped him to become an outstanding theologian and teacher. His educational training included instruction at home, attendance at a synagogue school (Zuck 1998). His Rabbinic education took place at Jerusalem under teacher Gamaliel (Acts 5:34; 22:3) (Pazmino 2006). Gamaliel was the grandson of Hillel the great pharisaic teacher (Martin 2005) and influential Pharisaic educator in the early 1st century AD (Peterson 2007). He was the representative of the school of Hillel in c. 10 B.C (Clinton 2002). Paul learned under this great rabbi-teacher how to expound the Old Testament and techniques of debating, of posing questions raised by an imaginary opponent and answering those questions, of discussion and argumentation, of satirical criticism.

The purposes of Theological Education can vary according to the geographical and cultural situation. But its main purpose is that people may know God and His Word thoroughly. Following are the purposes of Theological Education: 1) to equip the Christians (especially the church leaders) for evangelism; 2) for motivation and mobilization to planting of churches and for strong foundation for pastoral ministry; 3) for sound doctrine, spiritual life and good Christian discipline so that they can grow in understanding Gods word; 4) to destroy the cultic teachings and heresy from the church; 5) to motivate the people of God to be redemptively involved in the world to work for those who do not belong to the church makes the Christian credibility authentic; 6) it is service to the church and not just giving out qualification certificates. 7) to make difference in the congregation of church in worship, spirituality, and theology with other people (Wingate 2005).

Nyblade's and other researcher are of the view that the spiritual formation is a continual apprehension of biblical education (Amirtham and Pryor 1990, Cully 1984, Edwards 1990). Sanner (1978) argues that churches should take up responsibility of teaching and training competent workers in the Christian religion so that they can skillfully train other people in the ministry. Pazmino (2006) gives strong reason for training church leaders especially the pastor first in the word of God and then in other subject matters to equip them fully for the work in the ministry. The Old Testament in the book of Deuteronomy is full of instructions for training and God challenges that church to take up the responsibility of training workers seriously.

According to Dueck "Christianity offers to people a set of symbols and stories, which affect them" (Dueck 1995). Christianity is a source of symbols and stories to people and introduces and impose certain spiritual values them, experienced as salvific. Through commitment Christian values and spirituality, one gets transformed through the Spirit. Thus, to be a Christian is to have a transformed life and continual spiritual development. Spiritual foundation refers to the learned practice of the growing.

In the post-Reformation years, those preparing for pastoral ministry in the Protestant movements generally spent a few months to a year living in the home of one of the revivalist preachers to prepare for ministry. The practice was continued in America when Harvard was founded, with those who prepared for pastoral ministry in the liberal-arts program spending up to three years in a pastor's home while completing their course of studies. Harvard developed a separate chair of theology in 1721, followed soon after by Yale's institution of a similar position. Curriculum emphasis continued to be in theology, while preparation for ministry was by apprenticeship. The first distinct theological seminary in North America was established in Andover, Massachusetts,

in 1808. By the late nineteenth century, the tradition of a four-year college degree plus a graduate seminary experience was established, though not required.

Clouzet (1997) states that it was during the last part of the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth centuries that the major institutional forms by which American Protestant clergy were trained took shape. The basic structure of ministerial education, namely, four years of college followed by three years of seminary, did not change after that. Messer (1995) notes the need for higher education enterprises committed to critical and creative theological teaching, scholarship, and research. He asserts these needs were not always self-evident to the church. T. Christopher Turner finds that the development of seminaries was to provide graduate theological education in America and asserts that seminaries designed to prepare professional leaders for the church are still a relatively new experience, and, thus, often entangled in controversy (Turner 2001).

Fraser (1998), tracking the development of theological education in America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, suggests that the twentieth century was not creative in developing formal education for ministry. He asserts that no new patterns in theological education have emerged since the establishment of seminaries. Seminaries provide theological education, with the congregation serving as the primary setting for practical training in ministry.

Today there is a deep influence of the Theological Education in a pastor life. Theological Education helps to grow knowledge of the Word of God. Further it has been established that the health of the church is to a large extent dependent on the education level of its ordained leadership which in turn is deeply impacted by the kind of training that it has received in Theological Education/Institutions. Pastoral ministry training is a special form of a command given to all believers, for discipleship. The training is all about having a godly personality, theological understanding and ministry knowledge or skills (Busenitz 2003).

Theological Education trains the pastor for prophetic leadership for the church and society (Arles 2006). Thus, in the absence of theological training it is highly likely that they may not enjoy personal spiritual growth in godly character, besides lack in effective and meaningful ministry to others. The training thus equips pastor to teach with authority, to preach with passion, and to shepherd with care (Busenitz 2003). Its emphasis not only on academics, but also on character formation and the development of ministerial skills and develop competence in communication skills (NA 2008). It also trains pastor to teach others as well as to learn from others (Kanagaraj 2005).

Theological Education in Kenya like in most parts of the Christian world is primarily for the church ministry. (Robinson 2000). There is a common agreement that church should participate in Theological Education because it has always been an important part of the educational mission of the church (Thumma 2007, Vanlaluava 2003). There is a close relationship between Theological Education and mission of the church, which makes possible both to exist effectively (Singh 2007, Massey 2011). It is meant to equip all Christians for ministry and mission (Philip 2006). The role of Theological Education is not limited to training Christian's minister alone. It includes empowering the church members so that they can be advocates of the true gospel that transforms lives. (Prabhakar 2003). Neil states the need for biblical Education for a layman in the church: without this kind of education the church can lose its way and fall prey to wrong doctrines,

superstitions. The central focus of Theological Education is to equip the church (Saphir 2003).

Theological Education is important for the knowledge of the scriptures and appropriate interpretation for an in-depth understanding. It helps in solving people's problems in our locality. (Durairaj, 2011). While conducting a worship service and prayer meeting is important, teaching the church members biblical truths is of necessity (Acts 17:1-3; 10-13) (Jeyaraj 2002). It is necessary because it helps the pastor to do minister freely in all church ministries full time. He can work as a missionary evangelist, children and youth minister or teaching the new believers in the church. (ibid). Through this pastor will prepare himself better for the ministry (Arles 2006). The church in Kenya especially in Nairobi needs a theological education which shall bring maturity and stability to her selfhood, nature, and identity, and move her into positive action of involvement with the society for interpreting the gospel of Christ of God.

Materials and Methods

This was a theological based study where it is believed that the Holy Spirit inspired the bible according to II Timothy 3:16, it is therefore accepted as the true word of God (Thiga, 2021; De Klerk & De Wet, 2013). The study adopted qualitative design employing phenomenological approaches in data collection.

The target population comprised of the church leaders in church of decision making in the church and members who have been in the church for more than two years.

Both non-probability and probability methods were used to sample participants. The study used purposive sampling technique to select the church leaders in accordance with the leadership structure of the churches under study. For the WGCK and the FGCK, leaders who were there during the period of conflict, that is 2008 were sought for interview. Stratified sampling method was used to select the church members for fair representation. The sample size was 84 respondents who comprised of 48 church leaders, 24 elders and 12 pastors.

The study used semi-structure interview guides to collect data. The semi structured interview guide was used since the research covered a raft of questions related to the study. Personal notes were also used personal notes in which the personal experiences of the researcher during the study were recorded. Others included methodological notes and observational notes of the participants in which the expressions both verbal and non-verbal were recorded.

Iterative and repeated re-reading was used to systematically analyze the interview transcripts. The responses were analyzed thematically after organizing them into common themes using content analysis.

Results

Age of the Respondents

The study findings in Table 1 revealed that majority of the pastor respondents (83.3%) were in the age of 41 years and above. From the results, KAG had the youngest pastor, in the age bracket of 31 years and 40 years. Majority of the church alder (10 out of 17) were also aged 41 years and

above.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age

	Pastors		Church elders		Other leaders	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
25-30 years	0	0.0	2	2.9	5	7.2
31-40 years	1	1.4	5	7.2	17	24.6
41-50 years	8	11.6	6	8.7	14	20.3
51-60 years	2	2.9	3	4.3	4	5.8
61 years and above	1	1.4	1	1.4	0	0.0
Total	12	17.4	17	24.6	40	58.0

Duration in the Church

According to the results in Table 2, all the pastors have been in their respective churches for at least five years. 5 pastors (7.3%) have served in their respective churches for a period of between 11 to 15 years. According to the results, 4 (5.8%) pastors had served in the respective churches for 16 to 20 years. Majority (8 out of 17) of the church elders have served in their respective churches for 16 to 20 years. The results show that most of the other leaders (13 out of 40) have served in the churches for 16 to 20 years while 11 have been in the respective churches for 11 to 15 years.

Table 2: Duration in the Church

	Pastors		Church elders		Other leaders	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 5 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.3
5 - 10 years	1	1.4	2	2.9	6	8.7
11 - 15 years	5	7.3	4	5.8	11	15.9
16 - 20 years	4	5.8	8	11.6	13	18.8
21 years and above	2	2.9	3	4.3	7	10.1
Total	12	17.4	17	24.6	40	58

Served in Church Leadership

The study established that all the respondents have been leaders in their respective churches with most having served in different capacities. For example, 4 pastors from WGCK and FGCK noted that they were once church elders. Others from WGCK noted that they were once leaders of departments. However, 4 pastors (3 from KAG and 1 from PEFA) have been pastors all through. However, the church elders were once leaders of departments or other ministries in the church.

Duration in the Leadership Position

Table 3 shows that the pastors have served for more than 10 years. Most church elders (15) have served in leadership positions for more than 10 years. For other leaders, most (13) have been in leadership for 5 to 10 years while 7 have been in the positions for less than 5 years.

Table 3: Duration in the Leadership Position

	Pastors		Church elders		Other leaders	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 5 years	0	0.0	0	0	7	10.2
5 - 10 years	0	0.0	2	2	13	18.8
11 - 15 years	2	2.9	5	5	11	15.9
16 - 20 years	4	5.8	6	6	7	10.2
21 years and above	6	8.7	4	4	2	2.9
Total	12	17.4	17	24.6	40	58.0

Church Growth

Description of Membership

The growth of membership the churches was described by most of the respondent pastors as gradual and challenging. They explained that, though there has been growth, this has been very slow as members come and leave resulting into the fluctuation in membership. According to most church elder respondents, the membership was described as below average. The membership of some churches had stagnated at between 40 to 65 members. However, some respondents stated that their churches had experienced remarkable growth in terms of membership, one respondent reporting that their church had a membership of about 250 and 50 children.

Church Growth Measured by New Members Joining

The new members joining the church was another measure of church growth and most of the churches received new members every week in their worship services. Yet another respondent noted that while the church was able to record visitors every week in their services and majority expressing desire to be members, they only turned up for a short time for the services. This according to one respondent was a problem of the urban churches.

Church Growth Measured by Members Participation in Evangelism

The study found that as reported by respondents, the PEFA church reached out to the lost every third Sunday of every month in which the church members take part in preaching the Gospel of Jesus. In KAG, the church members receive training on evangelism and encouraged to take part in missions. According to some respondents, the church was organized into taking part in reaching out to the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the evangelistic team. However, as noted by some respondents, participation in evangelism was not a common practice in their churches, even individually, the practice was uncommon among the church members and majority only took part in evangelist when it was organized by the church. There were however a few respondents who took part in evangelism, signaling spiritual growth.

Church Members belong to Fellowships

The results revealed that some of the respondents noted that the church encourages every of its members to belong to a fellowship where they reside. According to one of the respondents, the members were constantly reminded by the pastor, the benefits of belonging to a fellowship noting

that it was only through the fellowships that people can encourage each other through testimonies and prayers. Other participants noted that the churches used other communication channels such as church weekly bulletins among others to urge its members to find and attend fellowships. However, the study results revealed that only a few people attended fellowship. The participants gave various reasons for not attending the fellowship. These included work, college, house chores, among others. Therefore, using fellowship attendance as a measure of growth, the church growth can be described as slow.

Pastor has Theological Training

The study established that nearly all the pastors except three had theological training. According to the respondents, the pastors training was important for both the church and the pastor as the pastor are equipped with the biblical truth and thus ready for equipping of the church, becoming firm and principled against any false doctrine. Respondents noted that besides building the pastors' confidence, theological training enables the pastor to deal with all the issues within the church effectively. Respondents noted that theological training equips pastor for his/her ministerial duties besides having proper theological doctrine. The pastor will be able to know how to teach members and which sermon. Respondents noted that through theological training, the pastor can analyze and interpret the word of God appropriately and able to deal with all personalities and kinds of people. Some respondents also noted that the training was important as it gives the pastor the knowledge of how to effectively manage the church. However, according to one respondent, though the pastors' theological training was important, it was not the main influence of church growth. The respondent noted that the spirit a man carries is what influences men and not just education.

Theological Training and Pastor's Competence in Ministry

The study established that most of the respondents noted that theological training is important in building the pastors' confidence particularly in handling questions about the faith and they have sound interpretation of the word, sound leadership and authority in God among others. The respondents noted that theological training gives the pastors confidence in analyzing the Bible and bringing truths and misconception that members may have on spiritual matters. The pastor is able to articulate the word of God in a better way. Respondent noted that theological training enables the pastor to have a deeper understanding of ministry and apply the knowledge and expertise when conducting the ministry in the areas such as the Bible study, leadership, teaching and preaching. Respondents noted that through the theological training the pastor knows how to teach and make congregation understand about doctrines. Other respondents noted that theological training is important to the pastor as it teaches much about the origin of the doctrine helping him/her understand the bible. It enables the pastor to handle every situation in the church.

Theological Training Empowered Pastor with Church Leadership Skills

The study established that the theological training had equipped the pastors with the right leadership skills. They noted that it has made the pastors become competent leaders, leading as examples and as servant leaders. Most of the respondents noted that through the training, the pastor can provide effective leadership in the church, and they are able to manage group dynamics and leading the congregation towards their vision. The training has made the pastor to be well exposed

on matters of handling people on matters of general leadership. The pastors can deal with every character and any doctrine that may come. Through the training, the pastors have been able to influence others and to bring members together which has made the church to grow in a great way.

Pastors' Theological Training and Growth of Pentecostal Churches

According to the study findings, the pastors' theological training influence on church growth was enormous as the training has equipped pastors for the ministry, preaching and leadership, among others. Respondents noted that through the training, the pastors were well vast with skills necessary for the running of the ministry. Respondents noted that theological training has made the pastors to be grounded on sound doctrine thus cushioning its members from false teachings, thus more commitment to church. The members are taught sound doctrine which enhances their spiritual growth. The respondents noted that the pastors who have gone through theological training are more servant leaders than those who have not received training, as it was the churches with pastors without theological training that experienced frequent conflicts in their churches.

Discussion

The findings of the study were that majority of pastors had theological training and they were equipped for the ministry. The study further revealed that the respondents perceived the theological training of the pastor as important for the church as it equipped the pastor for the ministry and besides, cushioned the church from the teaching of false doctrine. This is important for the spiritual growth of the church as members are taught the true doctrine. The study findings are in support of the views of Wingate (2005) and Kanagaraj (2005) who noted that the pastor's theological training equips the pastors who then equips the Christians for evangelism, sound doctrine, spiritual life, and good Christian discipline so that they can grow in understanding God's word, among others. The findings also agree with Pazmino (2006) who urged that theological training is a strong reason for training church leaders especially the pastor first in the word of God and then in other subject matters to equip them fully for the work in the ministry. The study further revealed that training enhances the pastor's confidence when preaching. The findings agree with Busenitz (2003) who noted that the theological training of pastors equips pastors to teach with authority, to preach with passion and to shepherd with care. Further, the finding that training equips the pastor for the ministry supports NA (2008) view that the training not only on academics, but also on character formation and the development of ministerial skills and develop competence in communication skills.

Conclusion

The study established that most of the pastors had theological training. However, a few pastors had no theological training. The study revealed that the training had a positive effect on the pastors as it equipped the pastors with the skills to preach and to effectively teach the word of God with deeper understanding. The pastors also had more confidence when ministering and were able to handle whatever question from the members. It shielded the congregation from false doctrine which comes with ignorance of the study of the word of God. The results mean that those without

the theological training were more exposed and even their members. The study established that the pastors theological training had effect on the growth of the church as the study established that the churches where the pastors did not have the training experienced more conflicts which may have direct effect on the church growth.

Recommendation

The Pentecostal churches need to lay emphasis on the importance of theological training of the pastors with the aim of equipping them for the work of the ministry and enhancing their competence and confidence in teaching the word of God and other areas of service as Paul urges Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2, thatand the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

Declaration

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit. The views presented in this proposal are mine and are not necessarily those of Africa International University of the Examiners.

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