The Paradigm Shift from Theocratic to Autocratic Leadership

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Abstract

Peace (shalom) is a key pillar of the church but this has not been so within the Anglican Church. Conflicts are not the problem but should be managed to form part of the solution. Churches should be orderly places in which conflicts are encouraged and managed constructively. The Anglican Church is a product of the conflict based sub-divisions and has also experienced complex conflicts that have led to further sub-divisions. This study investigated the leadership styles and practices applied in Conflict Management within the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North. The objective of the study was to evaluate the type of leadership styles employed in addressing the conflicts experienced in the Church. The target population was the 43 parishes in the Diocese while the study population was 520 leaders of the parishes and all congregation members.

A sample of 390 respondents was selected using cluster random sampling in the study which was carried out as a case study research.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in this study because it involved different parishes which were treated as subgroups. Closed ended Questionnaires and In-depth Interview Guide was used to collect Data from the randomly selected leaders and congregation members in a Face to Face interview. The findings were; Congregation members and church leaders were in agreement that, authoritative, democratic and empowerment were the leadership styles applied when addressing conflicts in the church and the most used style was the authoritative.

Keywords: leadership Style & Conflicts

Introduction

Peace (shalom) is a key pillar of the church but this has not been so within the Anglican Church.

Conflicts are not the problem but should be managed to form part of the solution. Churches should be orderly places in which conflicts are encouraged and managed constructively.

The Anglican Church is a product of the conflict based sub‑divisions and has also experienced complex conflicts that have led to further sub‑divisions. Instructional, administrative, and mission efforts are lost because churches are filled with conflicts that dioceses and parishes manage poorly."The frequency and severity of conflicts seems to be increasing" (Elam et al., 1994, p. 41-56).

The 19th century saw a major crisis within the Anglican Communion over the morality of human slavery. This was particularly acute in the U.S.A, Canada and England. The practice had been supported by many Anglicans and Christians of other denominations for centuries. In line with this, "the Anglican Communion was able to survive the slavery debate without a schism over slavery" (Young, 2005) After Reformation the protestant Churches have undergone sub-divisions partially occasioned by leadership notwithstanding both resource and non-resource conflicts.

One of the main products of these conflict-based sub-divisions and transformations is "the Anglican Church of England which separated from Roman Catholic Church in 1538 (Cross, 2005), and eventually spread into Kenya by the Church Mission Society (CMS) from the year 1884. Adedeji (1999) notes, Africa continues to be devoured by various types of conflicts and "20% of the sub-Saharan population lives in countries that are at war within themselves" (Deng, 2005, p.3). The continent now accounts for "more war-related deaths than the rest of the world combined as a result of poor leadership" (Human Security Center, 2005).

"The amount of conflict and by implication peace in any organization is majorly determined by the influence of its leadership" (Richards et al., 1986, p. 199-215).

Leadership has challenged many people "from virtually all walks of life and organizations" (White and Lippitt, 1960) including churches because of the complex nature of situations that leaders have to handle. The Anglican Church of Kenya is a product of the conflict-based subdivisions and has also experienced complex conflicts that have led to further split or subdivisions. This split is responsible for the breakaway of denominations like the Episcopal Church in Kenya and Church of Christ in Africa (CCA).

The study was undertaken in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North which is one of the largest Anglican Dioceses in Western Kenya. It currently has "37,000 registered members from 43 parishes with 100 churches" (Church Report, 2010). Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North has had several conflicts most of which are linked to Church leadership. The Diocese frequently experiences intra and inter-church group conflicts within its local Churches especially over allocation of material resources and over the management of Human Resources. This is responsible for the breakaway of the Episcopal Church and Holiness and Repentance Altar. This explains why the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North was a good test case for this kind of research.

Turay (2001) says that "understanding how people perceive conflict is fundamental to understanding the types of conflicts they deal with" , their "root causes and how they respond to them." Constantino and Merchant (1996) argue that, in the organizational context, conflict is an expression of dissatisfaction or disagreement with an interaction process, product or service. According to Bisno (1988) conflicts are integral part of the functions of the human service worker because differences of interest and commitment are virtually built into the job specifications hence the focus of this study on Church leaders.

Fisher et al., (2000) agree that, "conflict transformation addresses the wider social and political sources of conflict and seeks to transform the negative energy of war into positive and social and political change." Rothman (1997) writes that transforming conflict is about finding that even the bitterest of adversaries share common human needs. Conflict may be creatively transformed when adversaries come to learn, ironically perhaps, they may fulfill their deepest needs and aspirations only with the cooperation of those who most vigorously oppose them.

Leadership Styles

White and Lippertt (1960) identified Laissez-faire, democratic and autocratic, as the three main leadership styles in the world. Laissez-faire style is virtual absence of direct leadership. There is complete delegation of authority to subordinates so that they can make decisions by themselves and there is free flow of communication (Smith and Foti, 1998, p. 147-160). White and Lippertt (1960) averred that Democratic style is also known as group centered or consultative leadership. Under this style, leaders consult the group and solicit their opinions and participation in decision-making process.

Democratic leaders confer authority on the group and after their consultation decisions are taken (Sagimo, 2002). The last style is Autocratic which is also known as leader-centered style, under this style of leadership, there is complete centralization of authority in the leader that is; authority is centered in the leader himself (Drucker, 1967).

Flippo (1976) has divided autocratic style of leadership into following three. The *Manipulative autocrat* is manipulative by nature and creates a feeling in the minds of his subordinates and workers that they are participating in decision-making process.

While *Benevolent autocrat* uses positive influences and develops effective human relations, he is known as paternalistic leader (Burnes, 2003, p.627–42). The third is *Hard boiled or strict autocrat* who uses negative influence and expects that his orders to be obeyed by the employees immediately.

Effect of Leadership Style on Conflict Management

Leadership is the human side of managing that is, influencing – follower ship or discipleship towards achieving the desired objectives with minimum conflict (Armstrong, 2006, p. 20-24). Leadership style depends on the situation and not inheritance (Ian and Len, 2004, p. 500- 536). Each manager will have a natural style of leadership. This style will be set by the individual's personality, upbringing, beliefs and previous work and social experience.

Leithwood et al (1994) in their study on leadership style and organization management found that a manager who is effective in selecting goals which will be assessed as meaningful by his staff is much more likely to succeed than one who fails to define the goals in this way. The need for effective leadership cannot be overemphasized. The responsibility for ensuring that each of the staff offers his/her best rest squarely with the manager (Graham and Benette, 1998, p. 25-43).

Theoretical Framework for the Research

Conflicts are not only a major challenge but also a source of stress to the parties, groups or communities locked in the disagreement or conflict (Ross, 2007). On this basis, a simple theory widely used by American communities in search for solutions to a wide range of stressful community conflicts, problems or challenges was adopted for this research. This theory was developed in America in 1966 by Lazarus and hence named as the Lazarus stress theory.

The operation of the Lazarus stress theory is such that a community faced with a particular challenge for example a conflict tries out or tests different alternative ways to solve or address it (Lazarus, 1966).

From the many tried or tested alternatives, the community finally adapts and adopts the best alternative as the solution to the conflict, challenge or problem. This can be summarized diagrammatically as indicated below
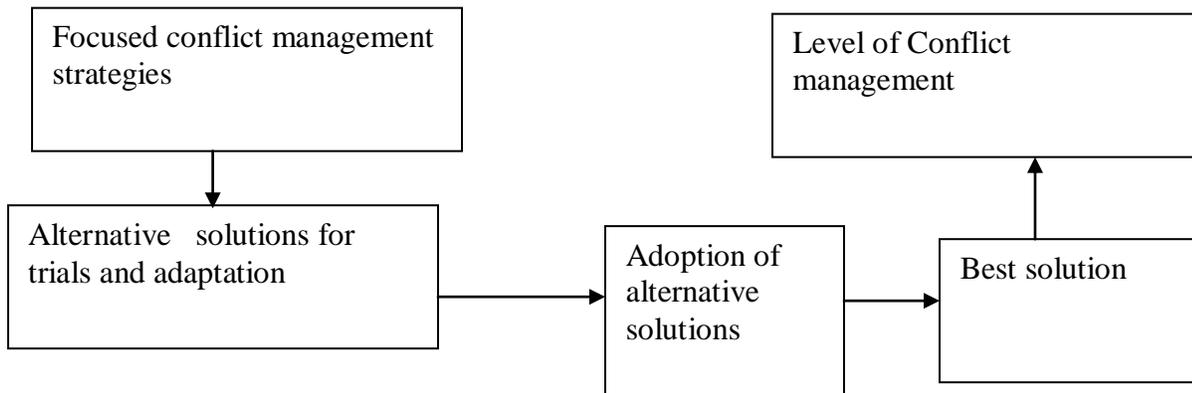
Figure1: Modification of Lazarus stress management theory (1966).

Based on Lazarus stress theory, the research was to: evaluate the leadership styles employed in addressing the conflicts experienced in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno.

Objective of the Research

To evaluate the type of leadership styles employed in addressing the conflicts experienced in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North

Research Question

What type of leadership styles were employed in addressing conflicts experienced in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North?

Methodology

Introduction

This study utilized a case study research design. This design was appropriate for the study because it consisted of a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case, Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North. This design was appropriate for the study because the nature

of data required was supposed to be collected in only one round.

According to Kothari (2007), Casely and Kumar (1988), a case study research design was appropriate for studies where the nature of data required does not require time series over several rounds of data collection. A case study research design is applicable where and when a researcher uses different categories of personnel at ago (Kasomo, 2007). This was applicable in this study because it covered different Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North leaders at different levels or hierarchical positions within the Diocese.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for the leaders and those who are not leaders in this study. This was because according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) it enhanced representatives in studies like this that dealt with sub-groups. During the sampling, the target population was purposively divided into 43 sub-groups on the basis of the existing parishes.

The first stage of sampling involved the use of multistage random sampling to select 13 parishes to be involved in the study. The second stage of sampling involved application of multistage random sampling to select 15 leaders from each parish to be respondents in the research.

The third stage of sampling involved application of multistage random sampling to select 15 members who are not leaders from each parish to be respondents in the research. Simple random sampling was used because it allowed generilizability of research findings to a large population with a margin of error that was statistically determinable. Mugenda and Mugenda (2002) say that in a case study research design 30% of the target population appropriately represented the entire group. On that basis 13 parishes representing 30 % of the target population was used in this study. Gall and Borg (2003) established that in a case study research design like this one involving sub-groups; the minimum recommended size of each sub-group is 15 respondents.

On that basis, every selected parish was a strata or sub-group in the study which was purposively sampled and allocated 15 respondents for leaders and 15 respondents for congregation who were not leaders. On that basis of 13parishes, an overall sample of 390 respondents was used in this study.

Result and Discussions

Evaluation of Leadership Styles Used in Addressing Conflicts in the Church

This study coved 195 congregation members and 195 church leaders in 13 parishes from the current 43 parishes in Maseno North Diocese. Each parish had two in-depth questionnaires adding to twenty six (26) for the thirteen parishes. For fairness each parish was allocated equal number of respondents.

This objective was important because the type of leadership style applied during conflict management was critical determinant of the extent of conflicts resolution that one attained. The application of democracy, dictatorship and empowerment leadership style in addressing conflicts within the church was investigated. The proportion in percentages of congregation members and church leaders that agreed or disagreed that each of these leadership styles was frequently applied.

According to the congregation members, authoritative leadership style was the most popular leadership style in addressing conflicts 147(75.4%) it was distantly followed by democratic leadership 47(23.9%) and finally empowerment 40(20.4%) the same perception was captured among the church leaders according to whom authoritative leadership style scored 147(75.5%) and was distantly followed by democratic leadership style 74(38.1%) and the least applied leadership style was empowerment 62(32%) this indicated high level application of authoritative leadership in addressing conflicts.

This was attributed to the fact that as Christians, church members were obliged to strictly adhere to the expectations of the principles of Christianity as spelled out in the bible and not to decide what to do based on numbers which the basic principle of democracy and have the powers to do whatever they want as spelled out in the principals of empowerment. However, the results also indicated that democracy was applied on some occasions.

This was when addressing conflicts about specific issues for example the time when worship services was to be conducted or how to dress during services that were not directly dictated by the bible but were supposed to be agreed upon as the accepted norms by the church members as a group.

Empowerment was the least applied leadership style in addressing conflicts because the basic principle of empowerment was provision of freedom which the congregation members and more so the church leaders could not allow because parties involved in a conflict could decide to enhance the conflict instead of resolving it and yet peace is the foundation and the central theme of Christianity. This explained why empowerment was the least used leadership style in addressing conflicts.

This objective was assessed further by seeking to know from both congregation members and church leaders whether there were specific leaders who were reknown for conflicts resolution within the church. An overwhelming majority of the congregation members 191(98%) indicated that there were specific leaders notable for management of conflicts within the church compared to only 4(2%) who indicated there were none.

Similarly, 187(96.1%) of the church leaders conceded that there were specific leaders notable for management of conflicts within the church compared to only 8(3.9%) who said there were none.

To gain more insight into the leadership styles practiced in conflict management in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North, different leadership styles were investigated. More investigations were undertaken to gain more insight into leadership style used to address conflicts. The findings for authoritative leadership was the most popular leadership style relative to addressing conflicts in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North as indicated in Table 1

The congregation members and church leaders were asked to indicate the frequency with which Authoritative practices including emphasis on predetermined procedures of conflicts management, promptness in conflict management, strictness on church doctrines and strictness on conflict managements. Table1 indicates the responses given by congregation members while those in Table 2 indicates the responses given by church leaders.

Table 1: Congregations Perception of Authoritative Practices

Authoritative Practices	Frequency Scores In Percentages						
	Very frequent	Frequent	Subtotal	rare	Very rare	Subtotal	Total
Strictness on church doctrines	51.5	27.7	79.2	14.6	6.3	20.9	100
Promptness in church management	42.2	30.6	72.8	13.6	13.6	27.2	100
Strictness on conflict management	43.7	26.2	69.6	13.6	6.5	30.1	100
Emphasis on pre- determined procedures of conflicts management	61.2	18.4	69.6	11.7	8.7	20.4	100

Table 2: Church Leaders Perception of Authoritative Practices

Authoritative practices	Frequency scores in percentages						
	Very frequent	Frequent	Sub-total	Rare	Very rare	Sub-total	Total
Strictness on church doctrines	45.0	35.2	80.2	11.5	11	22.5	100
Emphasis on pre – determined procedures of conflicts management	39.7	39.7	79.4	15.3	5.3	20.6	100
Strictness on conflict management	35.4	38.3	73.7	16.3	10	26.3	100
Promptness in church management	31.1	37.8	69.9	20.1	11	31.1	100

According to the findings both congregation members and church leaders indicated that among the authoritative practices, strictness on church doctrines was the most observed practiced.

This was duly indicated by a frequency score of 154(79.2%) for congregation members and 156(80.2%) for the church leaders respectively.

This could be attributed to the fact that church doctrines were the foundation of church practices inclusive of conflicts therefore always taken seriously. It may further be accounted for by the fact that for the church to remain one the church doctrines must be strictly adhered to especially in the management of conflicts. This brought a situation where all conflict management practices were undertaken within the perspective of church doctrines. This view was well supported by 100(51.5%) of the congregation members and 88(45.0) of the church leaders who indicated that strictness of church doctrines was very frequently observed and 54(27.7%) of the congregation members and 69(35.2%) of the church leaders according to whom the frequency of this practice was frequent.

Further observations indicated that a higher proportion of the church leaders compared to the congregations indicated that strictness to church doctrines was frequently observed 156&154 (80.2% > 79.2%).

The gap between the two respondents could be due to the fact that church leaders were more duty bound about maintenance or sustainability of church conflicts than the congregation because they bear the greatest responsibility of giving direction to their flock (congregation).

According to the congregation promptness in conflict management was the second most practiced authoritative practice with a frequency score of 142(72.8%) while the church leaders felt that the second most practiced authoritative practice was emphasis on pre-determined procedures of church management with a frequency score of 155(79.4%). This meant that the two practices were treated as essential in the conflict management processes.

In comparison 82(42.2%) of the congregation members compared to 61(31.1%) of the church leaders indicated that promptness in conflict management was observed very frequently.

A higher proportion of congregation compared to church leaders indicated this level of practice. The gap between the two could be because congregation members were not exposed to the conflicts in the church as the church leaders and were therefore unlikely to have had an accurate perception. Further assessment indicated that according to the congregation members, strictness on conflict management decisions was the third most practiced autocratic practice with a frequency score of 136(69.8%).

According to the church leaders, this was also the third most practiced autocratic practice but with higher a frequency score of 144(73.7%).

The gap between the frequency scores could be attributed to the fact that church leaders were more focused on sustainability of conflict management decisions than the congregation members because they bore the responsibilities of administering church functions that included upholding the conflict management decisions as made by the stakeholders. According to the congregation members, emphasis on pre-determined procedures of conflict management was the least practiced autocratic practice with a frequency score of 136(69.6%).

This was in contrast to the views of the church leaders according to whom emphasis on pre-determined procedures of conflict management was so highly practiced that it was only second to strictness on church doctrines and had a much higher frequency score of 156(80.2%).

Though this study was aimed at assessment of leadership style and conflict management in the Anglican Church, this particular finding was an indicator of yet another intra-church conflict relative to differential perceptions of congregation members and church leaders over this autocratic practice.

The level and weight of this conflict was well brought by the wide gap in frequency scores of the two respondents indicating a high level of disagreement and by extension conflict The gap could also be an indicator of an emerging uprising by the congregation members against the church leaders contrary to the past when failure to agree with church leaders was almost

synonymous to disagreeing with God for example 30 different Christian denominations leaders stood together and told their Christians to vote against the then proposed Kenya Constitution but the Christians went against their wishes (The Christian Post, 2010,p. 31).

Table 3: Congregations Perceptions of Democratic Practices

Democratic practices	Frequency score in percentages						Total
	Very frequent	Frequent	Sub total	Rare	Very rare	Sub total	
Inclusion of all parties in decision making	23	24.4	47.4	35.4	17.2	52.6	100
Internal team work	15.8	23.0	38.8	41.0	20.1	61.1	100
Development of clear communication channels	19.1	17.2	36.3	38.8	24.9	63.2	100
Co-operation among members	14.8	20.1	34.9	43.1	22.0	65.10	100
Motivation of stakeholders to manage / minimize conflicts	14.8	18.2	33	40.2	26.8	67	100

The application of democratic practices in resolution of conflicts in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North was assessed by investigating inclusion of all parties or stakeholders in decision making, internal team work, development of clear communication channels, co-operation among members and motivation of stakeholders among the congregation and church leaders.

According to the findings of this aspect of the study, congregation members indicated that inclusion of all parties in decision making was the most practiced democratic leadership practice followed by internal team work, development of clear communication channels, co-operation among members and lastly motivation of stakeholders to manage conflicts.

This trend of events was duly supported by frequency scores of 92(47.4%), 76(38.8%), 71(36.3%), 68(34.9%) and 64(33%) respectively. Further assessment indicated that up to 45(23%) of the congregation members felt that inclusion of all parties in decision making was very frequently practiced while 48(24.4%) felt that the frequency of practicing this democratic aspect was only frequent.

The second most practiced democratic strategy was internal team work 76(38.8%). However, there was a big gap between congregation members' involvement in inclusion of all parties in decision making and implementation of internal team work. This gap could be attributed to the fact that inclusive decision making was the key foundation of democratic leadership style besides being the genesis of team work operations in democratic systems.

According to the findings in table 3, 31(15.8%) of the congregation members indicated that internal team work was practiced very frequently in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North. However, a higher proportion of the congregations 45(23%) indicated that team work was only practiced on frequently.

The level of congregation members involvement in internal team work was closely followed by development of clear communication channels 71&76(36.3% < 38.8%). Among the church members, departments and sections, clear communication channels were critical in conflict resolution because they are like net worked roads on which participants in conflicts resolution deliver solutions to the target parties.

According to the findings 37(19.1%) of the congregation members indicated that development of clear communication channels during conflicts resolution was practiced very frequently while 34(17.2%) indicated that it was practiced frequently.

Congregation involvement in development of clear communication channels was closely followed by implementation of co-operation among members 68&71(34.9% < 36.3%). However, unlike involvement in development of clear communication lines which were more skewed towards very frequent than frequent as justified by frequency scores of 37(19.1%) and 34(17.2%) respectively.

Implementation of co-operation among congregation members was more skewed towards frequent as justified by scores of 39(20.1%) and 29(14.8%) respectively. Among the democratic practices covered in the study, motivation of stakeholders to manage or resolve conflicts was the least practiced with a frequency score of 64(33%) and skewed towards frequent as indicated by frequency scores of 29(14.8%) and 35(18.2%) for very frequent and frequent respectively. The low involvement in Motivation for conflicts management could be attributed to the fact that motivation requires particular skills and material resources which most of the congregation members lacked due to limited education and high poverty levels respectively

Table 4: Church Leaders Perceptions of Democratic Practices

Democratic practices	Frequency score in percentages						Total
	Very frequent	Frequent	Sub total	Rare	Very rare	Sub total	
Inclusion of all parties in decision making	9.8	16.6	26.4	37.6	36.1	73.7	100
Internal team work	13.2	12.7	26.1	38.0	76.10	74.10	100
Co-operation among members	12.2	12.9	24.9	41.0	34.1	75.10	100
Development of clear communication channels	10.7	11.2	21.9	44.2	34.0	78.2	100
Motivation to manage / minimize conflicts	12.1	8.3	20.4	38.3	41.3	79.6	100

An assessment of the trend of democratic practices as per the church leader's perception indicated that like in the case of the congregation members, inclusion of all parties in decision making was the most practiced strategy 51(26.4%).

This confirms Linzey and Kirker (2005) who found out that inclusion in decision making was forefront in campaign in the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North. Inclusion of all parties in decision making was followed by internal team work 51(26.1%) in the second position.

However, differences between the congregation and church leaders views were witnessed in third and fourth positions and uniformity in views re-established to both congregation and church leaders was that Motivation to manage / minimize conflicts was the least practiced democratic strategy with a frequency score of 40(20.4%) for church leaders and 64(33%) for congregation. According to the findings, 19(9.8%) of the Church leaders indicated that they felt inclusion of all parties in decision making was practiced very frequently while 32(16.6%) indicated its practice was only frequent.

The level of church leaders involvement in this practice was closely followed by implementation of internal team work 51&51(26.1% < 26.4%), co-operation with other church members 49(24.9%) development of clear communication channels 43(21.9%) and motivation to manage conflicts 40(20.4%).The closeness in the levels of church leaders involvement in these practices could be attributed to the fact that the church leaders perceived all these practices as equally important in resolution of conflicts in the church.

Table 5: Congregations Members Perception of Empowerment

Empowerment Practices	Frequency score in percentages						Total
	Very frequent %	Frequent %	Sub total %	Rare %	Very rare %	Sub total %	%
Participation in open discussion	8.3	14.2	22.5	35.3	42.2	77.5	100
Application of self control strategies in conflict management	9.8	12.7	22.5	33.2	44.4	77.6	100
Delegation of conflict management authority	4.9	17.2	22.1	35.2	42.6	77.8	100
Provision of conducive environment for creativity and in innovation in conflict	13.2	5.9	19.1	28.9	52	80.9	100
Facilitation of free flow of information	4.9	10.7	15.6	35.1	49.3	84.4	100

This objective was further assessed through investigation of congregation and church leaders in participation in open discussions, application of self control strategies in conflict management, delegation of authority, facilitation of free flow of information and provision of conducive environment for creativity and innovation in conflicts resolution which are elements of empowerment leadership style. Substantial differences between the congregation and church leaders relative to the aspects of these findings are in Tables 5 and 6 respectively.

According to the congregation, the trend of involment in empowerment practices during conflict resolution was such that participation in open discussion and application of self control strategies were the most practiced strategies, followed by delegation of authority, provision of conducive environment for creativity and innovation and lastly facilitation of free flow of information in conflict resolution. This view was duly supported by frequency scores of 44(22.5%), 44(22.5%), 43(22.1%), 37(19.1%) and 30(15.6%) respectively.

Table 6: Church Leaders Perception of Empowerment

Empowerment Practices	Frequency Score In Percentages						
	Very frequent %	Frequent %	Sub total %	Rare %	Very rare %	Sub total %	Total
Delegation of conflict management authority	10.5	26.3	36.8	26.8	36.4	63.2	100
Participation in open discussion	14.8	21.5	36.3	30.1	33.6	63.7	100
Application of self control strategies in conflict management	11.1	19.7	30.8	29.8	39.4	69.2	100
Provision of conducive environment for creativity and in innovation in conflict	11.5	18.7	30.2	25.8	44	69.8	100
Facilitation of free flow of information	10.0	15.8	25.8	32.1	42.1	74.2	100

In assessment of the trend relative to church leaders perceptions of the use of empowerment leadership style in conflict resolution they indicated that delegation of authority was the most practiced, followed by open discussions, application of self control strategies, Provision of conducive environment for creativity and in innovation in conflict and lastly facilitation of free flow of information. This trend is duly supported by frequency scores of 72(36.8%), 71(36.3%), 60(30.8%), 59(30.2%) and 50(25.8%) respectively.

An overview of the scores indicated that on the average, church leaders indicated high levels of empowerment are practiced in the church than what the congregation indicated. This could be attributed to the fact that the empowerment was more within the church leaders than among the congregation members of the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North relative to conflict resolution.

According to the congregation, participation in open discussions and application of self control strategies in conflict management were the most practiced empowerment strategies with frequency score of 44(22.5%). This could be attributed to the fact that these were the core aspects of empowerment as a leadership style. These two were closely followed by delegation of authority 43(22.1%).

This meant that the congregation felt that to an extent church leaders delegated conflict resolution engagements to a fair percentage.

The main findings of the study were; Congregation members and church leaders are in agreement that, authoritative, democratic and empowerment are the leadership styles applied when addressing conflicts in the church.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made; the congregation and leadership of the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North are in agreement that authoritative leadership is the most popular leadership style in addressing conflicts; it is distantly followed by democratic leadership and finally empowerment.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

i)   The congregation and leadership of the Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Maseno North should invest more in the application of democratic and empowerment leadership styles in conflict management.

ii)   They should be provided with access to a professional consultant, somewhat on the model of a spiritual director or someone with whom to talk things through so as to help them see more clearly what is before their eyes.

iii) Train itinerant staff in consulting skills. Senior denominational staff has a role to play in this, but so have those in non-parochial or local church ministry, in simply being available to help local leaders to approach change in the right way.

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