



EVANGELICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND ITS ROLE IN CHURCH CONFLICTS:
A CASE STUDY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN BURUNDI

Dissertation Manuscript

Submitted to Unicaf University in Zambia
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

By Sinzohagera Emmanuel

June 2025

Approval of the Thesis

EVANGELICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND ITS ROLE IN CHURCH CONFLICTS:
A CASE STUDY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN BURUNDI

This Thesis by Sinzohagera Emmanuel has been approved by the committee members below, who recommend it be accepted by the faculty of Unicaf University in Zambia in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Thesis Committee:

Dr Attridge Mwelwa Mwape, supervisor

Dr Nathan Musonda, chair

Dr Yogesh Kumar Jain, external examiner

Dr Mary Mutete Mwanzia, internal examiner

Abstract

EVANGELICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND ITS ROLE IN CHURCH CONFLICTS:
A CASE STUDY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN BURUNDI

Sinzohagera Emmanuel

Unicaf University in Zambia

This study explores the role of evangelical church leadership in shaping, managing, and resolving internal church conflicts, focusing on the United Methodist Church (UMC) in Burundi. Recognizing that conflicts are an inevitable aspect of organizational life—including faith-based institutions—the research sought to understand how church leaders contribute to both the emergence and resolution of disputes. The purpose of this study is to analyse the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts. The objectives of this research include therefore the importance of training church leaders, the involvement of church leaders in church conflict resolution, and the identification of possible roots of church conflicts. A qualitative ethnographic research design was employed to gain deep, context-specific insights into leadership and conflict interactions. Data were collected from 30 purposively selected participants—all occupying leadership roles within a local UMC charge conference—through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis was applied to the data, supported by four theoretical frameworks: Servant Leadership Theory, the McKinsey 7S Model, Problem Solving Theory, and an Ecclesiological Framework. Findings of this study revealed that participants consider training for church leadership very valuable not only for church leaders themselves, but also for the congregation and the community as well. And participants recommended training mainly in

leadership programs, conflict management courses, UM related courses, and Information Technology courses. Participants endorsed the involvement of church leadership in managing church conflicts. The results indicated that the role of church leadership in conflict management is vital for the survival of the congregation. Major sources of conflict included power struggles, financial mismanagement, and individual ambition. Though similar results to these findings were found in other studies, it was nevertheless noticed that participants did not consider the positive value of conflicts if well managed. Even though the findings call for further research, it also brings its contribution in the field of church leadership and conflict management. A conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist Church in Burundi emphasizing on forgiveness, dialogue, and theological integrity has been suggested. The study advocates for a transformative model of leadership development and conflict engagement tailored to the unique challenges and values of evangelical church contexts.

Keywords: Leadership, Church Leadership, Conflict.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

AI Acknowledgment

Use of AI:

I acknowledge my use of Chat GPT (<https://chatgpt.com/>) to paraphrase and summarize some paragraphs of chapter 2 of my thesis. This action was completed on 28.10.2024.

Copyright

I confirm that I retain the intellectual property and copyright of the thesis submitted. I also allow Unicaf University in Zambia to produce and disseminate the contributions of the thesis in all media forms known or to come as per the Creative Commons BY License (CC BY).

Dedication

This thesis is devoted to Delphine Uwimana, my wife and to the four children that God has blessed us with: Gift Mugisha, Jonathan Buntubwimana, Samuella Irishura, Emmanuella Ishimwe.

Acknowledgments

My personal thanks are addressed to Dr Attridge Mwelwa Mwape for having taken me through this dissertation and for their constructive critics and guidance. She has been very supportive throughout the process.

My thanks go also to the Unicaf University in Zambia for admitting me for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership and for granting me the scholarship. My special thanks go to all lecturers and research assistants for their endless support.

Special thanks are addressed to the UMC- Burundi Annual Conference and its leadership, Bishop Daniel A. Wandabula for allowing me to undertake this study. To all those who participated in this study, receive my sincere thanks.

Last but not least, my sincere appreciations and thanks are directed to my dear spouse Delphine Uwimana and my four children Gift Mugisha, Jonathan Buntubwimana, Samuella Irishura, and Emmanuella Ishimwe for their support, encouragement and especially their perseverance of enduring pains due to my absence in the family while pursuing this program. They have accompanied me through this program by enduring loneliness and stepping in whenever I was not there.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....XVI

LIST OF TABLES.....XVII

LIST OF FIGURES.....XVIII

LIST OF APPENDICES.....XIX

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 BACKGROUND1

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM2

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY, AIM OF THE STUDY, AND OBJECTIVES7

1.3.1 Purpose of the study7

1.3.2 Aim of the study.....8

1.3.3 The research objectives.....8

1.3.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....8

1.4 NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY9

1.4.1 The nature of the study.....9

1.4.2 The significance of the study.....12

1.5 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY14

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS.....14

1.7 LIMITATIONS14

1.8 SUMMARY15

1.9 CHAPTERS BREAKDOWN16

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	18
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	18
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
2.2.1 <i>Servant leadership theoretical framework</i>	19
2.2.2 <i>Problem solving theoretical framework</i>	21
2.2.3 <i>The McKinsey 7S Framework</i>	24
2.2.4 <i>The theoretical ecclesiological framework</i>	26
2.2.5 <i>Operationalization of variables and the use of the UTAUT and TAM Frameworks</i>	27
2.2.6. <i>Synthesis of theoretical frameworks</i>	29
2.3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	30
2.3.1 <i>Definition of key terms</i>	30
2.3.2 <i>Leadership theories</i>	36
2.3.2.1 Great Man Theory	37
2.3.2.2 The Traits leadership Theory	39
2.3.2.3 The Behavioural leadership theory	40
2.3.2.4 Contingency leadership theory	42
2.3.2.5 Integrative leadership theory	48
2.3.2.6 Contemporary leadership theories	55
2.3.3 <i>Some leadership styles of Jesus Christ</i>	57
2.3.3.1 Jesus as a Servant Leader	57
2.3.3.2 Jesus and transformational leadership.....	63
2.3.3.3 Jesus and transactional leadership.....	67
2.3.3.4 Jesus and charismatic leadership	69
2.3.4 <i>Pastoral ministry</i>	72

2.3.4.1 Definition of pastoral ministry	72
2.3.4.2 Difference between pastoral and lay ministry	78
2.3.4.3 Ordination of ministers	80
<i>2.3.5 The place of training in pastoral ministry</i>	<i>91</i>
2.3.5.1 Difference between scholarly education and training	91
2.3.5.2 Education entry requirement for ministers.....	93
2.3.5.3 Importance of training church leaders	94
<i>2.3.6 Types of Conflict and conflict resolution models.....</i>	<i>96</i>
2.3.6.1 Types of conflicts.....	104
2.3.6.2 Conflict management styles	125
2.3.6.3 Conflict resolution in Burundi.....	126
<i>2.3.7 Church leadership and conflict management</i>	<i>127</i>
2.3.7.1 Some biblical conflict cases	127
2.3.7.2. Conflict in the United Methodist Church.....	140
2.3.7.3 Sources of church conflict	149
2.3.7.4. Church conflict management styles	151
2.3.7.5. Managing church conflict in the African context.....	157
2.3.7.6. Mechanism of resolving church conflicts in Burundi.....	159
<i>2.3.8 Polity of the United Methodist Church.....</i>	<i>161</i>
2.3.8.1 Doctrine of the United Methodist Church.....	161
2.3.8.2 The mission of the United Methodist Church (UMC)	162
2.3.8.3. The structure or polity of the UMC	178
2.3.8.4 The ordination processes	180
2.3.8.5 The purpose of ordination in the United Methodist Church	181
2.3.8.6 Superintendence in the United Methodist Church	183
2.3.8.7 Office of Bishop in the United Methodist Church	186

2.3.8.7 The BOD and conflict.....	189
2. 3.9 Summary.....	192
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	193
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	193
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN	195
3.2.1 <i>Research approach</i>	195
3.2.2 <i>Appropriate research design</i>	200
3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY	203
3.4 MATERIALS OF RESEARCH TOOLS	206
3.4.2 <i>Interviews</i>	206
3.4.2.1 Interview participants	206
3.4.2.2 Interviewing process	207
3.4.3 <i>Focus group discussions</i>	207
3.5 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	208
3.6 STUDY PROCEDURES AND ETHICAL ASSURANCES	209
3.7 SUMMARY.....	211
CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION	212
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	212
4.2 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA	215
4.3 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF DATA.....	221
4.4 DATA PRESENTATION	225
4.4.1 <i>Age characteristics of participants</i>	226
4.4.2 <i>Gender characteristics of participants</i>	227

4.4.3 <i>Characteristics of participants based on membership</i>	227
4.4.4 <i>Raw data collected per research question</i>	228
4.5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION	232
4.5.1 <i>Church members' views on the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders</i>	232
4.5.2 <i>Church leaders and training programs</i>	245
4.5.3 <i>Conflict involvement of church leaders</i>	248
4.5.4 <i>Possible roots of church conflicts</i>	264
4.6 EVALUATION OF FINDINGS	272
4.7 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS AND FRAMEWORK INTEGRATION	278
4.7.1 <i>Servant Leadership Theory</i>	278
4.7.2 <i>McKinsey 7S Framework</i>	278
4.7.3 <i>Problem Solving Theory</i>	279
4.7.4 <i>Ecclesiological Framework</i>	279
4.8 SUMMARY	280
CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	281
5.1 INTRODUCTION	281
5.2 IMPLICATIONS	284
5.3 CONCLUSIONS	290
5.3.1 <i>The views on the importance of training church leaders</i>	290
5.3.2 <i>Received and planned training programs</i>	294
5.3.3 <i>Role of church leaders in church conflict</i>	295
5.3.4 <i>Possible roots of church conflict</i>	298
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPLICATION	299

5.4.1 Suggested conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist church in Burundi.....	299
5.4.2 To church organizations and its leaders	300
5.4.3 To leaders of other organizations	301
5.4.4 To members of different church denominations.....	301
5.4.5 To government entities in charge of religious organizations.....	302
5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMIC AND FUTURE RESEARCH	302
REFERENCES	303
APPENDICES	316

List of Abbreviations

BOD	Book of Discipline
BOOM	Board of Ordained Ministry
COB	Council of Bishops
dCOM	District Committee of Ordained Ministry
DR Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo
DS	District Superintendent
GC	General Conference
GBGM	General Board of General Ministries
GBHEM	General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
IT	Information Technology
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
UMC	United Methodist Church
UM	United Methodist
UTAUT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology

List of Tables

Table 1. Operationalization of variables	27
Table 2 Studies of Leadership Traits and Characteristics	40
Table 3 Distinguishing technical problems and adaptive challenges.....	56
Table 4 Number of UMC closed congregations in the U.S.A.....	147
Table 5 Local Church Structure	204
Table 6 Number of participants per age.....	226
Table 7 Consequences of not training church leaders.....	242
Table 8 Training received by participants.....	246
Table 9 Additional trainings desired	247
Table 10 Possible way of resolving a church conflict.....	258
Table 11 Causes of a church conflict	264

List of Figures

Figure 1 Six step Problem Solving Model	21
Figure 2 McKinsey 7S Diagram	24
Figure 3 Major components of the path-goal theory.....	46
Figure 4 Model of Adaptive Leadership	57
Figure 5 Guidelines of Servant Leadership.....	59
Figure 6 Participants per age features	226
Figure 7 Gender of participants	227
Figure 8 Participants based on membership characteristics.....	227
Figure 9 Main root of church crisis.....	268

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Data Collection tools.....	316
Appendix 2: Paragraph 2553 of the 2016 BOD.....	327
Appendix 3 UREC Decision.....	330
Appendix 4 Informed Consent Form	331
Appendix 5 Gatekeeper Letter	324

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The lifecycle of any organization changes. In fact, any organization goes through different stages of its development. It is not a straight line. It is made of high and low points, good and bad moments. Some factors affecting the organization may be internal or external. All these factors generated from within or outside the organization need to be managed in order to alleviate the consequences caused by them. It is therefore in the interest of the leadership or management of such organizations to be proactive in taking corrective measures and even planning ahead in order to identify potential risks and menaces that could affect the life of the organization.

Church institutions, like any other organization, are not exempt. In other words, the lifecycle of church organizations is not different from other types of entities. Church organizations experience moments of prosperity and hard times, growth period and decline moments. Forces from the internal or external environment have a positive or negative impact on the life of those church entities in general and the life of church members in particular. In Burundi, Evangelical churches in general and the United Methodist Church (UMC) in particular have been experienced leadership instability, divisions, etc. And this is not a modern issue. Conflicts within the churches are not new and this started already with the early church. The Bible gives examples of early churches which underwent through conflicts. The church at Corinth is a speaking example (Campbell, 2018). The following issues were experienced by the church at Corinth: division, lawsuits, marriages, and management of spiritual gifts, etc. These conflicts that the church faced during the first centuries continue to happen even today. It required the strong leadership of the Apostle Paul to address these issues and some solutions given are still applicable even for today.

The following paper will explore this issue of church leadership, and its role played in church conflicts. Since there are many church denominations, the United Methodist Church in Burundi was used to carry out this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Research problem identification is the critical phase of any research process because it identifies the problem that needs to be investigated or that needs to be addressed. Research problem identification is the starting point of the investigation process of any subject. Research can only be conducted for an identified problem even though it is not for any problem that research needs to be conducted. That is why the problem formulation phase is not easy as people may think because not all problems are researchable. As mentioned above, a brief story of Burundi annual conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) is used as an illustration of a conflict case.

Since 1984 to 1996, the church in Burundi, under the leadership of the Resident Bishop John Alfred NDORICIMPA, did tremendous work in various areas of ministries. The church grew dramatically, and new districts were created. Development projects were implemented: schools, health centers, women development centers and other agricultural and livestock projects. The church grew holistically, caring for the soul and the body of church members and of the community as well. Due to civil war that Burundi was going through since 1993, the Resident Bishop moved to Kenya three years later and started the missionary work there. He launched the United Methodist Church work in Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda. The Burundi Episcopal Area that used to cover Burundi was then changed to East Africa Episcopal Area covering four countries: Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda. It is in such environment that the bishop started losing control over the Burundi Annual Conference. Due to crisis that was going on in Burundi, a group of lay and clergy members started protesting the authority of the Resident Bishop John Alfred NDORICIMPA. The bishop was accused of dictatorship,

nepotism, and many other issues. Although leadership goes with power in order to facilitate the leader to influence others, caregiving actions need to be considered so that the leader is not viewed as dictator. Once power is misused, the leader uses the power to dominate others instead of using it for the interest of the organization. According to Northouse (2016), those leaders opting to misuse power or who intimidate their followers are more concerned with their own needs than the needs and wants of their followers. The consequence of using coercion is therefore the non-achievement of a common objective. Followers are demoralized, frustrated, and not focused on the common goal. The Resident Bishop was viewed as an Autocratic leader. It is true that the UMC Book of Discipline gives power to Bishops, but they are also reminded to carefully exercise that power in the interest of the church. Autocratic leader centralizes power and decision making in himself (Shajahan & Shajahan, 2000). In fact, the Resident Bishop J. Alfred NDORICIMPA developed a self-centered attitude, and he was the only one to make all the decisions. Other church leaders such as District Superintendents had nothing to contribute to the affairs of the church. He was a feared leader. It was very difficult to approach him even for pastors. By then, the church was going through a cold conflict of leadership crisis which started a few years before but became opened in 2005.

Bishop J. Alfred came in Burundi in 2005 to try solving the issue. His cabinet took even some measures against some leaders such as suspension, but the movement did not stop. One Sunday as the bishop was about to give the opening prayer, the congregation kept singing for almost one hour in order not to give him a chance to say the opening prayer. The Inspector General of Burundi National Police had to come and make arrangement for an urgent meeting. The conflict had openly started and the church in fact started a long journey of twelve years of division.

One year later, the Resident Bishop passed away due to sickness in 2006 and that was the beginning of a long journey of church crisis. The Global Church appointed an Interim

Bishop to come and oversee the church in Burundi. The Interim Bishop Machado from Mozambique came to Burundi and tried to discuss with the local church leaders in Burundi on the way forward to end this crisis. He tried to initiate a reconciliation meeting, and the church members thanked God hoping that a solution had been found. Locally, we had to elect the Legal Representative and the Deputy Legal Representative according to national regulations and laws governing church organizations. The Rev. Justin NZOYISABA and the Rev. Lazare BANKURUNAZE (the young brother of late Bishop John Alfred) were respectively elected as the Legal Representative and the Deputy Legal Representative. Both the Rev. Justin NZOYISABA and the Rev. Lazare BANKURUNAZE were favourite candidates to succeed the bishop. In fact, throughout his leadership, the Resident Bishop had prepared the two elders to succeed him once he retires. The Rev Justin had been the Bishop Administrative Assistant for a long period. Even though at the beginning the Rev. Justin was his favourite candidate, the bishop changed his mind and wanted to promote his young brother as the next Bishop of the East Africa Episcopal Area. To prepare this appointment, the Rev. Justin NZOYISABA was replaced by the Rev Lazare BANKURUNAZE as the Bishop's administrative assistant. In fact, the bishop appointed the Rev Justin to a local church in Burundi, and he was forced to come back home from Kenya because he was no longer in good relationship with the bishop. This situation created a deep conflict between the Rev Justin and the Rev Lazare. Back home, the Rev Justin worked therefore with other lay and clergy leaders to rebel against the authority of the Resident Bishop. That is why, even though they were elected to lead the church in Burundi, the issue was not resolved at all due to that existing conflict from Kenya. They saw each other as rivals. While church members were celebrating their elections as Legal Representative and Deputy Legal Representative, it was instead the beginning of the schism. The Deputy Legal Representative started accusing the Legal Representative of taking all the decisions alone without consulting other church leaders. The deputy legal representative wanted also to sign

all the church documents, which the other leaders did not approve of because there is only one leader at the top of every organization. There is no organization led by two equal leaders. Dirty fighting characterized their leadership term. Instead of promoting reconciliation, they used their power to overpower one another or to fight against each other. The celebration and joy church members experienced when these two were elected turned into fairness and despair.

The situation was worsened with the election of the Bishop of the East Africa Episcopal Area. Delegates from all four Annual Conferences were convened (Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda) and attended to that special session that took place in Burundi. The process of electing a Bishop in the UMC is a two-step process. Delegates from the Episcopal Area annual conferences nominate potential episcopacy candidates and the names of the first three candidates are then sent to the corresponding Central Conference for election. Normally, Bishop is elected among the first three nominated candidates according to the ballots from the annual conference session. However, delegates to the Central Conference are also authorized to nominate additional candidates on the floor. That is their rights given by the conference regulations. But also, a nominee can withdraw his/her candidacy and the next nominee on the list is therefore promoted. This is what happened in 2006 special session of the East Africa Episcopal Area. Three names were nominated: the Rev Justin NZOYISABA (he got the highest votes), the Rev Joel NCAHORURI and the Rev Lazare BANKURUNAZE. The Rev Daniel WANDABULA was fourth on the list. In Zimbabwe, where the delegates of the Africa Central Conference gathered, delegates to central conference decided to include the Rev Daniel WANDABULA on the list of episcopacy candidates due to the withdrawal of Rev Lazare BANKURUNAZE. This move was done by delegates from Burundi annual conference because they thought that having a non-Burundian bishop would help to solve the internal conflict. The elected bishop would serve as a reconciliation agent to Burundi church. He could be the mediator in resolving this internal conflict. It is in that perspective that the election and the

consecration of the Rev Daniel WANDABULA as the Resident Bishop of the East Africa Episcopal Area took place. Nevertheless, the situation did not go as expected. Instead of resolving the conflict, the election of the new bishop from Uganda fuelled the conflict, it added more fire, and the division was deepened in Burundi, and it affected the entire episcopal area. Attempts to resolve this conflict were initiated later without success. Failure to resolve this conflict impacted greatly the lives of the congregations. Families were torn apart, imprisonments, fighting, legal cases were initiated, some church members joined other church denominations because the situation was unbearable for them, and this lasted nearly twelve years.

The above example is a speaking case for what church organizations go through. Other church institutions have experienced or are experiencing similar situations. Most evangelical churches in Burundi have been going through divisions and new churches created as a result of the split. The analysis of church leadership's role played in those church conflicts is very critical. And church conflicts should be quickly resolved to avoid more damages that could result in prolonged church crisis.

What happened in the UMC attracted the attention and pushed the researcher to carry out an investigation on the church leadership and church crises in Burundi based on the case of the UMC. This is the identified research problem and according to (Walliman, 2011), the research problem is the central generating point of a research project. According to (Habib, Maryam, & Pathik, 2014), research is driven by a question or problem that guides the process for seeking information with a clear goal in mind.

It is therefore very important to clearly define the problem and limit its scope in order to enable a practical research project with defined outcomes to be devised. The problem has been clearly identified and its scope limited to one church denomination: the UMC in Burundi. However, a question may be asked: is it necessary to do research on this topic? Or is this issue

researchable? As defined early, research is defined as a systematic inquiry of a social phenomenon with an objective of adding to knowledge and or providing possible interventions for desirable solutions. Research implies that the topic or the issue is already known but needs to be studied again (Ayiro, 2012). In fact, church leadership and church crises or conflicts have been the subject of different research (Clarke, 2012; Buchanan, 2013). The research will focus on the United Methodist Church in Burundi with a purpose of providing possible solutions to the current situation. Nevertheless, every research has an objective to achieve formulated as the purpose statement.

1.3 Purpose of the Study, Aim of the study, and Objectives

1.3.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose statement is derived from the problem statement; while the problem outlines what needs to be solved, the purpose explains how the research will respond to it (Ayiro, 2012). It articulates the reason for conducting the study and what the researcher aims to accomplish. It would be inappropriate to conduct research that will not address the identified problem. This statement plays a pivotal role in guiding the dissertation, providing clarity and focus (Hogan, Dolan, & Donnelly, 2009; Ayiro, 2012). Essentially, it gives the study its significance, inspiration, and direction. It typically includes the justification for the research, the subject area, key and supporting research questions, the issues being tackled, and the expected outcomes (Saldana & Leavy, 2011).

The purpose of this study is to analyse the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow us to detect other possible sources or roots of church conflicts. It is very important to determine whether church leadership might also be a source of church conflict or crisis.

1.3.2 Aim of the study

A research aim expresses the intention or an aspiration of the research study. The main aim of this research is to investigate the role of church leaders in church conflicts and other possible roots of church conflicts.

1.3.3 The research objectives

Research objectives outline the specific steps that you will take to achieve your research aim. Objectives define what, why, who, when and how questions. Research objectives are statements of what you intend to find out when answering your question. Research objectives answer what, why, and how questions. In this case, the study has four main research objectives to achieve:

1. To assess if the United Methodist congregation value leadership training.
2. To evaluate what kind of training United Methodist church leaders have.
3. To identify the role of United Methodist church leaders in church conflicts.
4. To identify the possible roots of church crises.
5. To recommend a conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist church in Burundi

Research objectives should enable the realization of the research and should help to frame the research questions.

1.3.4 Research Questions

After identifying the research problem and formulating the research purpose statement, the next step is to develop related research questions in order to narrow the topic under investigation. Normally, research questions derive from the research purpose statement and these workable questions show the existence of sufficient scale to be appropriate for the project

in hand (Andrews, 2003). In addition, a research question must be answerable. It will make no sense at all to formulate research questions that would be impossible to answer within the boundaries of a research project (Andrews, 2003). Bourke, Kirby & Doran (2016) have also supported this view by suggesting that the researcher has to take into account three issues known as the Golden Rules when designing research questions: (i) do participants understand the questions being asked, (ii) Can the respondent answer them and (iii) Are the respondent willing to answer the questions? Since qualitative research primarily seeks to understand human behaviour and interpret individuals' motivations rather than determine causal relationships between variables, it is essential that the research question is clearly articulated, precisely defined, and highly researchable (Andrews, 2003).

Therefore, and considering that the research approach is qualitative one, the following are some of the possible research questions that can be formulated from the above purpose statement:

1. How do United Methodist church members view the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders?
2. What kind of training have the United Methodist church leaders received?
3. How do United Methodist church leaders get involved in conflicts?
4. What are the possible roots of church crises?

1.4 Nature and Significance of the Study

1.4.1 *The nature of the study*

Research in any field is about finding knowledge. Nevertheless, there are research paradigms that the researcher needs to be aware of in order to decide which research approach to use. A research paradigm defines what to study (relevance of social phenomena), why to study (formulating explanatory hypotheses) and how to study (through which methods) (Porta

& Michael, 2008). According to Ayiro (2012, p.61), a paradigm is defined as the basic belief system or worldview about the nature of knowledge and existence that guides the investigation.

Qualitative and quantitative research approaches are therefore built on different philosophical assumptions. In fact, how the researcher views the world (ontology) and believes that knowledge is created will greatly influence his/her philosophical approach to research (Ayiro, 2012). There are therefore two main research paradigms: positivism (also known as the traditional approach) and interpretative (known as naturalistic approach).

Positivism approach or scientific approach is related to quantitative research approach. For those opting this approach, the truth about an object or a phenomenon can only be understood through scientific methods and cannot be influenced by the perceptions of the researcher. According to Abbott & Jennifer (2012, p.21), the scientific method gives us a systematic way to understand what we observe, and it ensures as much objectivity as possible in how we think about and then observe the world. In other words, the object being observed is separate from the observer (researcher) and it can be accepted as reality if proven by scientific research or empiricism (methods for exploring phenomena by collecting observable, empirical, and measurable evidence, guided by established principles of reasoning) (Ayiro, 2012). With this research philosophy, the task of the researcher is to describe and analyze this reality only in a neutral way. Why? Because the world exists as an objective entity, outside of the mind of the observer, and in principle it is knowable in its entirety, says (Porta & Michael, 2008). But not all truth is scientifically proven, in some cases, truth is a reconstruction of social events or phenomena.

Interpretative research paradigm adopts a qualitative research approach, and the world is viewed differently. The assumption of this research paradigm is that reality is collectively or socially built. This means that reality depends on society constructing it. We can construct different reality depending on the society we are in. In short, there is no single observable

reality. In the words of (Merriam, 2009), the purpose of qualitative research is to figure out how people make sense out of their lives, to explain the process of constructing the meaning, and to describe how people give meaning to what they experience. Hence, this approach suggests that the truth cannot be known and understood without the intervention of the researcher. Therefore, the researcher has to be directly immersed in the situation under study (Sarah J., 2013) and cannot be detached from the subjects being investigated. With this research paradigm, subjective meaning (as opposed to scientific method) is at the core of the knowledge and therefore, an event or social phenomenon cannot be understood if the perceptions researchers have of the world outside are ignored (Porta & Michael, 2008). According to Ayiro (2012), the understanding of social reality is based on the subjective interpretation of the researcher. In fact, there is no single, unitary reality apart from our perceptions, and because every person is unique and lives in a unique reality, individuals cannot be aggregated or averaged to explain phenomena. Interpretive investigators attempt to understand phenomena by accessing the meaning and value that study participants assign to them (Stephen D., Marylynn T., & Frances Julia, 2012). Sometimes, culture plays a major role in understanding social events, and culture differs from place to place. Hence, the importance of exploring meaning individuals assign to that social event. Their understanding may differ depending on their cultural background or their own context.

The current research topic is on church leadership and church conflicts with the focus on the United Methodist Church as all the church denominations cannot be analyzed. The results from the UMC can then inspire other church denominations. And since the purpose of the study is to analyze church leadership and its role in church conflicts, this can be greatly achieved by using a qualitative research approach.

In fact, leadership deals with people and the perceptions that people have on leadership differ a lot. In other words, it is very difficult to know about the reality or truth of leadership if

the understanding or the views of the participants are ignored. Leadership can be understood and explained differently depending on the context and the reality of the world there. So, there is possibility of multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest (Ayiro, 2012). But also, the researcher must appreciate the settings and bring in his understanding and perception of the subject under study.

The same principle applies to the analysis of church conflicts. Conflict brings into play human nature. This cannot be completely measured by scientific methods but considerations on human perceptions may offer great result about knowing the truth on this social phenomenon.

1.4.2 The significance of the study

As the researcher is also a church leader, the research is very important because it has given light on possible roots of conflicts related to church leadership and particularly the role played by the church leadership in those times of chaos. Consequently, the understanding of those causes will enable the researcher and other church leaders to avoid conflicts but also it will give some guidance on how to deal with crises because problem solving starts with detecting the causes. The problem-solving process includes three main steps: i) Understand the problem, ii) Identify alternative solutions, and iii) Select the best among them (Vandenbosch, 2003). Understanding the problem deals with the definition of the problem and detecting the causes of the problem. And according to John Eric Adair (2010), a problem properly understood is a problem half-solved. For Pokras, the solution might not address what's wrong underneath unless the problem is thoroughly and accurately defined (Pokras, 2010).

Furthermore, if the findings indicate that church leadership can be the cause root of church crises, training sessions may be organized in various denominations in order to equip church leaders with the necessary leadership skills. But also, the fact of identifying the roots of church crises may bring back the honor of the Christian faith and contribute to prevent the

Church against further crises. Due to conflicts observed in many church denominations, the public has lost trust for protestant churches. In fact, there are no existing information in Burundi related to this topic.

Based on the findings of this research, a conflict resolution framework was recommended to the United Methodist Church. This model can be adapted by other church denominations as well to manage conflicts.

Other leaders from various domains such as private business, public organizations, and political organizations may also use the findings of the research. Since there are no conflict free organizations, the findings of this research would inspire other leaders from those organizations and measures could be taken to address or to manage any detected conflict.

The application of the findings would not be limited only to church organizations. The Ministry of Interior that deals with church organizations may also use the findings of this research in updating law and regulations governing religious organizations. The Ministry of Interior has been struggling to deal with increasing church conflicts. The findings would help the Ministry of Interior to get some insights regarding church conflicts, including the importance of church leadership training, the possible roots, and the range of conflict management models.

This research constitutes a great contribution to the academia family. Studies on church conflicts in Burundi, with a focus on the role of church leaders are very limited. The findings of this study would serve as secondary data for those who would initiate further studies in this domain.

The research will be beneficial not only to the researcher as a church leader but also to i) evangelical denominations and to other similar organizations, ii) church leaders and church members, iii) government and iv) other researchers interested in this area.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The research was conducted within the UMC, one of the main churches in Burundi established in many provinces. The church has over three hundred thousand members and it is made up of thirteen District. Even though there are many protestant churches in Burundi, the research was limited to the UMC only and only members in leadership positions were targeted. But even the members in leadership position are many in a church that has more than 300 local churches. In fact, the number of church members in leadership in a local church varies between 30 to 50. If all these were to be considered as the research population, the sample of the research study would be drawn from more than 9,000 to 15,000 members. And these leaders are made up members from the clergy and from the laity. It would not be possible to get the views of all those church members. The time, budget and other related logistics would not allow us to carry out such an investigation. Hence, the research was limited to one of the conference charges in the district of Bujumbura.

1.6 Assumptions

In conducting this study, the researcher made two assumptions: participants would be open, and they would give honest responses. The interpretation of a phenomenon in order to make a meaning out of it requires the openness and the honesty of participants. Since they occupy various leadership positions, the researcher expected them to be open and honest in sharing their thoughts on the issues raised in this study.

1.7 Limitations

Since targeted participants were those in leadership positions, the data collection experienced few challenges and was time consuming because the researcher had to get the permission from the church leaders before meeting participants. This was not an easy task due to their various commitments. Due to the unavailability of some selected participants,

replacement was arranged, and this affected the data collection plan. Most of those church leaders are not full-time employees of the church and arrangements needed to be put in place to reach and interview all selected participants. The findings may have been affected by some of these limitations in one way or the other even though they were dealt quickly with. For instance, there was a change in the original targeted sample due to unavailability of some participants. Though replacements were conducted, participants differ in experience, leadership level, or perspectives. And yet purposive sampling was used to gain the rich experience of participants. So, there was a chance of getting different findings if the participants initially selected were not changed.

1.8 Summary

The proposal has indicated the necessity to conduct a study related to church leadership and its role in church conflict. The shared story of the UMC is just an example of conflicts that many church denominations go through. Chapter one gave the introduction of the study. It outlined the background information of the research, the purpose of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives and research questions, the nature and the significance of the study, the delimitation of the study, and limitations. A list of proposed chapters has been also included.

The next chapter focused on literature review. Different books, journals, and articles related to leadership theories and styles, pastoral ministry, conflicts and conflicts management styles, the polity and doctrine of the UMC, etc.

1.9 Chapters breakdown

The study is divided into five chapters. The first introductory chapter covers the background information that sheds light on the motivation of the research. The following topics were discussed: the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research objectives and research questions, the nature of the study, the significance of the study, the delimitations, and limitations of the study. A summary of that chapter was also given.

Chapter two gives a detailed literature review under which the study is conducted. Writings related to leadership theories, pastoral ministry, types of conflict and conflict management styles, and the polity of the United Methodist church were explored with the focus on leadership, conflict, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Chapter three discusses research methodology and research design. In order to carry out this research, qualitative research was pursued. And the ethnographic method was selected as the appropriate research design. As Merriam (2009, p.27) notes, ethnography studies focus on human society and culture. Conflict is part of human society, and conflict resolution styles are culturally rooted. A sample made of clergy and laity was drawn from one of the circuits of the district of the United Methodist Church and adequate data collection tools including interviews and focus group discussions were developed.

Chapter four gives the expression of church members in leadership positions within the UMC with regard to church leadership training, roots of church conflict, and conflict management or resolution approaches. And since conflicts are being analyzed within church settings, the behaviour of Christians involved in that conflict is very critical. In addition, how to deal with such conflicts is also important. According to Halverstadt (1991, p.25), while conflicts, as such, are not sinful, conflicts provide opportunities for sinful behaviour. Parties in conflict should bear that in mind and demonstrate the willingness to resolve the conflict in a peaceful manner, being guided by the love of God. Interviews and focus group discussions

were therefore organized to hear from church leaders and data collected were used to determine the source of church conflicts and the role of church leaders in church conflicts.

Finally in chapter five, the study discovers the views of United Methodist Church members on church leadership and church conflicts. This chapter reflects on the importance of training church leaders, the understanding of possible roots of church conflict, and the management process of church conflict. The study offers practical recommendations to be used in the domain of church leadership and church conflict. Before concluding, the study offers recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to analyse the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow us to detect other possible sources or roots of church conflicts. Among the possible root causes, the focus should also be directed to church leadership in order to determine whether church leadership might also be a source of church conflict or crisis. This research focuses on the case of UMC- Burundi annual conference, an annual conference that went through a twelve year of leadership crisis.

There are therefore some theoretical frameworks that are related to the topic under study. Four theoretical frameworks have been identified: the servant leadership theory, the six steps problem solving theory, the McKinsey 7S Model and the ecclesiological framework.

The research purpose statement requires a thorough analysis of the servant leadership theoretical frameworks. The servant leadership is very important because it is a framework that is attached mainly to church leadership. Even though other leadership theories are necessary for the church, the need for servant leadership is paramount. Another useful theoretical framework is the six steps problem solving models. In fact, church conflict constitutes a problem. And according to that theoretical framework, the problem needs to be clearly identified, and the root causes determined in order find a solution to the current research. In addition to that, this problem-solving model was combined with the McKinsey 7S Model in order to analyse the effectiveness of the UMC organizational design. This McKinsey 7S helped to diagnose the different elements and see their impact on the church structure, especially if the change can prevent or promote conflict. The last theoretical framework that the researcher opted to include is the theoretical ecclesiological framework. It is very interesting to see how this ecclesiological framework was developed in Latina America as a response of an identified

problem. This ecclesiological framework helped people to understand the church and it provided the practical foundation upon which this vision of the Church could be built. A new paradigm of the Church as the “People of God” was developed after Vatican II.

After analyzing the theoretical framework of this study in detail, a literature review of related topics was conducted for in-depth exploration.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 Servant leadership theoretical framework

Even though there are many leaderships theoretical frameworks, the following research focused mainly on the servant leadership theoretical framework. The selection of this framework is motivated by the scope of the topic, that is looking at church leadership and causes of crises in a church setting. According to Afolabi (2018), leadership within a church extends beyond methods, structures, techniques, or official positions. It embodies a servant-minded character that collaborates with others to fulfil the church's eternal mission. As a result, the church serves as the ideal setting for the servant leadership theoretical framework. Therefore, church is the best arena of servant leadership theoretical framework. This doesn't mean that other areas such as business and other domains do not need this framework. There is certainly a need for such a theoretical framework for the interest of the organization. But the church presents a special case because its founder, Jesus Christ, not only demonstrated the highest point of a servant leader but he is also portrayed as the role model of all servant leaders ever known.

In fact, at the heart of this servant leadership theoretical framework is to serve others. According to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church as the Apostle Paul writes, a leader is the one who serves others. In other words, leadership is servanthood. This is the question that Jesus' disciples had. As Jesus makes his way toward Jerusalem, the mother of James and John

came to Jesus with her two sons, kneeling down and made a request of granting them preferred seats, one on Jesus' right hand and the other on Jesus's left hand. This request greatly displeased the other ten disciples, and they disputed among themselves to find out who should be the greatest, the leader. Both the disciples and their families have become preoccupied with status rather than serving. They have missed the whole point of Jesus' leadership. Arriving to Capernaum, Jesus asked the disciples what they were arguing on the roads, but they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all." (Marc 9: 35). For Jesus, the greatest must be the servant. Jesus did not stop there; He then practiced that in the Gospel according to John by washing the feet of his disciples.

John 13:14-15 reads "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Jesus Christ demonstrated the heart of servant leadership theoretical framework: serving others. And many scholars have concurred with this. In fact, serving the needs of others is not just a by-product of servant leadership; it is the heart of how servant leadership is practiced (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2018). Though this theory was coined for the first time by Robert Greenleaf in his seminal booklet "*The Servant as Leader*", and has been the focus of other leadership scholars for more than four decades (Northouse, 2016), this theory originates from Jesus Christ, the Founder and Head of the Church. Since the research is about investigating the church leadership and its role in church conflicts, this servant leadership theoretical framework is very suitable one to be used in this case even though Jesus Christ applied as well other leadership theories. Jesus Christ is therefore the role model of current church leaders. Since Jesus is the Master, church leaders must follow the example of their Master or step in his feet. A church leader who is not practicing servant leadership is like a Christian with spiritual gifts but without love. The apostle Paul is clear about it in his first letter

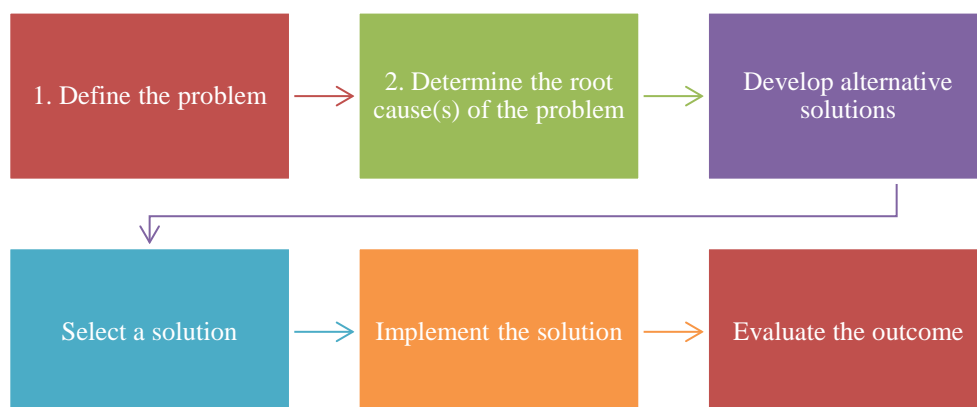
to the Corinthians. In chapter 10 of this letter, the Apostle Paul shows what the congregation in Corinth was missing. And due to lack of love despite having many spiritual gifts, the church in Corinth was characterized by divisions, hatred, legal cases, etc. As long as a church leader does not grasp the fundamentals of servant leadership, that he/she has been called to serve others instead of serving for her/himself, the possibility of a conflict to erupt would be always there.

Not only Jesus used other leadership styles and skills, but his focus was mainly on serving others. He came as a servant, and not as manager or a boss as it is written in the gospel according to Matthew 20:28 “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to **serve**, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” This is an appeal to all those aspiring to leadership positions, a principle to be applied by leaders. Therefore, church leaders have to demonstrate the heart of servanthood in their ministry works.

2.2.2 Problem solving theoretical framework

The Six-Step Problem Solving Model is represented in the following diagram:

Figure 1
Six step Problem Solving Model



Source: (Medium:2023)

The current research used this model and especially for the first five steps of this framework: problem definition, determination of the root causes of the problem, develop alternative solutions, select a solution, and implement the solution.

The first step is identifying the problem – the context, background and symptoms of the issue or a problem. Once the problem has been clearly understood, an investigation is therefore carried out to detect the symptoms and the implications of the problem. This step helps to identify who is affected by the problem and how urgent it is to deal with the consequences caused by it. According to John Eric Adair (2010, p. 48), a problem properly defined is a problem half-solved. The identification of a problem is very crucial for a research activity. In fact, failure to identify the true problem misleads the whole research process. In fact, the purpose of conducting research is to contribute to the wellbeing of the community. According to Creswell (2014), when the problem is unclear, understanding other elements of a research study—particularly its significance—becomes therefore challenging. The findings of such research cannot address the issues the community is facing because of failing to properly identify the real problem. However, it is not the identification of a problem that matters only, the root causes of the problem are also very important. Hence, this model helps to move to the next step: determine the root causes.

The second step is concerned with the root cause(s) of the problem. It explores what has caused the problem. It requires a deep analysis of the problem in order to detect its real roots or causes. The identification of the true causes requires therefore the use of appropriate problem-solving tools such as fishbone diagrams (or cause effect analysis), pareto analysis and affinity diagrams. This step is very crucial if the researcher wants really to make a valuable contribution and especially if the findings are to address the issue or to provide a lasting solution to the problem. In fact, the management and the prevention of conflict begin with understanding its sources (Ho-Won, 2008). If the root causes are not found, there is a high

probability of treating symptoms and as consequence, coming up with false solutions or treatment because a symptom may be shared by various problems. Failure to identify the root causes may lead to the high probability of recurrence of the problem.

The next three steps consist of identifying alternative solutions, selecting a solution and implementing the solution. These steps are vital for determining the appropriate management style(s) for the church conflict. Resolving a conflict may require a combination of more than one solution or conflict resolution methods. Therefore, church leaders should be able to identify the possible solutions to the case being treated, and from these possible solutions, select the appropriate one or ones, and implement it.

In his creative problem-solving model, Tomlinson (2004, p.116) combines the two phases of defining the problem and determining the root cause of the problem in one single phase called “preparation”. This phase consists of understanding and identifying the problem. And you can only understand and identify the problem if you properly define it and determine the root causes of the problem. Instead of six phases, Tomlison’s problem solving model has only four phases (2004, p.116): The first phase is called “preparation” and under this phase, the researcher seeks to understand and identify the problem. Under the second phase known as “production”, the researcher’s main activity is to develop different solutions. Tomislon called the third phase “judgment” under which the researcher has to make the highest quality decision. In other words, this phase consists of selecting the most appropriate solution for the identified problem. The final phase focuses on creating favourable conditions for completing tasks, which involves examining the problem situation from various perspectives, transforming a decision-making scenario into a problem-solving one, distinguishing between idea generation and evaluation, promoting constructive debate, and considering a broad spectrum of alternatives.

The above-mentioned steps are relevant for the current research. In fact, one of the research objectives is to find the possible root causes of church conflicts. The identification of

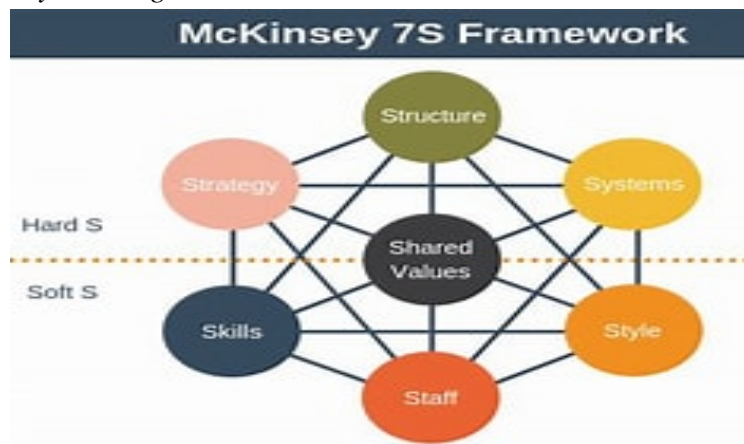
these root causes will help the researcher to formulate appropriate recommendations to the various stakeholders and other interested parties of this research. For instance, church leaders will find them very useful in order to properly manage current conflicts and prevent future conflicts within their church organizations.

2.2.3 The McKinsey 7S Framework

The McKinsey 7S Model refers to a tool that analyses a company's "organizational design." The goal of the model is to depict how effectiveness can be achieved in an organization through the interactions of seven key elements – Structure, Strategy, Skill, System, Shared Values, Style, and Staff. Hence the framework is called 7S Model. The model's main objective is to find out whether these key elements support each other or are in effective alignment so that the organization's objectives can be achieved. The following is a diagram of the McKinsey 7S framework:

Figure 2

McKinsey 7S Diagram



Source : (manager: 2014)

Those seven elements are divided into hard S and soft S. The hard elements include strategy statements, structure, and systems. The four soft S are skills, staff, style, and shared values. Changing one of these key elements may affect positively or negatively the organization's goals. Leaders of the organization must ensure that these elements are

interrelated if the organization's objectives are to be achieved. For the purpose of this research, this framework model was used to evaluate mainly the structure of the United Methodist Church. In this case, the structure is equivalent to the church polity or how the church is governed, the conference being the main the primary source of authoritative teaching in the church since the beginnings of Methodism in the United States (Scott, 2002). It is the chain of command as described through the organization chart or structure. UMC leadership is organized according to the polity of the church. In the words of (Afolabi, 2021), the church is structured and organized in such a way that leadership conflict is inevitable. The United Methodist Church is governed by the episcopal system, where power and authority reside in the office of the bishop. A bishop may misuse the power bestowed to him/her and act as an authoritarian leader. This is what happened in Burundi with the first UMC resident bishop. And this became one of the roots of the church crisis in Burundi annual conference.

In addition, the model should be used to analyze how a change in those seven elements can foster or prevent conflict. The role of skills, staff, style, and shared values need to be analyzed in the context of the research purpose. The appointment of pastors(staff) to local church is another characteristic of the United Methodist Church. And this is done during the annual conference session. A change in local church leadership(staff) can also affect the life of the congregation and may be a source of conflict. A change of skills through training of church leaders has an impact on staff as it helps the acquisition of new skills, and in return trained leaders can use the acquired skills to improve their leadership role. It is therefore another suitable framework to use for the purpose of this research, especially for the analysis of the United Methodist Church.

2.2.4 The theoretical ecclesiological framework

This theoretical ecclesiological framework was developed after the Second Vatican Council. In fact, this Council led to a shift in the Catholic ecclesiology (Helgen, 2020). This was more remarkable in Latin America where conflicts between priests and church members on some ecclesiological questions. A debate was therefore around the following issues: Who is the Church? Where is the Church? What does it mean to be Church? But it didn't stop there. More questions were also discussed: How should the Church be structured? How is ecclesiastical authority exercised? What are the roles of bishops, priests, and the laity? The above questions constitute the core elements of the worldly manifestation and mission of the Church (Helgen, 2020). To answer these questions required to redefine the church identity leading to a new approach or thinking to church, not a church viewed in its institutional structures with power concentrated in the pope, bishops, and priests, rooted itself in the image of the "People of God."

This theoretical framework was in way applied to the case of United Methodist Church in Burundi. There was a shift on the way the church leadership must be put in place, hence raising conflicts and tensions between the Book of Discipline regulations and the people of God or the delegates to Annual Conference. A liberation movement was in a way developed. The church in Burundi did not approve the election of a foreign bishop. The delegates thought that they needed to liberate themselves from foreign leadership. The delegates challenged the polity of church with regard to the election of the bishop and decided to take the issue in their hands. According to delegates of Burundi annual conference, the delegates to Africa Central Conference, the body in charge of electing bishops, were to abide to the choice made in Burundi. And yet, the election process is well described in the BOD. The delegates of the annual conference do not elect bishops, they nominate episcopacy candidates, and the delegates of the central conference elect among the first three nominees, even though the BOD gives

them also the right to nominate additional candidates during the session. The role of each church body is very clear. This misunderstanding of the roles assigned to these church bodies (annual conference and central conference) constituted nevertheless one of the roots of the church conflict in Burundi. What is done deliberately or what is done due to ignorance?

2.2.5 Operationalization of variables and the use of the UTAUT and TAM Frameworks

The above theoretical frameworks present some key constructs and variables attached to each theoretical framework. The following table gives a summary of how some variables can be operationalized:

Table 1

Operationalization of variables

Framework	Key Constructs	Operational Variables	Data Source
Servant Leadership	Listening, empathy, stewardship	Frequency of servant behaviours; perceived impact on congregational peace	Interview & transcripts
Problem Solving	Root cause analysis, resolution steps	Leader capacity to identify causes, plan and implement solutions	participant narratives
McKinsey 7S	Style, staff, shared values	Alignment between values and structure; conflict due to mismatched systems	Document review; interviews
Ecclesiological	Authority, polity, people of God	Interpretation of governance roles; perception of spiritual legitimacy	Church documents

While the primary focus of this research was on church leadership and its role in conflict, it is also useful to stress that the adoption of conflict resolution frameworks and leadership development tools—particularly digital ones to be developed—would necessitate the incorporation of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The above theoretical frameworks support the examination of how leaders accept, adopt, and utilize digital tools and frameworks (e.g., online leadership training modules, e-learning platforms for conflict management, or church governance software).

According to Venkatesh et al. (2003), UTAUT is well-suited for assessing how external and internal factors affect the behavioural intention to use a system. The model includes four core determinants: (i) performance expectancy: Whether church leaders believe that adopting new tools (e.g., conflict resolution training platforms) will improve outcomes; (ii) effort expectancy: How easy it is for leaders to engage with training or governance systems; (iii) social influence: The degree to which leaders feel pressured or encouraged by peers or senior clergy to adopt conflict tools or leadership practices; and (iv) facilitating conditions: Whether sufficient infrastructure (digital access, training support) exists for adoption. On the other side, TAM complements UTAUT by focusing on two critical perceptions: (i) perceived usefulness: Do leaders believe a tool (e.g., servant leadership development apps or training simulations) enhances their leadership effectiveness?; and (ii) perceived ease of use: Is the technology or training platform simple to use, given digital literacy levels in the church context?

The use of UTAUT and TAM would be fundamental if the variables are to be operationalized. It is worth noting that digital leadership training and conflict mediation tools are increasingly available. However, adoption remains low in contexts like Burundi due to perceptions of complexity, relevance, lack of skills, and limited access to IT solutions.

Integrating UTAUT and TAM would therefore help to explain why church leaders resist or embrace tools that could strengthen leadership skills or reduce institutional conflict.

2.2.6. *Synthesis of theoretical frameworks*

Together, the four theoretical frameworks—Servant Leadership, Problem Solving, the McKinsey 7S Model, and Ecclesiological Theory—form a comprehensive lens through which the complexity of church leadership and conflict can be understood. The Servant Leadership framework provides a theological and moral foundation for evaluating the character and conduct expected of church leaders. The Problem-Solving framework introduces a practical, analytical process for identifying, understanding, and resolving conflicts by addressing their root causes. Meanwhile, the McKinsey 7S Model allows for organizational-level analysis by examining how internal church elements—such as structure, staffing and skills—interact and potentially contribute to conflict. Finally, the Ecclesiological framework situates the leadership crisis within a broader theological and institutional context, recognizing that different interpretations of authority, governance, and church identity can be both sources and reflections of deeper tensions. By integrating these frameworks, the study ensures a holistic approach that not only diagnoses leadership-related conflict in the United Methodist Church of Burundi but also proposes biblically grounded, organizationally sound, and contextually relevant solutions.

2.3 Review of related literature

Under the following sections, related literature to the main key themes of this research is to be explored. According to Merriam (2009, p.72), literature review provides not only the foundation of a theoretical framework, but it also provides the basis for knowledge establishment. A review of related literatures on leadership theories, types of conflicts and conflict resolution models, pastoral ministry and Christian education has been conducted. In addition to that, literature related to the polity of the UMC was explored in order to get an understanding of the church under study.

2.3.1 Definition of key terms

The following are the key terms that require an overview for the purpose of this study: leadership, church leadership, and conflict.

Leadership

Leadership is a term that needs some thought. The term “Leadership” has been attached to various definitions depending on the people who tried to define it. In other words, leadership has many meanings attached to it or leadership means different things depending on who is defining it. Leadership is not therefore an easy term to define as people may think. Leadership definitions have been evolutionary, and it has been difficult for scholars to agree on one common definition of leadership. Gary summarized well this by saying that leadership is defined in accordance with each researcher’s individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon that are of their most interest (Gary, 2012). In the words of (Shajahan & Shajahan, 2000), leadership is defined as the process of influencing the members of the group with respect to goal setting and goal achievement. According to this definition, there are four key words: process, influence, group of people and goal. This definition was also supported by other researchers.

In fact, leadership concepts have been viewed from different perspectives such as personality, power relationships, transformational process, etc. (Northouse, 2016). Despite that challenge, Norton, in agreement with Shajahan and Shajahan (2000), identified four key components of leadership: (a) it is a process, (b) it involves influence, (c) it occurs within groups, and (d) it focuses on achieving common goals. Expanding on these elements, Northouse (2016) defined leadership as a process in which an individual influences a group of people to accomplish a common objective. These characteristics can be traced in the definition given by Burns (1978, p.29). According to this author, leadership is defined as the ability of leaders to inspire followers to pursue goals that align with their shared values, motivations, needs, aspirations, and expectations. The relationship between leaders and followers is fundamental in understanding what leadership is. Hence for Burns (1978, p.27), one cannot talk of leadership if the exercise of it does not achieve goals mutually held by both leaders and followers. Leadership seeks to attain shared goals. In other words, leaders with motive and power bases use followers' motives to achieve the objectives of both leaders and followers. Alternatively, leaders' main objective is to achieve a common goal. A point that Afolabi (2018) fully supports: "*leadership is incomplete without followship*". Is it possible to be a leader of oneself based on that definition?

Nevertheless, Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) argue that leadership has long been mistaken for authority, power, and influence. They emphasize that leadership should be understood as an action rather than a position. While authority, power, and influence are essential tools, they do not inherently define leadership. Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky (2009) further note that these resources can be utilized for various purposes, many of which may have little or no connection to true leadership. The word "leader" has a sacrifice connotation attached to it:

“The origin of this word “*leader*” comes from the Indo-European root word *leit*, the name of the person who carried the flag in front of an army going into the battle and usually died in the first enemy attack. His sacrifice would alert the rest of the army to the location of the danger ahead”. (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009)

Another issue that needs to be clarified is whether it is important for a leader to be educated or to be literate. Being educated and being literate are two different terms. Note that it is important also to stress that education does not necessarily make someone a good leader. The formal education makes people become literate, meaning a person who has book knowledge. Pastors are required to have theological qualifications. And despite the importance of these qualifications, for a pastor to be a good leader, he/she must be educated. In our annual conference, we do have pastors who have degrees in Theology and other related fields but who are not good leaders. An educated person is one with practical and moral knowledge.

Church leadership

But what is then church leadership? It is very important first to understand the word church and its origins in order to properly define what church leadership is. Studies about churches and church-related issues have been conducted (Clarke, 2012; Buchanan, 2013). The word “church” was used for the first time by Jesus Christ in the gospel of Matthew 16:18. In this story, Jesus told his Apostle Peter “And I also say unto you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” The term “church” comes from *ekklesia*, which is a combination of *ek* (the preposition out) and *kaleo* (the word for “to call.”) Thus, the original meaning of the term Church is “called out ones.” It signifies people who are called to follow Christ and set apart from a life of self-centeredness and rebellion (Elmer, 2008). In the words of Mills (2013), the word “Church” was defined as the called-out body of believers, and it is to be the spiritual light of the world. For Riccards (2012), church can be analyzed in six models with a dominant leadership style linked to each

model. The Church can be viewed as an Institution, as a Mystical Community, as Sacrament, as Herald, as Servant and as Community of Disciples.

Church can be viewed as visible and invisible. Visible church includes everyone who is regularly part of the gathered church, the community of believers regardless of the condition of their hearts while invisible church is composed only of those who have been united to Christ in salvation. And this is what is called the “true church.” Invisible church is therefore a subgroup of the visible church even though we do consider all members of the visible church as truly saved, giving them the benefit of the doubt. However, only God sees the heart (Psalm 44:21 and Acts 15:8). Therefore, it is only God who can identify the invisible church with full certainty. In short, the church belongs to Jesus and in fact, He is the Head of it.

Church leadership is not therefore a new theme as it has been the subject of many writers and researchers. For Afolabi (2018), church leadership refers to all who exercise influence, guidance, and direction to those in the church toward fulfilling the church’s goals. This means therefore that there are many leaders within one congregation. And these leaders may be either ordained ministers or lay leaders. This requires building good relationship between clergy and laity. Church leadership goes beyond the position occupied as it has to consider also the management of followers. According to Mills (2013), church leadership has not much changed since the first century to date. The Bible gives a series of examples of church leadership and the third book of John pointed out a problem related to church leadership especially Diotrephes who proclaimed himself as a church leader (Mills, 2013). Hence the necessity of understanding different leadership styles and how these can be applied in case of church crises or conflicts. Different leadership styles have been explored and since the Church has been viewed as Servant, it is very keen to stress the importance of the servant leadership theory. Developed by Robert K. Greenleaf in the 1970s, the theory states that the great leader is seen as servant first (Young, 1999; Board of Discipleship, 2016). This style was coined based

on Jesus' example of washing the feet of his disciples. The Church, like any other organization, cannot be separated with leadership.

Therefore, all church leaders should refer to Jesus Christ's leadership as the Owner of the Church. In other words, any church leader who wants to succeed in his/her leadership has to follow the example of Jesus. Different leadership styles were used by the Founder of the Church: transformational, transactional, servanthood, etc. In fact, the viability and the growth of the church requires responsible leadership.

Jesus knew that it was very important to have leaders who would work for the growth of the church. Throughout his lifetime of ministry, Jesus Christ was a transformational leader. Jesus aimed at transforming his disciples into leaders (disciple makers). Matthew's Great Commission (Matthew 20:18-20) is a good example "... Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..."

Jesus also motivated his disciples by exchange with rewards. Jesus' answer to Peter's question: "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?" (Matthew 19:27) was that when he sits on his glorious throne the disciples will sit with him judging Israel and that "all the losses which discipleship may involve will be handsomely repaid (France, 1985)". Furthermore, Jesus told his disciples that if they gave, they would receive (Luke 6:38). Jesus seems to say that there is reciprocity in life: we get back what we put into life (Morris, 1974).

Jesus rebuked those among his followers who thought that power comes from being above everybody else in leadership. Instead, Jesus insisted that power comes from serving others. When Jesus' disciples were arguing about who was the greatest (Mark 9:33-34), he told them that "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mark 9:35). This is servanthood leadership. The servant-leader is a servant first and this starts with the human inherent feeling of being there for others, the sentiment that one wants to serve

first. The servant-leader's priority is on ensuring that other people's needs are being served first. For instance, a good mother always puts the interests of her child first. All her energy is mobilized to ensure that the needs of her baby are first met. Jesus "who being in the very nature of God" humbled himself by "taking the very nature of a servant" and took human nature (Philippians 2:6-7) so that he could serve humanity. Furthermore, he died on humanities' behalf so that people would be saved (Philippians 2:8).

Conflict

Having defined what church leadership is, it is also important to stress that conflicts and crisis are part of the church's existence.

The term **conflict** originates from the Latin word *confligere* or *conflictus* (where *con* means "together" and *fligere* means "to strike"), which translates to "to strike together" (McCully, 2021). This etymology suggests a collision or disagreement, often involving controversy, quarrels, struggles, or prolonged battles. As a result, conflict is understood as a clash, struggle, or disagreement arising from opposing perspectives, values, ideas, interests, motives, or desires. Conflict Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster. According to Halverstadt (1991, p.4), conflict is defined as a power struggle arising from differences in information, beliefs, interests, desires, values, or access to resources. In the same line, Ayojimi(2019, p.9) defines conflict as a struggle among people; it may be physical or ideological. Conflict often leads to heated arguments, physical confrontations, and a disruption of peace and harmony, ultimately affecting relationships. According to Nnamdi (2023, p.42), conflict shows that a relationship is not going well, or that a relationship cannot continue as always, or that a relationship needs adjustment and constructive change.

The early church experienced conflicts and crises and the same thing is happening in today's churches: divisions, sexual abuses, financial crisis, heresies, and so on (Fox-Genovese, 2003). But also, Dreyer (2015) notes that the church is in crisis because it is not a church

anymore. According to the same author, the church has deviated from its original mission. The real crisis of the church is its inability to 'be church.' It is no longer the light of the world, it is no longer the voice of the speechless, personal gains have replaced the community interests, hypocrisy and corruption have been rampant within the church and the stewardship and integrity of some pastors and other church leaders are now questionable (Miller, 1997).

After the overview of these key terms, it is also important to describe the first step of any research: problem identification. In order to properly understand this step, a United Methodist Church background is given in the following paragraphs. Similar crisis cases had also occurred in other church organizations leading to divisions, fighting among church members, birth of new churches and the leadership crisis of the organization. And this is not expected to stop.

2.3.2 Leadership theories

Leadership theories have attracted many scholars and depending on their different approaches, leadership theories were developed. Due to its complexity, this domain has and continues to gain the attention of researchers worldwide. According to Lussier and Achua (2010, pp.16-17), there has been an evolution of leadership paradigm in the 60 years during which it has been studied, and four classifications have been made: the Trait Theory paradigm (1900s to 1940s) which attempts to explain distinctive characteristics accounting for leadership effectiveness; the Behavioural Leadership Theory paradigm (1940s to 1950s) that attempts to define distinctive styles used by effective leaders or to define the nature of their work; the Contingency Leadership Theory paradigm (1960s) which offers explanation that the appropriate leadership style is based on the leader, followers and situation; and the Integrative Leadership Theory paradigm (1960s to 1980s) where there is an attempt to combine the trait, behavioural and contingency theories to explain successful leader – follower influencing

relationships. Datche(2015) adds the Great Man theory(1840's); the Transactional theories(1970's), and the Transformational leadership theories(1970's). Northouse (2016, pp.2-5) gives a brief history on how leadership was defined and from these different definitions, leadership theories were also developed.

2.3.2.1 Great Man Theory

Before 1930, control and centralized power with a main focus on domination were the main characteristics of leadership. This theory was also known as the Great Man Theory (Arenas, Connelly, & Williams, 2017) due to its attachment to masculinity. Leadership was seen as a male quality, especially in terms of military leadership. Another alternative name or variant of this theory was referred to as the warrior model of leadership, which appeared in several classics such as *Sun Tzu's Art of War*, *Aristotle's Politics*, *Machiavelli's Prince*, *Gratian's The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, and *Clausewitz's on War* (Arenas, Connelly, & Williams, 2017). This theory was built on two fundamental assumptions: First, leaders are born and not made; and secondly, that great leaders are born when there is a need for them. According to (Nawaz, Khan, & Khan, 2016), the term Great Man Theory was coined by the Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle, (1841) who declared "the history of the world is but the biography of great men". According to this historian Carlyle, heroes shape history through their intellectual vision, their artistic brilliance, the abilities of their leadership and, most important, their divine inspiration. Carlyle argued that some men were born with inherent gifts that set them apart from others positioning them as intrinsic leaders (Dugan, 2017). Leaders who can therefore fall in this category are religious leaders like Jesus and Muhammad; political leaders such as Churchill and Gandhi and military leaders such as Napoleon (Kyagera, 2013). Concepts similar to this general idea of the "superior individual" are what resulted in the idea of the "great man" theory (Gehring, 2007). However, this theory received many criticisms from scholars such as (Burns, 1978; Mouton, 2019) and the most critical bias in the "great man"

theory of leadership being that it is neither cultural nor sexual. This leadership theory was discriminatory because women were excluded by this theory as its focus was on men leaders. And yet, women could also fall under this category if given a chance. The story of Deborah of the bible is a speaking case. Deborah's leadership gifts attracted the respect of both men and women, even though culturally women in her days rose to leadership positions. Even Barak, the military commander of the northern tribes of Israel, sought for her help.

Despite those critics, the Great Man Theory not only survived among scholars but also thrived among practitioners (Mouton, 2019) and more leadership theories were developed on the basis of this great man theory. According to (Gehring, 2007), the traits of these great leaders or men pushed scholars to go further and studies lead to term "trait theory of leadership. Essentially, the traits theory of leadership expands further on the concept of the great man theory, by focusing on the personal characteristics of the leader. (Kyagera, 2013) made the same analysis. In fact, the great man theory has contributed to what was later termed the leadership traits theory, focusing on universal traits that are common to all effective leaders. The key assumptions here are that leaders have inherited talent and traits in them that make them ideal candidates to become leaders and that all those who have leadership traits will become successful and efficient leaders in the time to come. In fact, the two theories seem to be interlinked. Hence, according to Lussier and Achua (2009), the trait theory paradigm which attempts to explain unique personal attributes contributing to leadership effectiveness was developed in the 1900s to 1940s.

2.3.2.2 The Traits leadership Theory

The trait theory emerged from 1930 to 1940, and its main emphasis was on influence rather than domination. During this period, leadership was more connected to an individual's specific personality traits compared to personality qualities of others in the group. In other words, leaders were those with special personal qualities and accordingly, many studies conducted during this period (from 1930 to 1940) aimed at identifying the essential qualities needed that clearly differentiated leaders from followers and could therefore contribute to leadership success (Arenas, Connelly, & Williams, 2017; Northouse, 2016). According to Gehring (2007), researchers have sought to identify the key qualities that define exceptional leaders, focusing on the traits that set them apart from their followers. These traits are generally considered personal attributes, such as intelligence, values, and physical appearance. Since this leadership theory suggests that leaders are born rather than made, such traits were often used as criteria to select individuals for leadership roles, even if they only exhibited some of these characteristics. It was widely assumed that leaders needed to have exceptional skills that allowed them to successfully guide and impact their followers. Nevertheless, a person can demonstrate different abilities depending on the context and the issue at hand. In addition to that, some personality traits may be relative depending also on who is making the evaluation. Northouse (2016) gives a summary of a few studies that were conducted in order to determine the personality traits or characteristics of a leader. These different studies came up with a variety of personality traits, an indication that this leadership theory has limitations. For instance, Stogdill had to add four more traits and characteristics to his study conducted in 1974 as compared to the one he did in 1948: achievement, cooperativeness, tolerance, and influence.

Table 2*Studies of Leadership Traits and Characteristics*

Stogdill (1948)	Mann (1959)	Stogdill (1974)	Lord, DeVader, and Alliger (1986)	Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991)	Zaccaro, Kemp, and Bader (2004)
intelligence alertness insight responsibility initiative persistence self-confidence sociability	Intelligence masculinity adjustment dominance extraversion conservatism	achievement persistence insight initiative self-confidence responsibility cooperativeness tolerance influence sociability	intelligence masculinity dominance	drive motivation integrity confidence cognitive ability task knowledge	cognitive abilities extraversion conscientiousness emotional stability openness agreeableness motivation social intelligence self-monitoring emotional intelligence problem solving

Source: Northouse (2016, p.22).

The variety of personality traits was a clear indication that the theory was differently understood though there were some similar traits shared by various scholars. The traits theory of leadership, despite its significance contribution in determining leadership effectiveness, had some shortfalls. It did not consider that a leader could also be made. But also, the theory did ignore that the situation and environment in which leadership unfolds play pivotal roles as well (Dugan, 2017). Depending on the situation, people tend to act differently. Some situations may force people to develop special skills for adaptability or to cope with that context. Researchers as noted by (Epstein, 1994; Gehring, 2007; Lussier & Achua, 2010; Yukl, 2013), were disappointed in the results of the search for leader traits, began to look at the behaviours leader's display.

2.3.2.3 The Behavioural leadership theory

In the 1940s to 1950s, the behavioural leadership theory dominated this period. Instead of focusing on the personality traits or who they (leaders) are, the shift was on how leaders behave in relation to job or task and to subordinates or followers (Lussier & Achua, 2010).

These theorists described leadership as a result of unique styles used by effective versus ineffective leaders. According to (Avery, 2004), their observations resulted in two broad categories of leader behaviours: task-related behaviours (concerned with the job to be done), and relationship behaviours (people-oriented behaviours, such as being supportive and providing feedback). Northouse (2016) supported this in that, according to him, the focus of this leadership theory is totally on what leaders do and how they act. In fact, these leadership theories “try to clarify the distinguishing styles these effective leaders utilize, or to define the nature of their work (Arenas, Connelly, & Williams, 2017). In the words of Northouse (2016, p.71), the primary aim of the behavioural leadership theory is to shed light on how leaders bring together these two kinds of behaviours to inspire followers in their efforts to achieve an objective. Behavioural theory suggests that leaders are developed through effort, talent, passion, and consistency, combined with their ability to reason. It emphasizes the practical actions that leaders take, rather than focusing on their mental abilities or innate intelligence. As a result, this theory offers encouragement to anyone aspiring to become an effective manager or leader. In addition to that, this theory provides an opportunity for leaders to adjust their behaviour to respond to the needs of the context or the team under his/her leadership. As opposed to trait leadership theory which advocates that leaders are born and not made, behavioural leadership theory admitted that leadership can be learned through observation (what people are doing) and adoption of certain behaviours depending on the context. In other words, this theory allows organizations to develop effective leaders through training.

As (Yukl, 2013) puts it and supported by Northouse (2016), the behavioural leadership theory was unsuccessful to offer strong support for universal conceptions of effective leadership. Researchers failed to agree or to establish a unanimous set of leadership behaviours that would reliably result in effective conclusions. And this is difficult to achieve due to the fact that people are different, and they behave differently. Northouse (2016) noted that

researchers were unsuccessful in establishing a reliable connection between the following variables: task and relationship behaviours on the one hand, and outcomes such as morale, job satisfaction, and productivity on the other hand. But also, the theory failed to consider the context. The effectiveness of the leaders' behaviour varies depending on the situation. Hence, a new leadership theory was developed: the situational or the contingency leadership theory in the 1960s.

2.3.2.4 Contingency leadership theory

According to this theory, effective leadership depends on the situation. It is impossible to have only one best leadership style applicable to all situations. Effective leaders need adaptability to various situations as each situation may require a different leadership style. According to Lussier & Achua (2010), contingency leadership theories are related to three main drivers or factors that are key determinants to describe the suitable leadership style: leader, followers, and situation. Among those three factors, more emphasis is put on the situational drivers, which have three main components such as the type of the task achieved, the external environment, and the followers' traits. Success depends upon several variables, including the leader's style, qualities of the followers and aspects of the situation. In order to evaluate the needs of a given situation, Northouse (2016), arguing in the same line of Lussier & Achua (2010), noted that a leader must carry a monitoring and evaluation exercise of followers to their competence and their commitment to achieve a given goal. What Northouse is referring to is what Lussier & Achua called capabilities and motivation of the followers. These are key ingredients to achieve performance or to successfully complete the assigned tasks.

And many contingency theories were developed in the 1970s and 1980s, such as situational leadership theory, path-goal theory, and many other related theories. (Yukl, 2013).

2.3.2.4.1 Situational leadership theory

According to (Avery, 2004) and Northouse (2016), effective Situational Leadership derives from an appropriate combination of supporting and directing behaviours. And from that combination, four key situational leadership behaviour categories or styles have been formulated:

- SI Directing (high directing, low supporting);
- S2 Coaching (high directing, high supporting);
- S3 Supporting (low directing, high supporting); and
- S4 Delegating (low directing, low supporting).

According to this situational leadership theory, leaders seek to develop their subordinates by navigating through Directing, Coaching, Supporting to Delegating. Northouse (2016, pp.94-96) gives a brief explanation of these four styles. In fact, the first two styles are more suitable for followers with less skills or experience while the last two styles are used for followers with high skills and very experienced.

S1: In this approach, the leader not only communicates what and how goals are to be achieved but also, the leader has to supervise closely what the follower is doing.

S2: Being an extension of S1, the Coaching style requires the leader to spend more time with the followers so that goals are achieved on one side but also the followers' motivational needs are met as well.

S3: though the leader supports the followers, this support is more on pushing the followers to give more of their skills in order to accomplish the assigned goals. The day-to-day decisions are under the control of the followers and the leader remains available to facilitate problem solving.

S4: the delegating style gives to followers full control and total responsibility on how the job should be done. In this case, there is a very limited involvement of the leader in activities such as planning, details control, and goal clarification.

Avery (2004) and Lussier & Achua (2010) analyzed situational leadership theory using Fiedler's model. This model makes a distinction between task-motivated leaders and relationship-motivated leaders. According to Fiedler's model, task-motivated leaders draw their self-esteem from accomplishing tasks, whereas relationship-motivated leaders draw their self-esteem from interpersonal relations. From this analysis, this model built the situational leadership theory by combining three factors: (i) the relationship between leader and followers; (ii) how structured the task is; and (iii) the leader's position power.

The key to situational leadership is that there is no universal leadership style for all the situations. Different situations require different leadership styles, and the change of situation implies also the change in the leader's effectiveness. Hence, the main concern of Fiedler's model was the match between the leader's style and the situation. Therefore, and according to Avery (2004), the predictions of this model revealed that task-motivated leaders will be more effective than relationship-oriented leaders where there is either high or low control over the situation. Relationship-motivated leaders will be effective under conditions of moderate situational control. This is what Lussier & Achua (2010) called situational favourableness. Lussier and Achua (2010) explain that situational favourableness refers to how much a situation allows a leader to influence their followers. The greater the leader's control over their followers, the more favourable the situation is considered for the leader. Among the three factors described by Avery (2004), Lussier & Achua (2010) noticed that the leader-member (or follower) relations is the main influential factor of overall situational favourableness. The situation is described to be more favourable if the relations are better. We are relational beings; therefore, better relationships create a conducive environment. A leader with good relations

with his or her followers will foster trust, confidence, and respect, and this will stimulate followers to give more for the benefit of the organization. In fact, a good relationship between the leader and the followers has a positive impact on the goals to be achieved. The second influential factor is the task structure. To Lussier & Achua (2010), structured jobs lead to favourable situations. In other words, where jobs are structured, leaders have more influence, and they have control over the situation. The last factor is the position power. It is described as the weakest factor compared to the first two factors. Leadership is a special form of power (Burns, 1978) and it is therefore logical that leaders with strong power have more influence. Nevertheless, and as Lussier & Achua (2010) advise, leaders with strong power should be careful so that they do not become autocratic leaders.

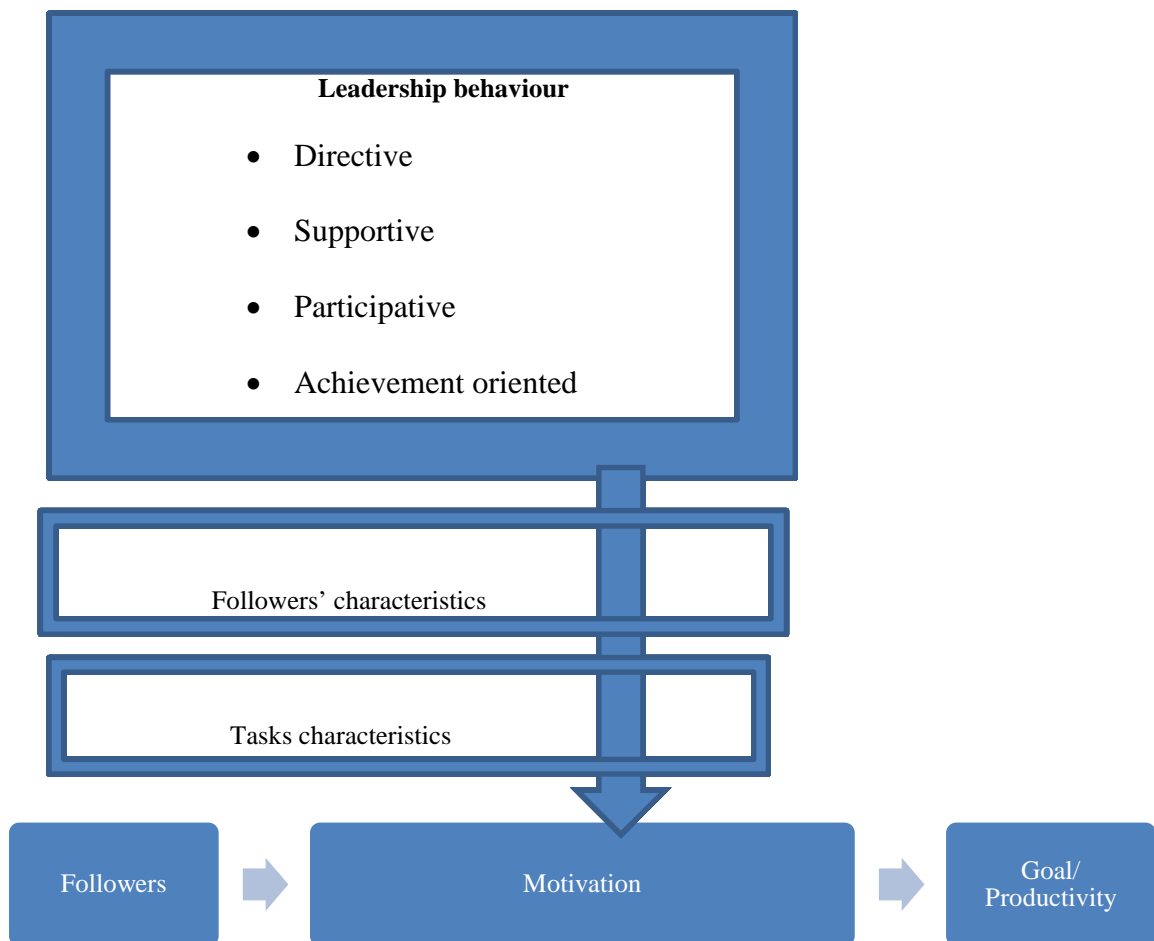
2.3.2.4.2 The Path-Goal leadership theory

The Path-Goal theory focuses on motivating the follower so that his or her performance and satisfaction are increased. The leader's role is therefore very important if this aim is to be achieved. House and Mitchell (1975) state that the theory is named Path-Goal because it focuses on how leaders shape their subordinates' views of work goals, personal goals, and the paths to achieving them. The theory proposes that a leader's behaviour is motivating and fulfilling when it enhances subordinates' goal attainment and clarifies the steps needed to reach those goals. Greene (1979) explained further the two propositions set forth by this theory. The first states that the leader's function consists of clarifying the goals of his subordinates, as well as the paths to these goals, enhancing subordinates' satisfaction with work itself, and providing valued extrinsic rewards contingent on performance. The second proposition asserts that the situation plays a major role in the motivational function of the leader. Northouse (2016) listed four main components of this theory including leader behaviours and follower characteristics, and four styles, depending on the leader's behaviour, were formulated: directive style, supportive style, participative style, and achievement-oriented style (House & Mitchell,

1975; Lussier & Achua, 2010). Followers' motivations are a result of the leader's behaviour. In other words, leader behaviour can influence followers' perceptions about the likely consequences of different levels of effort but also, leader behaviour can also affect subordinate satisfaction (Yukl, 2013). Northouse (2016) notes that the rapport between the leader's style and the followers' characteristics and the organizational settings are not to be ignored. These elements constitute also the emphasis of this path-goal framework. The leader is therefore required to select an appropriate leadership style that best matches the motivational needs of the followers. The following figure depicts the major component of the path-goal theory (Northouse, 2016):

Figure 3

Major components of the path-goal theory



Source: Northouse (2016, p. 117)

The four path-goal leadership approaches or leadership styles that function to offer arrangement and compensation to subordinates are directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented (House & Mitchell, 1975; Lussier & Achua, 2010). The leader uses one of these four leadership styles in order to influence how followers perceive their goals and the paths they follow toward achieving those goals. An explanation of these four leadership styles was described by House & Mitchell (1975) and supported by Northouse (2016, pp.117-118). According to these scholars, a directive leader provides followers with clear guidance on their tasks, how the work should be done, and the deadline for completing the tasks. In this case, the role of the leader is to set clear performance standards, and clear rules and regulations for the follower. This style of leadership is more suitable when followers prefer strong authority, feel they have no control over the work, and low ability. Complex or unclear tasks would also necessitate this kind of leadership style. In this case, followers would require clear guidance on how to perform these tasks and the authority of a directive leader must be felt if the tasks are to be done correctly.

A supportive leader is one who includes among his/her focus, focusing on the welfare of followers. Hence, it is the mostly friendly and approachable style. In addition, supportive leaders close the gap between them and followers by treating them as and by giving them respect for their status. This leadership style is the opposite of directive leadership. As the name suggests, the leader gives support only. Followers are skilled and know what they are supposed to do. This style is appropriate for simple tasks and when followers prefer non-authoritarian leadership, believe they are masters of their own destiny, and demonstrate high ability.

A participative leader is the one who invites followers to share in the decision making by bringing in their input. In other words, the consultation of followers is at the heart of this leadership approach. Once the leader gets their feedback, he or she includes them into the decisions about how the group or organization will proceed. This leadership style is ideal when

followers seek involvement, have an internal locus of control, and high ability. It fits well for complex tasks, regardless of authority strength, and works whether job satisfaction among co-workers is high or low.

Achievement-oriented leaders focus more on the highest level of followers' performance. The leader defies followers to achieve the highest level possible of performance. And this is done by setting a high standard of followers' excellence and through seeking continuous improvement. Since there are a lot of expectations or demand from followers, achievement-oriented leaders show a high degree of confidence that followers can establish and accomplish challenging goals. This leadership style is most suitable when followers are receptive to autocratic leadership, have an external locus of control, and possess high ability. This style is effective for simple tasks, strong authority structures, and regardless of whether job satisfaction from coworkers is high or low.

Despite the strengths of this path-goal theory, researchers found it very complex, and the theory was not fully supported from the various empirical research studies conducted to test its validity (House, 1971; Schriesheim & Von Glinow, 1977; Greene, 1979). Nevertheless, Evans (1996) noticed that the transactional together with Burns (1978) work on charismatic and transformational leadership theories originated from the path-goal theory.

2.3.2.5 Integrative leadership theory

The Integrative Leadership Theory as developed in the 1960s to 1980s focus on the behaviours and traits that enhance a leader's effectiveness and examine how the same actions can have varying impacts on followers, depending on the specific context or situation. The leader-follower relationship is one of the key elements of this theory. Some of the Integrative Leadership theories developed include the transformational leadership theory, the transactional leadership theory, the charismatic leadership theory, strategic leadership, and others.

Leadership theories aim to understand why some leaders inspire followers to work diligently and make personal sacrifices to achieve group or organizational goals. In other words, the leaders influence the followers' aspirations and values to the point of shifting their focus on collective interest to the detriment of personal interest.

2.3.2.5.1 Transactional and Transformational leadership theory

Burns (1978), while defining leadership, realized that the interaction between the leader and the follower can take two forms. According to this author, there are two ways a job can be done. This is what he called transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership occurs when one person takes the initiative in contacting others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. As the name suggests, the leader and the follower enter into a transaction relationship, whereby the follower gets rewarded once he/she complies with the leader's request. An example of such a transaction relationship is of a political leader who provides jobs, subsidies, lucrative government contracts, etc. for his/her followers who contributed to his/her campaign or who voted for him/her (Northouse, 2016). In addition to those rewards, transactional leadership may also involve values to the exchange process, such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and reciprocity (Yukl, 2013). As Burns (1978) puts it, this theory involves a bargaining process. According to this author, transactional leadership happens whenever a follower is rewarded based on the performance achieved. Bass & Riggio (2006, p.102) noted that in the transactional organization, leadership does not tolerate deviation from the standard operating procedures: followers must apply correctly and strictly the organization rules for them to be rewarded. This kind of leadership theory is used in every type of organization including family entities. Parents may use this type of leadership to reward their children's performance at school. A promise to buy a gift in case of getting an A⁺ grade

is a transactional form of leadership. The parent and the child enter into a reward agreement or contract once a given performance is achieved.

According to Lussier & Achua (2010), some scholars have therefore suggested three transactional leadership behaviours related to this theory: contingent reward, active management by exception and passive management by exception. According to Burns (1978) and Yukl (2013), contingent reward entails that the reward to be received depends on the satisfactory accomplishment of the assignment. In other words, if the assignment is not accomplished, then the follower does not expect any reward. According to Burns (1978), active management by exception involves the leader proactively monitoring deviations, mistakes, and errors in a follower's tasks and intervening with corrective actions when needed. In contrast, passive management by exception occurs when the leader takes corrective measures, including contingent punishments, only after noticeable deviations from acceptable performance standards have occurred.

Nevertheless, Yukl (2013) noted that this transactional leadership theory was just limited to the agreed reward. This theory failed to incite followers' enthusiasm and commitment to task objectives. Followers may just accomplish the tasks or assignments given in order to get the agreed reward but may not want to go beyond the agreed reward in giving the best of themselves to the organization. Hence, the transformational leadership theory was developed. As Bass & Riggio (2006, p.19) transformational leadership came to complement transactional missing elements. In fact, leadership must also address the follower's sense of self-worth to engage the follower in true commitment and involvement in the effort at hand. Followers can perform beyond their leaders' expectations if they are more valued, considered, and stimulated.

According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership takes place when leaders and followers interact in a manner that elevates both parties to higher levels of motivation and

morality. Not only followers are transformed but also leaders are also impacted by their followers' transformation and become transformed in return. Transformational leaders inspire and empower their followers to achieve remarkable results while simultaneously fostering the development of leadership abilities within those they lead. This stand was further developed and supported by Bass & Riggio (2006) and Hay (2006). According to these two authors, the main role of transformational leaders is to help the growth of followers and to turn them into leaders through the process of responding to the individual followers' needs and of empowerment. Transformational leaders ensure also the alignment of the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization. Hay (2006) adds that transformational leadership brings higher levels of personal commitment amongst 'followers' to organizational objectives. Consequently, this increases the followers' trust in their leaders, but also, they are motivated to perform far beyond their original expectation (Yukl, 2013). In the words of Northouse (2016), transformational leadership changes and transforms people. It affects all the holistic aspects of followers, being emotional, psychological, etc. It includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings.

According to Lussier & Achua (2010), transformational leadership puts more emphasis on the vision of the leader rather than on the attributions of the follower. Leaders who seek to create ideas and new perspectives to create a new path of growth and prosperity in front of the organization (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Four behaviour features characterize this leadership theory, and they are referred to as the "four I's" as described below. (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Hay, 2006; Lussier & Achua, 2010). These behavioural dimensions are fundamental for a transformational leader if organization performances are to be achieved. The leader fully understands that followers play a major role in the growth of the organization, but the follower's transformation depends on the leader's transformational behaviour.

1. Idealized influence. *Charismatic vision and behaviour that inspires others to follow.*
2. Inspirational motivation. *Capacity to motivate others to commit to the vision.*
3. Intellectual stimulation. *Encouraging innovation and creativity.*
4. Individualized consideration. *Coaching to the specific needs of followers.*

Transformational leadership and charismatic leadership have many points in common. And sometimes, these two are used interchangeably. Though they have some common characteristics, there are some important distinctions (Yukl, 2013). In fact, charisma is seen as a shared attribute by these two leadership theories. However, Lussier and Achua (2010) point out that while charismatic leaders are generally considered transformational, not all transformational leaders rely on their charisma to achieve transformative outcomes. Some may use other approaches or qualities to bring about change.

2.3.2.5.2 The charismatic leadership

Charisma is rooted from a Greek word meaning a “divinely inspired gift,” such as the ability to perform miracles or predict future events. According to Weber (1968), the term "charisma" is to be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. Conger & Kanungo (1998), in the same line of idea, viewed charismatic leadership as an important term to describe forms of authority based on perceptions of an extraordinary individual. However, scholars do agree that charismatic leadership is appropriate in time of crisis, which is generally considered as one of the facilitating conditions of a charismatic leader to emerge (Weber, 1968; Derman, 2012; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2013; Lussier & Achua, 2010). For Bass & Riggio (2006, p.64), the lack of collective perception of crisis or stress does not require an exceptional leader with radical solutions. In short, where there is no crisis, charismatic leadership is less likely to appear.

Charismatic leadership as well as transformational leadership has in common the ability of both leadership approaches to influence followers and promote change (Miller M., 2007). According to Yukl (2013, p.312), there are many ways a charismatic leader can influence the attitudes and behaviour of his/her followers. Yukl identified 9 ways of doing that. Let me mention only two of them: i) formulating an appealing vision, and ii) empowering followers. According to Miller (2007), it is through and from the use of emphasizing their personhood and their gifts that the charismatic leader has impact on the follower. And Lussier & Achua (2010, pp.331-333) give eight factors that influence personal meaning or that characterize charismatic leaders:

1. **Self-belief** – Through lifespan experience, motivation, and action oriented, charismatic leaders possess strong self-confidence achieved by overcoming personal challenges and realizing their potential.
2. **Legacy** – Charismatic leaders are motivated of leaving a lasting impact on society, ensuring that their followers will perpetrate the leaders' accomplishments through their actions and ideals.
3. **Selflessness** – Instead of promoting selfish interests, charismatic leaders promote servant leadership practices. They prioritize the well-being of others over themselves, finding purpose in serving and helping their followers achieve shared goals.
4. **Cultural Heritage and Traditions** – Using ceremonies and rituals to transfer their charisma, especially in religious contexts, these charismatic leaders use their leadership to help shape doctrines and traditions of their followers. Martin Luther King, Jr is a speaking example of charismatic leader.
5. **Activist Mind-set** – Charismatic leaders tend to be socially and politically engaged than non-charismatic leaders. They use those social and political connections as opportunities to initiate change and improve life for their followers.

6. **Faith and Spirituality** – Relying on their faith and spirituality, charismatic leaders use to find the meaning and purposes of their lives. And faith sustains them through hardships and in return, it helps motivate their followers toward a vision of a better future.
7. **Personal Interests** – Charismatic leaders may be passionate of personal interests, and this may be a reflection of their personality key elements.
8. **Values** – Values are central to their leadership. Charismatic leaders seek to align their values with those of their followers in order to inspire followers' loyalty and derive personal meaning from their actions.

These traits collectively define the influence and purpose of charismatic leaders. Their main job is to empower the follower to bring change in the organization, community, etc. Charismatic leaders act as catalyst of change in the lives of followers.

However, research has detected some problems associated with charismatic leadership such as (1) their visions, (2) their impression management, (3) their management practices, and (4) succession planning (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). Some charismatic leaders are motivated by self-interest and as (Derman, 2012) and Northouse (2016) consider them or call them *pseudo transformational* leaders. And there are examples of such charismatic leaders who used coercive power to lead people to evil ends. Yukl (2013) adds that charisma is a rare and transitory phenomenon and perpetuating the gains of the charismatic leader is not often easy. According to this author, the charismatic leader's accomplishments disappear when the leader is no longer there. For (Derman, 2012), a leader could also lose this charismatic leadership title if he or she had no longer this supernatural gift or "charisma". In other words, it requires the charismatic leader to continue demonstrating special powers if their authority is to be maintained. Otherwise, he/she becomes an ordinary man or woman like his/her followers. Thus, charismatic leadership required constant demonstrations of wondrous deeds.

2.3.2.6 Contemporary leadership theories

The twentieth century was dominated by a new trend of leadership theories. Northouse (2016) highlights emerging research that prioritizes the process of leadership, where a leader influences followers to achieve a shared goal, rather than redefining leadership itself. Among these approaches, Northouse (2016) identifies four key types. The first one is the Authentic Leadership. This approach emphasizes the authenticity of leaders and their actions, focusing on cultivating traits that enhance their trustworthiness and credibility in the eyes of followers. Authentic leadership is a complex process aimed at building genuine relationships. The second one is the Spiritual Leadership. This form of leadership leverages values, a sense of purpose, and belonging to inspire and motivate followers, fostering a deeper connection to shared goals. The third form is the Servant Leadership. Here, the leader adopts the role of a servant, applying "caring principles" to prioritize the needs of followers. The goal is to empower followers to become more autonomous, knowledgeable, and service-oriented themselves. At its core, servant leadership is about serving others first. More attributes for servant leaders were formulated by scholars. Listening is one of the foundations of servant leadership. And lastly, the Adaptive Leadership: This approach involves leaders guiding followers to adapt to and address problems, challenges, and changes by fostering resilience and problem-solving abilities. It is also important to note that each of these approaches underscores distinct aspects of leadership that cater to different contexts and needs.

Servant leadership has been discussed in the previous sections. It is worth writing a paragraph on adaptive leadership. According to Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky (2009, p.14), adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive. The world keeps changing, creating therefore new environments and bringing new dreams. Currently, the world is going through rapid technological change. The use of artificial intelligence software is changing the ways organizations are managed. Leaders are therefore

required to adapt the leadership skills to cope with this technological innovation. In the words of Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky, this change demands new strategies and abilities, as well as the leadership to mobilize them. According to Northouse (2016, p.258), adaptive leadership focuses on how individuals adapt to and navigate new circumstances. Its primary aim is to inspire people to embrace change and adopt new approaches to thrive and develop. Northouse defines adaptive leadership as the actions and behaviours of leaders that motivate and support others in addressing and managing significant changes in their lives.

This leadership theory requires leaders to differentiate adaptive challenges from technical challenges. As Northouse notes, there are challenges or problems that are primarily technical in nature, challenges that have both a technical and an adaptive dimension, and challenges that are primarily adaptive in nature. There must be a correct diagnosis process of challenges. Therefore, failure to diagnose challenges correctly is the most common cause of leadership failures (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009). Hence, these authors describe in the following table the distinctive characteristics of each challenge:

Table 3

Distinguishing technical problems and adaptive challenges

Problem definition	Solution	Locus of work	
Technical	Clear	Clear	Authority
Technical and adaptive	Clear	Requires learning	Authority and stakeholders
Adaptive	Requires learning	Requires learning	Stakeholders

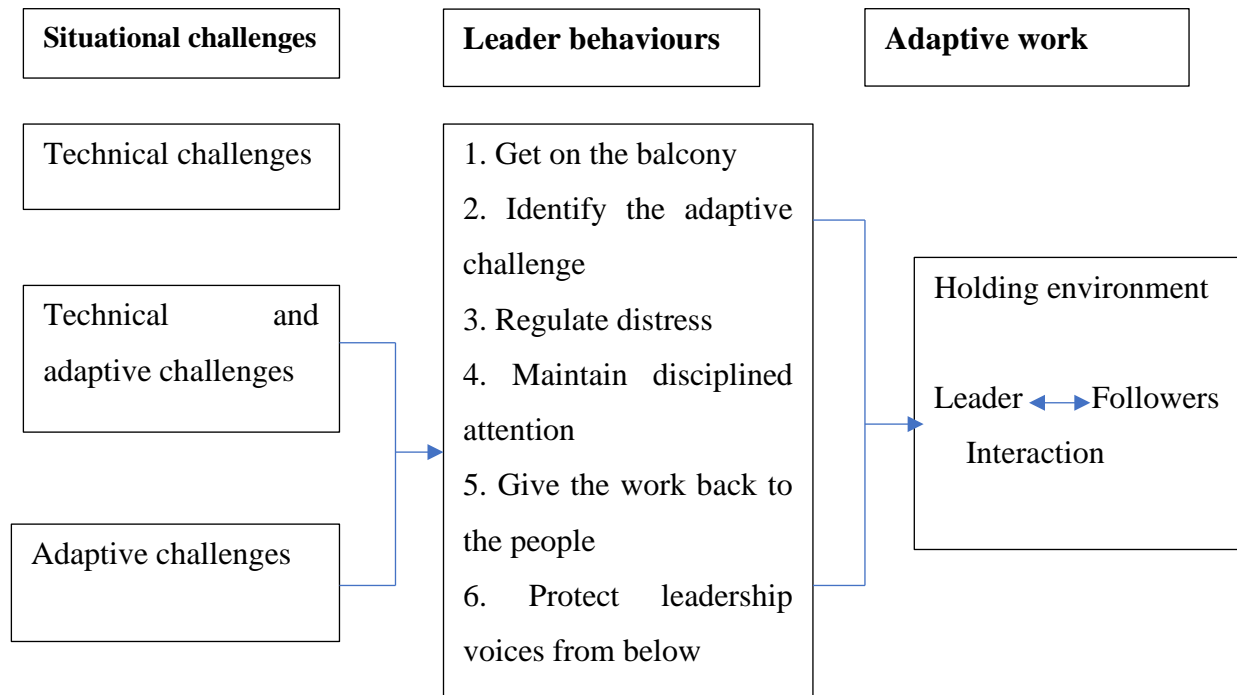
Source: Heifetz, Grashow& Linsky (2009, p.20)

Heifetz, Grashow& Linsky (2009, p.19) recognize that adaptive challenges are not easy to fix because they can only be addressed through changes in people's priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. A point that Northouse (2016, p. 262) supports as well. For him, adaptive challenges are not easy to tackle and are often resisted. Adaptive challenges are difficult because they usually require changes in people's assumptions, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes,

and behaviours. Not all situational challenges are adaptive challenges. Hence, Northouse proposes a model of adaptive leadership as depicted in the following diagram:

Figure 4

Model of Adaptive Leadership



Source: Northouse (2016, p.261)

After a survey of these leadership theories, it is opportune to analyze some of the leadership styles that Jesus Christ, the founder, and owner of the church, applied or used during his life on earth.

2.3.3 Some leadership styles of Jesus Christ

2.3.3.1 Jesus as a Servant Leader

Although servant leadership as a formal theory was popularized by Robert Greenleaf in the 1970s, scholars have noted that the conceptual roots of this model can be observed in earlier historical and religious figures, notably in the teachings and actions attributed to Jesus of Nazareth (Parris & Peachey, 2013; van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2018; Northouse, 2016, van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Heyker & Martin, 2018). The servant leadership model

prioritizes the well-being and development of followers, emphasizing service to others as the leader's primary responsibility.

Servant leaders seek primarily to serve others instead of being served. More care is on their followers. In other words, a servant leader empowers his/her followers so that they can reach their full potential. Hence, the followers' needs constitute the priority of a servant leader. And when people working in public offices are called civil servants, this must be done with this principle: to be at the service of the people, to be the servant of the common people. Those appointed in different governmental positions are to serve first the public. If one fails to grasp the principle behind this metaphor, it becomes very difficult to serve others first. Some of them are self-servant leaders instead of civil servant leaders. They serve first their interests instead of serving the interests of the people, the owners of power. Hence, (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2018) find that serving the needs of others is not just a by-product of servant leadership but it is the heart of how servant leadership is practiced.

Servant leadership is distinguished from traditional leadership models by its focus on ethical behaviour, empowerment, and follower growth. According to Lussier and Achua (2010, p.359), key elements of this model include effective listening, service to other over self-interests or self-sacrificial service, helping others discover their inner spirit and potential to make the difference or facilitating the potential of others, trustworthiness or earning and keeping others' trust by being honest and true to their words. This model is represented in the figure below.

Figure 5*Guidelines of Servant Leadership*

Source: Guidelines of Servant Leadership adapted based on Lussier & Achua (2010, p.359)

Effective listening is one of the key guidelines of servant leadership. A servant leader is willing to actively listen to the problems others are going through. They demonstrate love, empathy, and show love, acceptance, and encouragement to their followers. Service to others over self-interest is the trademark of servant leadership. A servant leader is ready to sacrifice his/her own interest over the interests of others. The desire to help others is at the heart of this leadership style. Lussier and Achua note that servant leaders can build strong working relationships with followers by earning and keeping the trust of followers. No hidden agenda should characterize a servant leader. He/she is always ready to share information with others, and they are comfortable with giving up their rights such as power, rewards, recognition, and control.

These features are closely aligned with various New Testament narratives that depict Jesus engaging in acts of humility and care toward his followers. For example, the symbolic foot washing episode in John 13:12–17 is frequently cited in theological literature as an exemplar of servant leadership. Though the Apostle Peter wanted to refuse and resisted before accepting Jesus' invitation, this story is concluded by these powerful words:

“When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” (Joh 13:12-17)

The leadership ethic portrayed in these biblical accounts presents an alternative to dominant, hierarchical leadership styles. In Matthew 20:26–28, Jesus is depicted as challenging prevailing power structures by asserting that greatness is defined by service rather than control. Scholars have interpreted such passages as advancing a leadership philosophy in which authority is exercised through relational trust and moral example, rather than coercion or status. In these biblical texts, Jesus is portrayed as emphasizing service over authority and modelling humility, notably through the symbolic act of foot washing. These actions are seen by many as instructional moments, offering a paradigm of leadership grounded in serving others rather than exercising power over them (Heyker & Martin, 2018).

The concept of servant leadership is further supported by research indicating that leaders who emphasize the needs of followers and prioritize ethical conduct tend to foster trust and long-term organizational well-being (Russell & Stone, 2002). Servant leadership is therefore seen as especially applicable in contexts such as faith-based institutions, where moral leadership and communal responsibility are emphasized.

Some authors suggest that although Greenleaf coined the modern term, the model’s essential attributes can be retrospectively applied to Jesus’ leadership style, as portrayed in Christian scripture (Heyker & Martin, 2018). This position views Jesus as an influential archetype for ethical leadership, especially within Christian organizations. However, it is important to distinguish between doctrinal affirmations and scholarly interpretations; claims

regarding Jesus' role as the "originator" of servant leadership remain interpretive and are often tied to theological commitments.

While Greenleaf popularized the servant leadership concept in the 20th century, some scholars argue that its roots can be traced to earlier religious figures, including Jesus. For instance, Philippians 2:6–8, often cited in theological literature, describes Jesus as embodying humility and self-sacrifice—qualities aligned with servant leadership principles. Even though the interpretations of these texts must be approached within their religious and cultural contexts, recognizing the distinction between theological claims and empirical leadership models, one main characteristic of this leadership style can be drawn from this text: compassionate love. According to (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2018), compassionate love is foundational to servant leadership and is considered the cornerstone of the servant/follower relationship; this love is related to *agâpao*, unselfish moral love that canters on the good of the other. This what Jesus Christ did for humanity. (Heyker & Martin, 2018) talks about an altruistic calling due to "a leader's deep-rooted desire to make a positive difference in others' lives". To support the idea that Jesus Christ is the Servant Leader par excellence and that He is the one who initiated this leadership style, Woolfe (2002) writes this:

“Perhaps it takes someone not born into royalty to fully embrace servant leadership. Such a man was Jesus, who was born in a manger and whose only crown was the crown of thorns. Such a man could not only preach servant leadership, he could practice it, and his practice inspired his followers to do.”

Frick (2004) notes that servant leadership goes beyond individuals, however. Servant leadership seeks to build a more caring society, organizations and their trustees can—and should—also function as servants. This can be drawn from Jesus Christ's teachings to His disciples. His aim was to train His Disciples to become Servant Leaders so that they can also go and do the same, creating more servant leaders, resulting in building a more caring society. (Wilkes, 1998) raised something important about Jesus Christ:

“He was sent to bring salvation to the world as God’s Sent One. He served that mission by living as the Suffering Servant Messiah. This mission was everything for Jesus. It was his purpose and direction for all he did while on earth—including his death.”

Commentators like Woolfe (2002) and Frick (2004) have further argued that Jesus’ leadership approach provides a compelling case study for leadership formation in faith-based institutions. These interpretations view Jesus as modelling a leadership style that prioritizes community welfare, moral integrity, and long-term transformation of followers.

This type of leadership has therefore some characteristics describing it. According to Northouse (2016, p.227), Robert Greenleaf developed therefore ten attributes that a Servant leader should have. And listening is one of those attributes. Servant leaders value the opinions of followers. Therefore, they should be active listeners, which require them to pay attention, understand, and if necessary, recall what they are being told. People feel undervalued if they are not heard. Hence, both verbal and nonverbal listening strategies need to be used to demonstrate or to show that the listener is paying attention to what is being said. The other important attribute is the commitment to the growth of other people. Excellent servant leaders should seek to empower other people. This is one of the ultimate goals: to develop their followers. Other scholars have added more attributes. For Bowman (2005) and Lussier & Achar (2010, p.357), servant leadership is grounded on the following principles of universal ethic: humility, honesty, trust, empathy, healing, community, patience, kindness, respectfulness, commitment, and service. (Russell & Stone, 2002), after conducting a review of servant leadership attributes, note that a servant leader should have the following attributes: vision, communication, honesty and integrity, credibility, trust, competence, service, stewardship, modelling, visibility, pioneering, influence, persuasion, appreciation of others, listening, encouragement, empowerment, teaching, and delegation.

Parris & Peachey (2013) realized that the values of servant leadership are related to the biblical concept of the seven beatitudes from Matthew 5. These values are as follows: being

teachable; showing concern for others; demonstrating discipline, seeking the greatest good for the organization; showing mercy in actions and beliefs with all people, meeting the needs of followers and the organization, and creating a place where peace grows within the organization

Overall, the servant leadership model offers a valuable framework for analysing leadership in religious settings. By emphasizing relational integrity, follower development, and ethical action, it aligns closely with the practices and teachings attributed to Jesus in the New Testament. While rooted in theological tradition, these principles continue to inform contemporary leadership studies across secular and faith-based domains. These parallels have led many leadership scholars and theologians to examine servant leadership through both empirical and theological lenses, particularly when studying ecclesiastical leadership practices.

2.3.3.2 Jesus and transformational leadership

In the previous section, the principles of transformational leadership were explained. Transformational leadership is a model that emphasizes the capacity of leaders to inspire and motivate followers toward shared goals, foster personal development, and bring about organizational or societal change (Northouse, 2016).

Contemporary leadership theory, particularly the transformational leadership model as outlined by Burns (1978) and extended by Bass and Riggio (2006), emphasizes a leader's ability to inspire, intellectually stimulate, and individually consider followers to achieve change beyond immediate self-interest. Scholars have drawn parallels between this model and the leadership style attributed to Jesus of Nazareth, particularly in how he engaged his followers and challenged prevailing cultural norms. Numerous authors (e.g., McCabe, 2008; Niebuhr, 1951) suggest that Jesus exhibited transformational traits in his interactions with followers and his broader cultural interventions. However, applying a modern leadership framework to a first-century religious figure demands caution. Scholars such as Northouse

(2016) argue that transformational leadership is inherently value-laden and often context-specific, making direct historical analogies problematic.

For example, passages from the New Testament—such as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5)—demonstrate teachings that challenge prevailing moral norms. Jesus reframed traditional commandments (e.g., Exodus 20:13) through more internalized ethical lenses, emphasizing intention over external compliance. France (1985) describes this shift as “more demanding...more radical,” positioning Jesus as a moral reformer concerned with inner transformation—a core aspect of transformational leadership. The cleansing of the temple episode (Matthew 21:12–13) further illustrates his confrontation with institutionalized practices, which some scholars (e.g., Barker & Kolenberger III, 1994) interpret as resistance against exclusionary religious-commercial systems. Yet, these acts are not purely organizational reforms; they are theological statements, and scholars must discern between socio-political action and eschatological messaging. Moreover, Jesus’ approach to service, humility, and empowerment—such as the symbolic foot-washing in John 13—aligns with concepts of servant-leadership and idealized influence. He modelled behaviour rather than merely mandating it. McCabe (2008) interprets this as a deliberate act to prepare disciples for leadership—what Bass (1985) would describe as “developing followers into leaders.”

Textual references like Luke 4:18–19 have been interpreted by liberation theologians (e.g., Boff & Boff, 1987) as highlighting Jesus’ identification with the marginalized—reflecting an emphasis on individualized consideration, a pillar of transformational leadership. Nonetheless, such interpretations are debated; some scholars stress the salvific, not political, nature of these acts (Morris, 1974), indicating divergent hermeneutical lenses.

Transformational leadership emphasizes elevating follower motivation and morality (Burns, 1978). This is visible in the so-called Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20), where Jesus sends disciples with a global mandate. Kyagera (2013) views this as a culmination of

Jesus' developmental leadership model. Yet, this interpretation again depends on viewing biblical texts through a modern leadership lens—an approach not universally accepted in critical leadership studies.

This model includes four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006; McCabe, 2008). Scholars in both leadership and theological studies have increasingly explored how the New Testament portrayal of Jesus of Nazareth reflects these principles, albeit in a unique religious and cultural context.

1. Idealized Influence

This dimension refers to leaders acting as role models, earning trust and respect, and embodying high ethical standards. Jesus' consistent alignment between message and practice—such as his servant leadership demonstrated in John 13 (washing the disciples' feet)—is widely cited as a demonstration of moral authority (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). His commitment to righteousness and rejection of hypocrisy (e.g., Matthew 23) positioned him as a figure of integrity. Scholars such as McCabe (2008) argue that Jesus' life exemplified transformational leadership through sacrificial service and moral modelling, which built deep follower commitment. In contrast to authoritarian models common in his sociopolitical context, Jesus' rejection of power for personal gain furthered his idealized image (Mark 10:42–45).

2. Inspirational Motivation

This involves articulating a compelling vision that provides meaning and challenges followers. Jesus' teaching of the Kingdom of God is viewed by many as a transformative vision of justice, love, and spiritual renewal. According to Bass & Riggio (2006), transformational leaders motivate by appealing to followers' higher values; Jesus did so by reinterpreting the Law (Matthew 5:17–48) and emphasizing internal transformation. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20) serves as a model of inspirational motivation. Jesus entrusted his disciples

with a global mission, invoking divine authority and providing assurance of support—elements that Avolio and Bass (1995) identify as crucial to transformational motivation.

3. Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders encourage innovation and challenge assumptions. Jesus demonstrated this by redefining social norms and religious traditions—for example, healing on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10–17) and reinterpreting Mosaic laws. Scholars like France (1985) argue that Jesus’ moral teachings invited his followers to engage in critical ethical reflection, rather than passive obedience. By responding to challenges with parables and questions (e.g., “Render unto Caesar...” in Mark 12), Jesus often disrupted binary thinking and encouraged cognitive engagement—a key aspect of intellectual stimulation (Northouse, 2016).

4. Individualized Consideration

This element involves recognizing followers' individual needs, growth, and potential. Jesus’ interactions with the marginalized—such as the Samaritan woman (John 4), the leper (Luke 5:12–16), and tax collectors (Luke 19:1–10)—reflect a personalized leadership style that affirms individual worth and dignity. According to Northouse (2016), transformational leaders are sensitive to follower development. Jesus often nurtured leadership in others, notably Peter, whose personal restoration and commissioning (John 21:15–19) is cited by Kyagera (2013) as an exemplary case of individualized mentoring.

However, it is essential to approach these interpretations within a scholarly framework. While many leadership theorists have drawn from religious texts for insight, the application of contemporary leadership models to ancient religious figures must account for differences in historical, cultural, and theological contexts.

In summary, Jesus’ leadership, as presented in the New Testament, exhibits several characteristics commonly associated with transformational leadership. These include inspiring a shared vision, mentoring followers, challenging cultural norms, and modelling ethical

behaviour. As such, his leadership remains a subject of ongoing analysis in both theological and leadership studies, particularly in the context of religious or values-driven organizations.

2.3.3.3 Jesus and transactional leadership

Jesus was not only servant and transformational leader. His leadership style included also transactional one. Transactional leadership is characterized by an exchange process in which leaders provide rewards or recognition in return for follower compliance or performance (Northouse, 2016). This leadership style focuses on clear roles, structured expectations, and conditional reinforcement. While transformational leadership emphasizes internal change and inspiration, transactional leadership is more concerned with maintaining established functions through reward-based systems.

Some scholars have observed transactional elements in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' interactions with his disciples. For example, in Matthew 19:27–30, when Peter asked him “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?” The response given was that “when he sits on his glorious throne the disciples will sit with him judging Israel and that “all the losses which discipleship may involve will be handsomely repaid (France, 1985)”. Furthermore, Jesus told his disciples that if they gave, they would receive (Luke 6:38). Jesus seems to say that there is reciprocity in life: we get back what we put into life (Morris, 1974).

Jesus responds to Peter's question regarding the sacrifices made by the disciples by assuring them of future rewards, including positions of authority and eternal life. This exchange-oriented language reflects the principle of contingent reward—a key component of transactional leadership.

Similarly, parables such as the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31–46) and the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30) emphasize accountability and reward or punishment based on behaviour and decision-making. These narratives illustrate the concept

of conditional reinforcement, wherein outcomes are determined by one's actions, aligning with transactional leadership's behavioural control mechanisms. The parables of the ten virgins, the wedding banquet, and the tenants seem to convey the same concept of reward for those who did well and punishment for those who did not.

Jesus clarified goals and objectives to the disciples. Expectations were made clear. This is the case in Acts 1:8, he outlines the geographic and spiritual scope of their mission, which is often interpreted as a directive model of leadership. The clarity of goals and delegation of responsibilities in this context mirrors the structure emphasized in transactional leadership theory. Acts 1:8 "...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". This is the pattern that the disciples' ministry in Acts seems to follow. The work begins in Jerusalem (chapters 1-7), Judea and Samaria (chapters 8-9), and other places of the world ("ends of the world") like Cyprus, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Syria, and other Mediterranean places. Jesus was simply telling them that the mission will be universal, carrying a universal message. It began in Jerusalem among Jews and spread "to the ends of the earth" (as promised by Jesus himself, Ac 1:8) to include all kinds of people (Barker & Kolenberger III, 1994).

Moreover, the emphasis on accountability in Jesus' teachings can be interpreted as a form of management by exception—another aspect of transactional leadership. In such cases, attention is focused on correcting deviations from expected standards, often with consequences attached. The moral dimension of this leadership approach, however, is notably more prominent in Jesus' context, reflecting theological commitments rather than solely organizational ones.

It is important to recognize that these interpretations are based on applying modern leadership theory to ancient religious texts. The identification of transactional leadership in

Jesus' ministry should not be taken as a literal equivalence but rather as a heuristic device for understanding specific leadership dynamics in religious contexts.

In conclusion, while Jesus' overall leadership style is frequently associated with transformation and servanthood, certain passages suggest that transactional elements were also present. These included explicit expectations, promises of reward, and structured guidance—features that make the transactional leadership model a useful secondary framework for analysing aspects of his leadership approach.

2.3.3.4 Jesus and charismatic leadership

As defined in the previous sections, the word charisma was defined as a “divinely inspired gift. Charismatic leadership is typically defined by a leader's ability to inspire devotion and strong emotional commitment through perceived extraordinary qualities, personal magnetism, or visionary influence (Weber, 1968; Conger & Kanungo, 1998). For Weber (1968), the term "charisma" is to be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. But as (Derman, 2012) notes, the Apostle Paul used this word charisma (lit. “gift of grace”) to refer to the special talents bestowed on select individuals by the Holy Spirit. For Conger & Kanungo (1998), the authority of a charismatic leader comes from perceptions people have for that extraordinary individual. And Derma (2012) defined this concept of extraordinary individual as:

“An extraordinary personal quality (originally seen as magical, as in the case of prophets, people with therapeutic or legal wisdom, leaders in the hunt, or heroes in war) by virtue of which the person is considered endowed with supernatural or superhuman or at least specifically extraordinary powers or qualities not accessible to others, or seen as God-sent or exemplary and thus a ‘leader’ [‘Führer’]

Jesus of Nazareth has often been identified in the literature as a figure who exemplifies charismatic leadership (Piovanelli, 2005; Bass & Riggio, 2006). His appeal, as portrayed in the New Testament, extended across different segments of society—drawing enthusiastic followers, provoking resistance among established religious authorities, and generating intense public interest. These narrative elements suggest characteristics commonly associated with charismatic influence: personal authority, symbolic acts, and emotional resonance with followers.

Looking at the characteristics of charismatic leadership as described above, Piovanelli (2005) noted the following:

Jesus' charisma was not only analogous to that of his fellow Galilean healers and miracle-workers but so strong as to generate a following of enthusiastic disciples and supporters, as well as the opposition of some members of his own family and the fiery hostility of a wide range of adversaries." In other words, "Jesus was a charismatic who had an almost inexplicable aura: fascinating to followers, provocative to opponents.

Piovanelli (2005) notes that Jesus' perceived healing abilities, moral teachings, and symbolic actions—such as his entry into Jerusalem or his confrontations with religious elites—contributed to a reputation that elicited both fervent loyalty and strong opposition. Such polarizing responses are typical of charismatic leaders, whose influence often challenges existing structures and evokes both admiration and hostility.

But also, scholars have stressed that charismatic leadership was appropriate in time of distress, crisis, instability, turmoil. Such times increase the feelings among people of helplessness, agitation, anxiety, and frustration. They accept the directions of charismatic leaders who appear to be qualified to lead them out of their distress. Hence, in times of instability, such as those documented during first-century Palestine, charismatic leadership often gains traction due to widespread social unrest or institutional distrust (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In this context, Jesus' message and actions resonated with marginalized groups and

those seeking an alternative vision for communal life. His followers interpreted his authority as deriving not from institutional position, but from spiritual legitimacy and moral example. Followers respond to the charismatic leader with passionate loyalty because the salvation, or promise of it, that he appears to embody represents the fulfilment of urgently felt needs (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The early Christian movement's expansion has also been associated with the institutionalization of charisma. Jesus empowered his followers with charisma to perpetrate the mission that He assigned to his disciples in Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age," Amen. This is what (Derman, 2012) meant when he wrote that the German church historian Rudolf Sohm argued that the authority of the early Christian church had been based on the charisma of its leaders rather than on any legal or institutional organization. According to Weber (1968), charismatic authority is inherently unstable and requires routinization to survive over time. In Christian tradition, this process is represented by the formation of the church as a structured institution, the delegation of leadership roles to individuals like the Apostle Peter, and the establishment of normative texts and practices. Some scholars argue that this development reflects the formalization of the charismatic foundation attributed to Jesus.

However, modern applications of the charismatic leadership framework to religious figures must be approached with critical reflection. While Jesus is revered within Christian theology as both divine and human, leadership studies interpret his role within sociological categories, focusing on the functional and symbolic dynamics of his influence rather than doctrinal claims.

In summary, Jesus' leadership—as interpreted from biblical narratives—displays key traits associated with charismatic leadership, particularly in his ability to inspire intense follower commitment, challenge institutional authority, and catalyse a movement that persisted beyond his death. These features make the charismatic model a useful theoretical lens for analysing his influence within both historical and leadership frameworks.

2.3.4 Pastoral ministry

2.3.4.1 Definition of pastoral ministry

This research requires an understanding of some terms related to pastoral theology. It is difficult to talk about church leadership by ignoring pastoral theology. In fact, pastoral theology is the branch of theology which deals with the responsibilities of members of the clergy to the people under their care. For Vinet (2017), pastoral theology deals with all the duties, all the kinds of activity to which the pastor is called, except public preaching and catechizing. In other words, it is the branch of practical theology concerned with the application of the study of religion in the context of regular church ministry. This approach to theology seeks to give practical expression to theology. Normally viewed as an 'equipping' of ministers, practical theology is essentially a practical science. Hence, its main interests are in those areas of theology which will aid clergy in ministry. Topics tend to include homiletics, pastoral care, sacramental theology, and ethics.

All branches of theology, whether theoretical or practical, purpose in one way or another to make priests, pastors, and others in a pastoral role "the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1Cor 4: 1). Pastoral theology presupposes other various branches, accepts the apologetic, dogmatic, exegetic, moral, juridical, ascetical, liturgical, and other conclusions reached by the ecclesiastical students, and scientifically applies these various conclusions to the priestly ministry.

Pastoral theology provides the theological foundation for pastoral ministry, stimulates theological reflection on pastoral experience and at the same time reflects on theology from pastoral perspective. Problems of definition arise because of the ambiguous nature of its boundaries with related disciplines:

1. **Practical theology**, a discipline which emerged in the 19th century has to do with the skills needed to conduct a ministry and so relates to subjects such as worship, homiletics, missions, and administration.
2. **Applied theology** relates to ethics or moral theology which, together with the provision of spiritual direction, have always been closely allied to pastoral theology, especially within Catholicism. More recently, it has been identified with pastoral psychology.
3. **Ecclesiology** in its broadest sense, meaning not only the doctrine of the organization of the church but contemporary understanding of the church's role and mission, is also a close relation to pastoral theology.

Pastoral theology both draws on these disciplines and contributes to them but is not itself limited by them and concentrates on the interface between theology and pastoral experience. Hence, from the theological standpoint, it raises questions and provides direction regarding the nature of ministry; and from the pastoral standpoint, it looks to theology for understanding and interpretations of human experience. According to (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009), the nature, role, and realization of the pastoral ministry are essentially determined by biblical theology.

Therefore, Timothy and Titus, 1 and 2, are known as the “pastoral epistles” since they present a series of practical directives for the proper pastoral care of the Christian communities at Ephesus and Crete. “Pastoral theology” includes everything connected with the priestly ministry to the faithful; it is a practical science which tries to apply the revealed truths of our faith, and the directives of the Magisterium, to the problems of daily living. Thus, the pastoral

priest, according to this understanding, is a practical man who instructs and helps his people lead a fully Christian life so that they can finally attain eternal salvation.

Jesus is the Supreme Shepherd of the flock (Church) who has a threefold office: prophet (teacher), priest (sanctifier) and king (ruler). Pope, bishop and priest all share in that threefold office and so continue it in history. Traditionally, the duties of a pastor have been enumerated in terms of those three functions: (1) to instruct the faithful in the truths of revelation and Christian doctrine; (2) to sanctify the people by administering the sacraments, and (3) to rule, or lead them in things pertaining to faith and the church.

What are the biblical foundations of pastoral ministry? What is therefore the definition of pastoral ministry in protestant churches and in Roman Catholicism? Is pastoral ministry understood in the same way?

Initially, the biblical word used was “shepherd”. The term referred to somebody looking after a flock. The idea was a familiar one to the people of Israel, most of whom owned or worked with flocks and herds of sheep, goats and cattle; and it was widely used by writers of the Jewish Scriptures to describe religious and political leaders, and even God himself. The term shepherd or pastor implies a duty/work or ministry of looking after or caring for the flock. In ancient Israel, everyone understood what the work of a shepherd was. Flocks of sheep and goats were important possessions, just as they are in many countries today; and having large flocks was a sign of wealth and status. The value of a sheep in those times was equal to the value of a cow among Burundians. In Burundi, a cow is culturally highly valued to the point that cows were and are still used in some communities as dowry to get a wife. Cows were also used by colonizers to divide the people of Burundi in different ethnic groups. For instance, any person with less than ten cows was considered as a Hutu, while anyone with more than ten

cows was automatically assigned the Tutsi ethnic. Receiving a gift of a cow was and is still considered as a privilege.

The work of the shepherd in guiding, feeding and protecting the flock was essential if the animals were to be productive and valuable for their owner. The idea of a good shepherd or caring shepherd was so familiar and meaningful to the people of Israel that many preachers and writers used it, as we see in both the New and Old Testaments as picture-language to describe not only human shepherds but also the attitudes of God towards His people.

In the Old Testament, the idea of a good shepherd which refers to pastoral ministry was used in two main ways. Firstly, it was used to describe the relationship between God and the people of Israel. 'He is our God, we are the people of his pasture, the sheep of his hand' (Ps 95: 6-7). 'He will feed his flock like a shepherd' (Is. 40: 11). It was used to show God as the true shepherd who can be trusted never to fail His people; and as the shepherd who cares for each individual, not only the flock as a whole. 'I will seek out my sheep and rescue them...I will bring back the strayed...bind up the crippled...strengthen the weak...the fat and the strong I will watch over; I will feed them in justice' (Ez. 34: 11-15). 'The Lord is my shepherd...He leads me...restores my soul' (Ps 23). Secondly, the idea of the shepherd was used to describe the work of the religious and political leaders in Israel, whom God 'appointed to care for his people' and encourage them to keep His law. God had saved and protected the Israelites on their journey to the promised land and had made His will clear in the commandments he gave to Moses. But the way of obedience was not always easy. The people needed continuing instruction and care from human 'shepherds': the priests and prophets who led them in worship and taught and counselled them on religious and moral questions, and also the judges and kings who protected them from enemy nations and administered justice in the land. God continued to guide and strengthen these wise elders and leaders: 'The lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding, he stores up sound wisdom for the upright, he is a shield

to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his saints' (Prov. 2: 6-8). 'Thou didst guide me with thy counsel... God is the strength of my heart' (Ps 119: 105).

But not all these leaders led the people in the right ways. Among them were 'false prophets' and 'worthless shepherds', 'wise in their own conceit', who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture' instead of feeding and defending them (Ez. 13: 3; 34: 1-10, Jer 23: 1). It was in such times of trouble, when God's people were suffering defeat and oppression for lack of good leadership that prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah used the 'good shepherd' idea in yet another way. Believing that God would never wholly forsake His people, they looked forward expectantly to the coming of a new leader, the one True Shepherd (Ez. 4: 23), the 'righteous branch' who would 'execute justice and righteousness in the land' (Jer 23: 5), 'feed his flock and gather the lambs in his arms' (Is 40: 11). It was as a shepherd as well as a princely ruler that the prophets foresaw the coming of Jesus, the Messiah who would save and redeem God's people (Micah 5: 2-4)

Even in the New Testament, the idea of the shepherd was chiefly used in two ways. First, Jesus used it for Himself: 'I am the Good Shepherd' who 'calls his own sheep by name... and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice'. And 'I am the door of the sheep...if anyone enters by me, he shall be saved' (John 10: 1-16). The writer to the Hebrews, too, referred to Jesus as 'the great shepherd of the sheep', who overcomes death, having been 'brought again from the dead by the blood of the eternal covenant' (Heb 13: 20), that is, through His willingness to lay down His life for the sheep. Second, and as in the OT, the idea was used to describe the human leaders of 'the flock of God'. The risen Jesus Himself commanded Peter on whom He said He would found His Church to: 'feed my lambs...tend my sheep' (Mat 16: 18; John 21: 15-16). Paul warned the elders of the church at Ephesus, 'take heed to yourselves and to the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers' (Acts 20: 28), and Peter

exhorted the leaders of the churches in Asia Minor to tend the congregations in their charge ‘willingly’...eagerly...being examples to the flock’ (1Pet 5: 2-3)

What is therefore the definition of pastoral ministry in protestant churches and in Roman Catholicism? Is pastoral ministry understood in the same way?

In Protestant churches, a pastor's role is often assumed to focus primarily on preaching. However, beyond delivering sermons, pastors are also expected to engage in local ministries such as hospital visits, funerals, weddings, and organizing church activities. Their responsibilities include both nurturing the existing congregation and attracting new members, with pastors typically taking the lead in these efforts, though the congregation also participates.

In Roman Catholicism, pastoral ministry, especially for the sick and infirm, is seen as a keyway the Church continues Jesus' mission. While all baptized Christians share the responsibility of pastoral care, the administration of sacraments—like Baptism, Eucharist, and Holy Orders—is reserved for ordained priests, with exceptions in specific cases (e.g., anyone can baptize in emergencies, and spouses administer the sacrament of marriage while the priest serves as a witness).

Pastoral ministry in the Catholic circle was understood differently at different times in history. It was not until the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) that the word “pastoral” was also used for the “cure of souls.” Many catholic parishes employ “pastoral associates,” lay people (not ordained) who serve in ministerial or administrative roles, assisting the priest/pastor in his work which culminates in administering sacraments.

According to (Willimon, 2002), pastoral ministry includes several activities that the pastor is called to do. These include home or hospital visitations, organizing prayers, training sessions, preparing sermons, or bible studies, and care giving activities that require the mastery of a whole range of physical, mental, and emotional skills. Nevertheless, this pastor's work,

including every supporting ministry, should not be done in isolation; it must be integrally tied to the church, with the church as the center (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009).

2.3.4.2 Difference between pastoral and lay ministry

The idea that priests were somehow *different* from the rest of God's people developed in the centuries after Christ, especially in the Early Church and the medieval Church. It was during that time that various ministerial orders such as bishops, priests and deacons developed (Vinet, 2017). Because of their ordination and their sacramental and disciplinary functions, priests came to be regarded not only as "set apart" for special work, but as actually "separated" in kind from those who were not ordained. In his writings, Gregory says that "the same power of the Word makes the priest venerable and honourable, separated. While yesterday he was one of the masses, one of the people, now he is suddenly transformed into a guide, a president, a teacher of righteousness, an instructor in hidden mysteries, raised in respect of his unseen soul to a higher condition."

As the centuries passed and the Church grew in political, economic, and spiritual power, the ordained clergy gained a position of great authority. By the 13th Century, they were responsible only to the Pope, and not to any control by lay people. They were free from judgment by the normal civil courts. If they did wrong, they were judged by other church leaders only, and lay people had no say in the way priests did their work. The idea that there was a great difference between clergy and laity became very strong, and was reflected in various practices that grew up, differentiating between them. Some of these were: firstly, at the service of the Lord's Supper, the clergy stood, but the people kneeled. Secondly, the clergy received the bread and wine, but the laity received the wine only. Thirdly, it gradually became customary for the clergy to be celibate (not permitted to marry)-new laws against marriage for priests were introduced, and lay people were regarded as inferior in holiness because they were

allowed to marry. And lastly, the clergy began to dress in a distinctive way which sets them apart from the laity.

Thus, the priests became a separate ‘order’ from the rest of God’s people. They were the “rectors” or “rulers”, exercising their authority through control of the teaching and sacramental functions within the church, and the ordinary believers were regarded almost as their “subjects”. As this distinction between clergy and laity became clearer, the laity became passive supporters and followers of the very powerful ordained leaders. Many of leaders neglected the real needs and wishes of the laity to whom they simply dispensed what seemed like “magical” formulas for salvation.

In the United Methodist Church, the church ministry is known as the ministry for all Christians. Christian ministry is the expression of Christ's purpose and perspective by a community of believers who embody a shared life of gratitude, devotion, witness, service, celebration, and discipleship. Though these two are separated (clergy and laity ministries), both Christians are bound to the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20, which is the main mission of the UMC and other Christian churches. In fact, this ministry for all was instituted by Jesus Christ through this execution of this command (Vinet, 2017). And Willimon (2002, p.29) adds the following:

“All Christians are baptized to share in the high priesthood of Christ. The “priesthood of believers” doctrine does not mean, as is sometimes asserted, that each person is his or her own priest, but rather that each person is a priest to his or her neighbor, one who shares in Christ’s priesthood to the world.”

However, in His writings on “Priesthood” Chrysostom (Schaff, 1889; Neville, 1964), a 4th century AD great Christian leader described four essential functions of priests as follows:

Firstly, the ordained leader has *sacramental* functions. He administers the saving rite of the sacraments. In baptism, he signs and seals the adoption of new Christians into God’s

family of the Church; in the Lord's Supper, he mediates the body and blood of Christ to a need world. Secondly, the ordained leader has *disciplinary and administrative functions*. He must maintain the purity of the church; administer discipline to unworthy members; judge disputes among Christians; and administer the church's property. Thirdly, the ordained leader has a *teaching and evangelistic* function. He is the instructor of the people. He must oppose false teaching and build up the faithful in their knowledge and understanding of the gospel so that they, in return, can proclaim the good news to others. Fourthly, the ordained leader has a *pastoral* function. He must be able to mingle with people from all walks of life. He must not confine himself to the work of sacraments and preaching. He must move among his people, and "preside at all the great moments of human life," that is, he must be present and involved so as to bring the resources of the Christian faith to people at every stage and every crisis of their lives.

It is worth noting that in different churches, different titles are used to describe ordained ministers. Three such titles commonly used are "minister, pastor and priest." Some churches ordain only men, not women. Some do not use the rite of ordination as such, yet they do appoint leaders whose work and position in the church is much the same as that of ordained ministers. Each of these titles emphasizes a different aspect of the leader's work and reflects the ideas about leadership held by each particular church. Every church needs some sort of ministry and organization if the gospel is to be made known to people in an effective way. But God calls different people to different sorts of ministry: "some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and preachers" (Eph 4: 11).

2.3.4.3 Ordination of ministers

Ordination is a gift of God, through the church, for the church, that the church might be the church of God, says (Willimon, 2002). Therefore, it remains imperative that those who are in the ministry should first be called by God. It is Christ who then assigns to those who are

called the different gifts to be well equipped for God's ministry: 'It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers' (Eph 4: 11). As St Paul told the Christians at Corinth, within the Church 'there are varieties of service... and there are varieties of working' (1 Cor 12: 4-6). The work of the ordained minister is an important one among these 'varieties'.

Ordination is the rite by which a church sets apart, as ordained ministers, people whom it believes to be specially gifted for a ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and for pastoral care of a congregation. When other church leaders lay their hands on the ordinand's head, it means that he (or, in some churches, she) is being 'set apart,' and 'ordained,' i.e., given authority by the church to carry out a particular ministry. It is worth noting that some churches use the pouring of the anointing oil on the head of pastors to set them apart for that ministry (Lev. 8: 12). There are also some specific leaders who get commissioned for God's work, which is not of a pastor, at the model of Jesus commissioning of the twelve apostles (Mat 28: 18-20; Luke 24: 50-51).

For instance, the purpose of ordination in the United Methodist Church (as defined in ¶303 in the Book of Discipline) is to set apart persons for ministry and this is fulfilled in leadership of the people of God through ministries of Service, Word, Sacrament, Order, Compassion, and Justice. It is also described as a complete dedication to the highest ideals of the Christian life for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and most effective witness to the Christian gospel (Lacey, 2014).

2.3.4.3.1 Categories of pastors

Leadership had always been present in the church (van Zyl, 1998) even though current church leaders are different from those of the early church. Those of the early church served in unity and made one team, putting and sharing together all they had. According to these days, we have so many denominations with various church leaders. We have deacons, pastors,

reverends, apostles, bishops, archbishops and so forth. It is somehow difficult to see the kind of unity that characterized the early church. Apart from lacking unity, they have different philosophies about pastoral ministry. The following are some categories according to various philosophies:

The first category is for those who think that pastoral ministry is for the poor. This category is made of people who are not called to this ministry, nor have any knowledge about pastoral ministry. They think that it is a ministry of lazy people who have nothing to do because there is nothing serious in pastoral ministry. That category concludes by affirming that it is the only ministry where we can serve joyfully without any difficulty. Those with the spirit of good shepherd serving in the midst of this category are women and men who work hard and remain well prepared to prove the opposite.

The second category includes those who have been called by their fellow human beings. These are men and women who have no divine calling and vocation. They are in the ministry as state workers and only wait for their 'salaries' at the end of the month. As they are called by other people, they look upon those who called them, who in their turn have full control of their lives and thoughts. For instance, church leaders who try their level best to convince their children and/or some of their family members or friends. Unfortunately, when those who called them are no longer there, the ministry falls.

The third category comprises those who think that there are many blessings in the ministry. Looking at the good standing of the clergy and Christians who look rich both spiritually and physically rich, some people join the ministry with the idea that the clergy and their Christians get many riches and support (money and materiel) from both the local and mother church.

The fourth category is for those who are not called but look for a hiding place. Some people sacked from their previous areas of job look for a hiding place in the church where they

only aim at earning bread. Once there, they make all manoeuvres to become pastors without merit.

The last category is related to those truly called by God and who wholeheartedly responded. They are men and women truly called by God. Such people normally are hesitant to the calling as they try to resist it. They have no other agenda apart from fulfilling God's will. They are faithful shepherds to their master; they always look forward to pleasing God who called them into the ministry than pleasing the flock. To these servants are these words: "Keep watch of yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood" (Acts 20: 28).

With that range of categories, there is a high chance that conflicts may arise if their objectives or expectations are not met. Unmet needs lead to conflict. Once someone's needs, objectives, or values are not met, this creates a threat within the person. The consequence of this is a conflictual outcome.

2.3.4.3.2 Marks of a good pastor

Paul has given a set of qualities required for a good leader and this is clearly stated in his letters. In this pastoral letter addressed to Timothy, Paul outlines the qualities of a good church leader. 1 Timothy 4 from verses 6 to 16 is a wonderful summary of what ministries should look like. It brings up 12 marks of an excellent pastoral ministry.

Both letters written to Timothy are concerned with how to behave in the church; that involves how to understand pastoral ministry which gives direction to every other kind of behaviour in the church. Paul's instruction here is not just for Timothy. It is normative. And what he says to Timothy is what the spirit of God wants to all of us who minister. The passage, starting in verse 6 and running down to the end of the chapter, provides a rich summary of all of the apostles inspired instruction for those who serve the church as ministers, as pastors. And

it all begins with the statement, a noble minister, an excellent minister, a good servant of Christ Jesus.

Based on this passage of Paul's epistle to Timothy, scholars (Hendriksen, 1957; Engstrom, 1976; Homer, 1982; Vinet, 2017) came up with 12 marks of a good pastor:

Firstly, an excellent minister warns his people of error. When you point out error, you are a noble servant of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, an excellent minister is a faithful student of Scripture. He says in verse 6, "The good servant of Jesus Christ constantly nourished on the words of the faith (Scriptures) and of the sound doctrine which you have been following".

Thirdly, an excellent minister avoids the influence of unholy teaching. In verse 7 he says have nothing to do with worldly fables stead only for old women. Have nothing to do with them. So, a faithful, noble, minister of Christ Jesus warns his people, becomes expert in Scripture and theology and avoids the corrupting influence of unholy teachers.

Fourthly, an excellent minister is disciplined in personal godliness. This is obvious. The bottom half of verse 7, on the other hand says, 'discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness for bodily discipline is only of little profit'. Discipline yourself for godliness using the means of grace that have been given to you in the word and by the spirit. Discipline yourself that way rather than for the physical because godliness is profitable for all things. It holds promise not only for the present life but for the life to come. Physical exercise holds some promise for this life, none for the life to come.

Fifthly, an excellent minister is committed to hard work. In verse 10, "It is for this we labour and strive." To work to the point of exhaustion. To agonize in a struggle. Those are words that are associated with ministry. It is sweating labour.

Sixthly, an excellent minister teaches with authority. Verse 11, "command and teach these things." This is a command. Actually, keep commanding, keep teaching these things.

What things? All the things related to divine truth and virtue. This is a call for Timothy and it's a call for all ministers

Seventhly, an excellent minister is a model of spiritual virtue. We are getting down to the life behind the message. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct or lifestyle, love, faith, faithfulness, and purity, sexual purity primarily, show yourself an example of those who believe.

Eighthly, an excellent minister maintains a thoroughly Biblical ministry. Verse 13, "Until I come, give attention to the reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching." This sums up what ministers are supposed to do. Read the Scripture, explain the Scripture and apply the Scripture. God has made us responsible to teach his revelation and it's all in one book.

Ninthly, an excellent minister uses his spiritual gift. And the idea here is to keep using it. Verse 14, "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you." Another way to say this is an excellent minister has endurance. He does not neglect what was given to him by the Holy Spirit, what was affirmed through prophetic utterance, what was confirmed by the elders of the church when they laid hands on him at his ordination. That is to say he is faithful to the usefulness of that gift, that calling, that ordaining, that setting apart. He does not neglect the gift.

Tenthly, an excellent minister is passionate regarding his work. Verse 15, "Take pains with these things. Be absorbed in them." That is an interesting translation. And Paul keeps coming back to this. It is all about the Word. It is all about reading it, explaining it, applying it. And here he says it another way. "In these things be you." It is another way of saying; this is your life. This is not your job. This is where you live and move and have your being.

Eleventhly, an excellent minister is manifestly growing spiritually. If you are fully absorbed in the matters of ministry, both in the knowledge of Scripture and its application in

your own life, your progress may be evident to all. You are marching forward; you are moving ahead. Let it be manifest. Do not spend your whole life trying to defend a stupid sermon. Admit it was a stupid sermon and preach a better one. Interpret it the right way.

Lastly, an excellent minister perseveres in the ministry. Perseveres - pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching, persevere in these things. The exhortation picks up everything that has gone before.

2.3.4.3.3 Pastoral care

Pastor comes from a Latin word meaning “shepherd” which is related to *pastus* which mean “*feeding*” just as how the shepherd sees to the feeding, wellbeing, and growth of the flock so also does the pastor. Moreover, the word “pastor” in its adjective form “pastoral” refers to the life and work centering around tending and caring in general. It is based on Psalm 23 and Ezechiel 34. Pastoral care is therefore to be concerned for and give watchful attention (feeding, wellbeing, and growth) to the flock.

Pastoral care requires therefore the pastor to be equipped with the necessary skills in order to help the congregation. This is the ministry through which the pastor can be a catalyst for individual and congregational healing by strengthening the ability of people to give and receive love in the community hence making the church people be the church, a community where God’s love and justice are experienced realities bringing healing, enlivening, and growth. Our journey is full of spiritual and physical battles. Physical battles include, for instance, family violence, and this constitutes an example of a family conflict. A family system faces a lot of issues that need to be fixed through therapy or counselling. Domestic violence is one of the issues faced by the family system. According to Hecker & Wetchler (2003, p.463), a partner/ spouse abuse is a pattern of abusive behaviours including physical, sexual, and/or psychological maltreatment used by one person in an intimate relationship against another to gain power unfairly or to maintain that person’s misuse of power, control, and/or authority.

According to Baloyi (2013), wife beating has become a common practice among African people, and this has been a big challenge to pastoral care.

This issue of domestic or gender violence is a very challenging issue to pastoral care. As Baloyi raised causes leading to gender violence: traditional reasons, a negative view of lobola, the fear of singlehood, corrective measure, African idioms, power balance, economic dependency, alcohol and drug abuse, childless or infertility and sexual reasons. Looking at those reasons gathered by Baloyi, it is not easy for pastoral caregivers to intervene. It is difficult for a woman to report that domestic violence for the fear of becoming single even though the wife may not be economically dependent to her husband. The culture of our societies may constitute a barrier to that decision. Like in my culture, if a woman decides to go back home due to domestic violence, the mother will tell her daughter to go back because of this our sayings “NIKO ZUBAKWA” literally meaning “that is how families are built”. The traditional view of sexual intercourse constitutes another challenge for giving pastoral care to that family. If the pastor intervenes, he may be accused of having an affair with that woman and this pushes the pastor to take some distance. Issues of sexual intercourse are considered as taboo in most African cultures. It is very rare for a woman to come to talk this to her pastor. But also, there are cultures that promote wife beating. And society considers it as normal because it is acceptable within that culture. In this case, a pastor caregiving intervention may be seen as acting against the culture of the community. In addition to that, the individualistic way of living makes it difficult to avoid problems related to wife beating. The community itself seems to some extent not bothered by such practice. Non-involvement in others’ business has taken place in the community and at the same time, someone is being emotionally hurt. But mostly, domestic or gender violence happens in the family. The victims usually keep it a secret with the view of protecting the family system. And this attitude of silence and secrecy render also

difficult the intervention of pastoral caregivers so that healing, guiding, reconciling, liberating treatments are offered.

Apart from those physical wounds, church members are also wounded spiritually as a result of domestic violence, people may develop addictive behaviours that need the care of the pastor. Marlatt, Baer, Donovan, & Kivlahan (1988) describe addictive behaviour as a recurring practice that intensifies the danger of disease and/or related personal and social crises. According to DiClemente (2018), addictions are understood as learned habits that, once established, become difficult to extinguish even in the face of dramatic and, at times, numerous negative consequences. The critical dimensions for an addiction are (1) the development of a solidly established, problematic pattern of an appetitive—that is, pleasurable and reinforcing—behaviour; (2) the presence of physiological and psychological components of the behaviour pattern that create dependence; and (3) the interaction of these components in the individual's life that make the behaviour very important and resistant to change. Examples of addictive behaviours include can include problematic behaviour patterns related to eating, sex, drugs, social medias, gambling, and money. Habits most clearly associated with addiction include tobacco dependence, alcohol misuse and dependence, legal and illegal substance and prescription medication use disorders, a range of eating disorders (including overeating and bulimia), as well as gambling disorders (DiClemente, 2018). Whether the addiction is to drugs, alcohol, pornography, gambling or tobacco, the problem is self-destructive behaviour (Dole, 1980). It is important to note that addictive behaviours are among the main roots of chronic disease, disability, and death. In addition to those consequences, Prochaska (2004) adds that these addictive behaviours have a huge budget burden on public services such as health care systems, legal systems, employers, and educational systems. Considering the consequences of these addictive behaviours, the best treatment to be recommended should be prevention and this is the medication to be offered by Pastoral Care. In fact, the pastor should not wait for

people who are hurt to come to him for help, but his/her roles include also one of seeking and saving the lost (Willimon, 2002).

Given the challenges faced by individuals and families, the role of pastoral care is essential within the life of a church community. Holistic pastoral care utilizes religious tools to empower people, families, and congregations to heal from their struggles and move toward personal and spiritual wholeness.

Pastors can use three key forms of ministry to support families: **pastoral care**, **pastoral counselling**, and **pastoral psychotherapy**. The specific type of care provided depends on the unique needs, resources, and goals of each individual or family. All three forms are integral components of pastoral ministry. According to Lynch (2002), therapeutic practices—whether in psychiatry, social work, counselling, or pastoral care—are united by their aim to reduce human suffering and promote well-being. These practices are grounded in values that define what is important for human flourishing.

Pastoral care is traditionally defined as the Christian ministry focused on the care of souls. Clebsch and Jaekle (1983) describe it as a set of supportive actions carried out by Christian leaders (such as elders and priests) to heal, sustain, guide, and reconcile individuals facing personal struggles, particularly those connected to deeper existential concerns. However, pastoral care goes beyond the relationship between pastors and individuals in distress; it also involves the broader mission of nurturing and uplifting the church community (Willimon, 2002). Holistic pastoral care begins with addressing the needs of individuals and families but extends to fostering caring communities within the congregation.

Pastoral counselling is a more targeted form of pastoral care, focusing on helping individuals, couples, and families manage crises, losses, difficult choices, and other stress-inducing situations. It helps people confront psychological, physical, spiritual, and relational challenges triggered by crises. The goal is to guide them in making constructive decisions,

adopting healthier behaviours, and developing new skills that enhance their relationships and improve their ability to handle stress.

Pastoral therapy builds upon pastoral counselling, delving deeper into complex emotional and relational issues. Its objective is to promote profound healing and growth, strengthening the very foundation of people's lives. In this role, the pastor serves as a therapist rather than a preacher or moral authority. Willimon (2002) emphasizes that pastors in this capacity help individuals connect with their spirituality, ease their anxieties, care for their emotional wounds, and support their personal development.

Clebsch and Jaekle (1983) outline **four primary functions of pastoral care**:

Healing: Aims to restore individuals to wholeness, helping them recover from impairments and move beyond their previous state.

Sustaining: Provides support to those facing situations where full recovery is unlikely, helping them endure and transcend their difficulties.

Guiding: Assists individuals in making informed and confident decisions about their future, especially when these choices affect their overall well-being.

Reconciling: Focuses on mending broken relationships, particularly between individuals and God, often through forgiveness and discipline.

Additional pastoral care functions identified by other scholars include:

Nurturing: Encourages individuals to realize their full potential throughout life's journey, integrating educational and counselling approaches.

Prophetic care: Addresses the social systems that deeply impact people's lives, aiming to inspire and equip individuals to become agents of positive change within their communities and broader society.

Liberating: the aim of this function is to equip counselee the spirit of liberation in case they are feeling trapped. This has been the foundation of liberation theology.

Empowering: The pastor seeks to empower the recipient to undertake changes

Nevertheless, it is also important to note that pastors may not have adequate skills in pastoral counselling, or pastoral therapy. In order to be effective and efficient in the pastoral ministry, pastors need to be trained in pastoral care and counselling skills. If they have no skills in this area, they should be bold enough to refer deeply troubled people to professional counsellors for long-term psychotherapy and psychiatric care. Pastors may face difficult cases that need skilled therapists. And in this case, the best way of helping their congregants is to admit their shortfalls and guide them where they can get the necessary help.

2.3.5 The place of training in pastoral ministry

The previous sections on “Pastoral ministry” lead to a very important issue: training church leaders or ministers. As Willimon says, the pastoral ministry is an activity. Not only do pastors need to be educated, but they also need to be trained during the period of his/her assignment. The itinerancy system that is used within some of the church denominations, like the UMC, calls for continuous learning. Each place has its own context, requirements, and new people that will force the pastor to learn.

2.3.5.1 Difference between scholarly education and training

Scholarly education is the formal education curriculum that most people must take in order to get qualifications in various course programs. According to the World Declaration on Education for All, every person-child, youth and adult- shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs (World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs - UNESCO Digital Library). At least, basic education should be provided to all children, youth, and adults. Access to further education programs should also be accessible for all who wish to do so. This is therefore

organized by various educational bodies. Teaching includes the design and implementation of activities that promote learning, and includes classroom teaching, course design, the development of instructional materials, and the development of formative and summative assessment. (Klopper & Steve, 2015). Academic education through formal education system is necessary and traditional, undergraduate, graduate, and research education will remain important to society as Gleason (2018, p.6) says, but he adds that space must be made for adult learners to continue their learning as well. This is where training and personal development programs come in.

Armstrong (2006, p.560) describes learning as an ongoing process that not only builds on existing abilities but also fosters the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for greater or more advanced responsibilities in the future. The acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes enable the trainee to be prepared for higher responsibilities. Training serves as a means to facilitate learning. Armstrong (2006) defines training as a structured and systematic approach to instruction aimed at promoting learning. It utilizes formal methods to impart knowledge and equip individuals with the skills necessary to perform their roles effectively.

As noted by Sloman (2003a) and cited in Armstrong (2006), learning is considered an individual-focused process, while training is seen as an organizational initiative. Training delivery typically follows a content model, which involves identifying the knowledge and skills to be developed, designing the program, selecting appropriate training methods, and presenting the material in a structured and logical order through various instructional techniques.

There are many types of training programs (Armstrong, 2006) that can be offered, and these may include for instance conflict management, trauma healing, IT skills, community development, evangelism techniques, leadership, social justice, advocacy practices, communication skills, project management, time management skills, planning skills, human resources management skills, and other types of training. As Armstrong (2006) notes, the

content of the training should be related to the work contexts of the participants. Training programs should be designed to respond the needs of the trainee' work or job. If the participant is a pastor, a training program in conflict management will be needed. Pastors or church leaders are exposed to conflict cases, and they need to be trained in some techniques on how to handle conflicts either in the community or within the congregation.

2.3.5.2 Education entry requirement for ministers

Education requirements depend on each religious organization. In the UMC, the education requirements for clergy are the responsibility of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) in accordance with the BOD (2016), paragraph ¶ 1404 and this is done through the Division of Ordained Ministry. ¶ 1421.3 describes the theological education tasks of this Division. Some of the responsibilities of this division include to:

- a) Develop and maintain the educational programs and standards for those who are ordained as deacons and elders, licensed as local pastors, and certified for specialized ministries in The United Methodist Church and shall disseminate the approved courses and standards to appropriate oversight bodies and boards.
- b) Certify the course offerings in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity as specified in ¶ 335. (3) and provide the University Senate and boards of ordained ministry with a list of the courses approved.
- c) Prescribe a theological studies program which will include basic graduate theological studies for those preparing for ordination as a deacon, an advanced course of studies program for local pastors preparing for ordination as an elder, and a curriculum of studies for those seeking certification in areas of specialized ministry.
- d) Prescribe a Course of Study for local pastors that include the studies for license for pastoral ministry and the Course of Study curriculum. All work in the Course of Study shall be taken in programs approved by the Division of the Ordained Ministry (Source: BOD, 2016).

For those who would like to get more details on the educational requirements for those who want to join the ordained ministry in the UMC, they can consult chapter two of the BOD which talks about the Ordained Ministry. A full section on candidacy and certification of Licensed and Ordained Ministry describes in detail the entire process and the educational requirements to be complied with.

Nevertheless, those educational requirements may not be applied in all annual conferences of the UMC. For instance, in Burundi annual conference, the Board of Ordained Ministry working with GBHM, candidacy has set the minimum educational qualification for those who want to be part of the ordained ministry. Candidacy must have high secondary school diploma and must complete the Course of Study program. This was done so because of the difficult time that the church went through, but also the socio-political situation of Burundi. Many people were denied access to education due to political and discriminatory reasons. Access to university studies was only granted to a certain category of the population. To counter this challenge, the church leadership has been organizing training programs to help pastors and local pastors to do ministries in an effective way.

2.3.5.3 Importance of training church leaders

Why train church ministers? And yet some of them have education requirements for them to be qualified as pastors? According to (Xhemajli, Vokshi, & Neziraj, 2022), knowledge is the basic power and capital and the generator of development, i.e. a key development resource. And knowledge is acquired through learning, defined as the process by which a person acquires and develops new knowledge, skills, capabilities and attitudes (Armstrong, 2006). For Tomlison (2004, p.48), learning is complex and covers knowledge, skills, insights, beliefs, values, attitudes and habits. Learning is a process and an outcome; it can be incremental or transformational, conscious or unconscious, planned and unplanned, it is a cause of change

and a consequence of change. And as it has been noted, learning is promoted through training. In Nigerian Pentecostal and mainline churches, Sofoluwe et al. (2013) and Ajayi & Olorunsola (2021) report that although spiritual mediation (e.g., prayer) is commonly used, many churches lack formal training in conflict resolution. This correlates with higher clergy burnout and fragmented congregations. According to (Ngong, 2020; Baloyi, 2014), the need for structured, context-sensitive conflict management training within African theological education is increasingly clear. These studies underscore that conflict is not merely a spiritual concern but a practical leadership challenge requiring formal skills, transparency, and community engagement.

Education never ends. People need to learn new skills, new ways of doing things or responding to changes happening within the organization or within the community.

For instance, Covid-19 brought new ways of doing things and new working models. Many organizations decided to use digital solutions to continue serving the clients. People increased their online connection through Zoom calls or phone calls. Church organizations started online worship services, and other online services such as online offering, online caregiving, etc. This change required church leaders to be trained in how to use these new technologies tools.

According to Word & Sowa (2017, p.125), training is defined as “the systematic approach to affecting individuals’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to improve individual, team, organizational effectiveness,” and development is defined as “systematic effort affecting individuals’ knowledge or skills for purposes of personal growth or future jobs and/or roles”. In business organizations, training is the work of the Human Resource Department. In a church setting, what should be the department in charge of church leaders’ development programs? In the UMC, the BOOM in collaboration with the district superintendents is the body in charge of training leaders. Independent of the type of organization, the assessment or identification of training needs is very important. Training is

part of the personal development program, and it is also part of the learning culture. Armstrong (2006, p.577) notes that training should be systematically planned. This planning process includes the ascertainment of training needs, the appropriate training programs to cover those identified needs, the human resources such as experienced trainers required to carry out this training, and a monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure the training effectiveness. And Tomlison (2004, p.1) notes that improved self-management increases an education leader's ability to cope with stress, resolve conflict, manage change and manage to change, achieve sustainable peak performance, build and lead effective teams and influence organizational cultures.

2.3.6 Types of Conflict and conflict resolution models

The world is full of conflictual situations: conflict in families, in communities, and in society. Conflicts are also found in organizations but also conflicts between nations do happen. Budjac Corvette (2014) notes that conflict occurs in individual relationships, in business and professional relationships, in organizations or entities, between groups and corporations, and between countries (Budjac Corvette, 2014). There is conflict between Israel and Palestine. The world is facing too many conflicts. Conflicts within the same regions are being noticed. The DR Congo, one of the country states of the EAC, has been experiencing conflicts for more than 20 years. Disagreements may be around the shared geographic boundary or diplomatic relations. Not that the conflict started as a war. However, disagreement over security interest issues for the two nations ended up with a conflictual war. The Russo- Ukraine conflict can be described as one of these cases. Some conflicts, if not properly managed, end up to a war as it is the case with Russia and Ukraine. It is very critical to define and explore the context of conflict. Jeong (2008, p.38) notes there are three elements that constitute the context of a conflict. A conflict can therefore be defined according to its context.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the Latin word for “conflict” is “*conflictus*.” And it is literally translated as “striking together.” From this translation, it implies that conflict may produce negative, unhealthy impact. Two elements striking may end up in destruction. According to Conflict Definition & Meaning | Dictionary.com, conflict is defined as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions. For (Ayojimi, 2019), conflict is a struggle among people, it may be physical or ideological. Ayojimi noted also that while conflict may be within one person, it may also involve people or groups in some other situations.

Conflict can happen everywhere, any time, in all organizations. Conflict may affect all the spheres of a nation: political conflict, economical conflict, social conflict, community conflict, environmental conflict, conflict over lands, ethnic conflict, etc.

A conflict may be a political one if it arises as a result of a political contest. This is the case with election contests for instance. In Africa, it is common to have these kinds of political conflicts. It is rare to accept the elections’ results in Africa. Those who lose elections always accuse the winners of having rigged them. The Republic of Burundi has been holding democratic elections since 1993. Nevertheless, it has been noticed that there is always a dispute between winners and losers. Leaders in opposition have never agreed to lose the elections. Rather, they have been accusing the ruling party of rigging the elections. And these attitudes have even led the country to a civil war. In 1993, all elected leaders were killed in an attempt coup d’etat. The president of the Republic, the speaker of National assembly, the deputy speaker, members of parliament, government ministers, and other local authorities were assassinated four months after the election. The political party which was leading the country for more than three decades did not accept the ballot verdict and its leaders decided then to kill

the newly elected leaders. This is frequently observed in most developing countries. It is very hard for politicians to accept the results of the elections.

A political conflict may also take the form of diplomatic conflict. Countries may enter a diplomatic conflict over several issues: a diplomat accused of spying on the country, etc. What follows a diplomatic conflict is the closure of embassy representation in those countries or key staff such as the ambassador may be asked to leave the country. Burundi and Rwanda have known diplomatic conflict since 2015. Even though embassy offices in both countries were not closed, the embassies remain with minimum staff personnel. The Burundi government accused Rwanda of supporting coup d'état plotters in 2015. The general who led the coup d'état fled in Rwanda and he is still even in Rwanda. The government of Burundi requested the repatriation of those coup d'état plotters, but Rwanda refused.

This development created also a community conflict. Rwanda and Burundi are states partners to East Africa Community. But the borders between them are closed. The conflict between these countries has affected the life of the entire community as an organization. In addition, this has also affected the life of the two communities: Burundians and Rwandans. The two countries do share borders. And along those bordering provinces, intermarriages between the two people do happen. Mobility of people and goods is not happening.

A land conflict has been observed in some countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, etc. Burundi is not left behind. Many legal cases that are recorded in the Courts are land related conflicts. Some cases have become unsolvable. Due to 1972 civil war, many Burundians were forced to flee the country. Their lands and assets such as properties, cars, etc. were taken by those who remained in the country. Refugees started coming back in 2005 after the peace agreement signed in Arusha between the rebel movement of CNDD-FDD (Conseil National de la Défense de la Démocratie- Force de Défense de la Démocratie in French) and the government in 2000. In this Arusha peace agreement, there was a provision of putting in place

a “National Commission on Lands and other Assets”. The commission was tasked of hearing disputes relating to land and other property between the victims and third parties or public or private services; to make an inventory of State land, to identify and propose the recovery of land that has been irregularly allocated or diverted from its intended use; know all the cases submitted to him by the victims. The 1972 massive killings in Burundi were a result of ethnical conflict that started in 1962. More than 200 hundred Hutu were killed. Their lands, properties and other assets were taken by some Tutsi leaders. A deep division between the two main ethnic communities was created. Ethnical violences and killings were observed in Burundi but these more intensified after the killing of the first democratically elected Hutu president in 1993. As Jeong (2008, p.5) notes that tangible economic interests or control over power are not the sole roots of conflictual relationships. Other sources include differences over value and identity. It is in that perspective that extremist Tutsi, supported by the army defense force, refused to be led by a Hutu president. This was seen as a big blow to their values and beliefs. And after 100 days, the president and other key leaders were all killed. But as Mayer (2012, p.47) notes, the survival of each ethnic group was at stake. On one hand, Tutsi feared that the Hutu president would revenge (as he was a 1972 refugee but who came back and formed a political party). Due to that fear, whether based on the real threat, they had to kill the president in a coup d’etat on 21st October 1993. On the other hand, Hutu realized that their survival was at stake. This event reminded them of all the killings that had been happening since 1962. They opted to fight for their survival. The country became a cemetery: innocent people were killed by the fellow neighbors, Tutsi became displaced in their own country, and Hutu fled the country to the neighboring countries such as Tanzania, DR Congo(ex-Zaire). Hence, the Arusha agreement included also the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Commission Verité et Reconciliation, CVR in French) to investigate crimes during ethnic conflict which started after Burundi became independent in 1962. The 2021 Truth and Reconciliation Commission report,

adopted by the Parliament indicated that a genocide against Hutu was committed in 1972, and criminal acts and violation of human rights against Tutsi.

According to Budjac Corvette (2014, p.39), there are three main schools of thought on conflict: the traditional view, the human relations, and the interactionist view.

The first school holds the view that conflict is bad and for that it should be avoided. Conflict is seen as something bad, devastating, and therefore should be avoided at any cost. Those who adopt this perspective often manage conflict by denying its existence or attempting to avoid it through strategies such as overlooking or ignoring it. According to Northouse (2016, p.269), avoidance behaviours can manifest in various ways. Individuals may ignore the issue, shift blame to authority figures or coworkers, attack those who seek to address it, pretend it does not exist, or divert their efforts to unrelated tasks.

This school of thought promotes the use of the “avoiding conflict style” when it comes to manage conflict (Lussier & Achua, 2010). According to Jeong (2008, p.30), the avoidance style is preferable by parties who have a negative perception about conflict and feel that the fight is not worth the effort. The tendency is to suppress or to avoid any damaging consequence that may result from managing the conflict. In the same line of ideas, Mayer (2012, p.62) notes that there is a movement of going back and forth between the avoidance and engagement many times during the course of a conflict, particularly when long-term relationships are involved. The efforts will be focused on preventing such conflict from surfacing, denying its existence, or staying out of it in order to save the relationship between conflicting parties.

The second views conflict as natural and sometimes functional and other times dysfunctional. This view considers conflict as part of us as (Kale & McCullough, 2003) note. For these authors, conflict is a normal part of all human organizations, including the church. Therefore, conflict is unavoidable. Whenever there is more than one person in a room, conflict becomes unavoidable, says (Ayojimi, 2019). Though conflict is considered in most cases as

bad or devastating, conflict may serve as a stimulus for change. This school of thought calls for a shift, and instead of focusing on the negative aspects of the conflict, the focus should be more on the positive aspects of it. (McCully, 2021) supported this idea. According to McCully, people need to resign from conflict from negative to positive. Not all conflicts are negative. Some conflicts have positive impacts if properly managed. Conflicts may shed some new light and new ways of doing things giving opportunity for growth, innovation, etc.

The interactionist view, though conflict is unavoidable, looks at how conflict can be managed and maintained at a certain level. In other words, conflict is more damaging if it is not properly handled. According to (Budjac Corvette, 2014), those in support of this perspective see conflict as a positive force except when it is misdiagnosed, improperly avoided, or mismanaged. Conflicting ideas may generate new ideas, new ways of doing things hence conflict needs to be embraced. This is the essence of the third school of thought. Those who support this view hold that conflict is inevitable and that maintaining and managing a certain degree of it can actually be helpful. Conflict is viewed as a positive force if it is well diagnosed and managed. In understanding conflict, it is imperative to examine the sources of discontent and animosity, to identify the phases of evolving relationships between adversaries (Jeong, 2008).

Conflict may be real or perceived, what Jeong calls realistic and non-realistic conflict. For Jeong (2008, p.43), the roots of realistic conflict include material scarcity, limited positions and other objective situations which produce differences in interests and competing aspirations. A realistic conflict may be between two individuals, two departments within an organization, countries, communities, etc. This usually happens when there is competition over resources, position, interests, etc. There is a water conflict between Egypt and Ethiopia(bbc:2021). The conflict is real. Egypt uses water from the Nile River for its agricultural activities through irrigation and Ethiopia wants to use the water resources for producing hydroelectricity power

through the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This project intends to produce enough energy for its population, and the surplus will be exported to neighboring countries such as Sudan, Djibouti, etc. Despite many attempts to resolve the conflict, no agreement has been reached yet. This is a realistic conflict.

But sometimes, a conflict may be perceived or unrealistic. (Budjac Corvette, 2014) defines perception as the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting stimuli. According to this author, perception is influenced by our worldview, cultural and learned expectations, biases and prejudices, learning and cognitive styles, and various personality traits. (p.131). What we think or perceive is very influential when it comes to conflict because what we perceive has an impact on our behaviour, attitude, and communication. Once we sense or perceive that our interests, needs, goals, etc. are being opposed, a conflict is already created. Whether our perceptions are true or not, Mayer (2012, p.26) notes that conflict is our belief or understanding that our own needs, interests, wants, or values are incompatible with someone else's. It is therefore not easy to manage perceived conflicts compared to conflicts based on real facts. Someone may hold on to his position despite all the necessary steps that have been taken to ensure that his/her perceived interests are not ignored, hence the harmful nature of unrealistic or perceived conflicts.

When Africans hear the word *conflict*, it often evokes thoughts of disunity, war, quarrels, opposition, disagreements, misunderstandings, and confusion—all of which carry negative connotations. However, conflict also has positive aspects; when managed effectively, it can lead to unity, peace, togetherness, change, and growth.

Note also that conflict can be either constructive or destructive, depending on how it is approached. The way individuals handle conflict—whether constructively or destructively—shapes its outcomes. This has to do with our behaviour in conflicts. According to Mayer (2012), conflict is also expressed through actions people take to convey their emotions, articulate their

perceptions, and fulfil their needs, especially when these actions may interfere with others' needs. Conflict behaviour can involve direct efforts to achieve an outcome at another's expense, the exercise of power, or, in extreme cases, violence, which makes conflict destructive.

Constructive dispute exists when there is incompatibility between one person's ideas, information, conclusions, theories, and opinions with those of another and the two seek to reach an agreement (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014). Sometimes in constructive conflict, people agree to disagree. Their different opinions are then discussed to come up to the best agreed conclusion to resolve the problem and an implementation plan to solve the problem is also agreed upon. This is a win/win conflict management style. In this approach, as (Leas, 1985) writes, the controversy is seen as a mutual problem, all group members are willing to participate, everyone's contributions are listened to, given attention, taken seriously, valued and respected. People are open and honest when sharing their ideas and feelings. The approach itself is constructive. But also, people see their different views as a source of strength, a source of creativity. In the same line of ideas, (Hunsinger & Latini, 2013) note that conflict need not be destructive. According to these authors, conflict faced honestly is far healthier for any individual or community than suppressed or denied conflict. For them, conflict should be equated to violence, which is always destructive. However, if a conflict is openly acknowledged and courageously embraced, it can be constructive. Once people accept to come together and express freely their needs without animosity, a common understanding may be reached, and new ideas may emerge through that process. For a conflict not to be destructive, people should not run from it, it must be accepted as part of their beings. The opposite leads to destructive conflict. Leas (1985) describes this as a Win/Lose approach. This is what (Lussier & Achua, 2010) call the forcing conflict style. The person uses aggressive behaviour to get what she/he wants. Lussier & Achua noted that forcers use authority, threaten, intimidate.

Forcers do not care about the strategy used even if it harms others as long as their own needs are achieved.

A conflict can be functional or dysfunctional. It is functional when it focuses attention on problems that inhibit performance, forces people to reexamine goals, priorities, policies and practices or when it energizes people by bringing them into the decision-making cycle. Conflict can be also functional when it serves to bring individuals' fears, concerns, and reservations into the open, generating new ideas and perspectives that encourage a re-evaluation of organizational structure and design. However, it becomes dysfunctional when it persists even after a decision has been made, leading to stagnant relationships between adversaries regardless of changing issues. Additionally, conflict is detrimental if outside parties are drawn in, discussions remain focused on complaints rather than solutions, and if one individual or faction is intent on winning at all costs. This distinction highlights the importance of managing conflict constructively to foster positive outcomes rather than exacerbating divisions.

Conflict is everywhere, and it is inevitable. It arises from many sources (Budjac Corvette, 2014). And the different types of conflicts are discussed in the next sections.

2.3.6.1 Types of conflicts

There are five main types of conflict: individual conflict, group conflict, organizational conflict, environment conflict, and conflict between humanity and the Triune God. Individual conflict may be intrapersonal or interpersonal conflict. Group conflict may also take the form of intragroup or intergroup conflict. Organizational conflict may also be interorganizational or intra organizational conflict. According to (Nnamdi, 2023), conflicts can be broadly classified into four, within which there could be further classifications (p.42):

- a. Conflict with self: deals with identity crises, the internal battles we face in life, etc.

- b. Conflict with others: deals with the outcomes of all forms of our inter and intra-human relationships predicated on differences in opinion, interest, value, point of expectations.
- c. Conflict with the environment: deals with the world we live and work in, as it relates to our worldview and engagement with the environment, nature and society at large. It encompasses all interactions, development endeavours, technological advancements, information technology, natural disasters, etc.
- d. Conflict with the supernatural: deals with our engagement with the spirit realm.

These types of conflicts are discussed in detail in the following sections.

2.3.6.1.1 Individual or personal conflict

A human being is a complex being. This complexity may generate intrapersonal conflict or interpersonal conflict. In fact, conflict starts within me. In other words, human beings are at the center of a conflict. As (Bernard & Ashimi, 2014) put it, conflict is an inseparable part of people's life. It is a perpetual gift of life, although varying views of it may be held.

Intrapersonal conflict or "man against self" conflict occurs within the person himself; it arises within an individual when his motives or drives are block or when a person faces two different decisions and cannot take the appropriate decision as he faces competing objectives and roles (Abdul Fattah & Yaser Hasan, 2019). Generally, this type of conflict is a psychological one involving the individual's thoughts, values, principles and emotions. As we grow, there is a change that generates conflictual emotions and behaviours. This is the case of puberty or adolescence phases, examples of very troublesome periods of human life (Giovanni & Leah, 2016) that create conflicts within an individual. Once again, this is to support the view that life and conflict cannot be separated. Intrapersonal conflict may be a result of how an individual interacts with his surrounding environment. But it all depends on someone's personality. According Budjac Corvette (2014, p.12), defining personality is not an easy task.

Personality is described as a dynamic and evolving system comprising an individual's unique emotional, cognitive, and spiritual characteristics. Causes of intrapersonal conflicts may vary and include uncertainty, incompatibility, anger, depression, frustration, etc. A person may face a dilemma of choosing a job with positive and negative results. The job is well paid, very nice but it is in an undesired place. I am sure that if a Pentecostal church member from Burundi visits another Pentecostal church in Tanzania, Kenya, or Uganda, that person would experience an intrapersonal conflict as far as the worship service is conducted. In Burundi, the Pentecostals do not dance or clap hands when singing. They have their own worship order practices, which are different from other Pentecostal denominations in the East Africa region.

The other type of individual conflict is interpersonal conflict. Interpersonal conflict is a disagreement between two individuals, often arising from differences in personalities, perspectives, or values. We have varied personalities which usually result in incompatible choices and opinions. Hence these interpersonal conflicts are sometimes inevitable as long as two people spend a considerable amount of their time together. Interpersonal conflict is one of the most common and widely recognized forms of conflict, occurring between two or more individuals. In organizational settings, it is often what people think of when discussing conflict, typically arising from personal differences in values, perspectives, or communication (Abdul Fattah & Yaser Hasan, 2019). As the Apostle James wrote in his book, interpersonal struggles are part of individual life.

“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God (James 4:1-2, New International Version)”.

An individual may be in conflict when things are not being done in accordance with his moral values and belief systems. And as Apostle Paul writes, conflict or battle starts from

within someone, then it is manifested either in the form of anger, dispute, etc. According to (Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2016), individuals become very irritated when their values are threatened or compromised. Consequently, interpersonal disagreements arise when you attempt to change someone's opinion because it conflicts with your own or when you try to alter their behaviour to align with your preferences (Budjac Corvette, 2014).

Several factors contribute to interpersonal conflicts, including personality differences, varying perceptions shaped by experiences and education, clashes in values and interests, power and status disparities, lack of information, role incompatibility, stress, and competition over scarce resources (Abdul Fattah & Yaser Hasan, 2019). The UMC in Burundi is sometimes facing interpersonal conflict between a pastor and young people due to education background. In some local churches located in rural areas, some pastors feel uncomfortable leading people who are more educated than them. Some of them see them as threats to their ministries, especially young people. This becomes a challenge for the pastors to welcome divergent ideas as they feel that their authority is being undermined. And according to (Edward, 2018), there are four explanations to this question. People disagree because: (i) they see things differently, (ii) they want different things, (iii) their thinking style encourages them to do so, and (iv) they are supposed to. Nevertheless, if people accept dialogue, an appropriate solution can be found for these forms of disagreement.

Interpersonal conflicts are not far from group conflict. A group is made up of more than one individual, who either works together or shares certain beliefs. Whether they may work together or share certain beliefs, they are not spared from conflicts. That kind of conflict is called a group conflict.

2.3.6.1.2 Group conflict

Scholars have divided group conflict into intragroup conflict and intergroup conflict. Intragroup conflict happens when a person in a group works to achieve a different goal than the other group in the organization (Abdul Fattah & Yaser Hasan, 2019). This conflict happens within the same group due to our differences in personalities, behaviours, emotions, etc. It is confined within the borders of the group. There are many causes of intragroup conflicts. According to (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014), at the heart of intragroup conflict lies three main elements: incompatibilities, behaviours, and sentiments. In fact, being different or being unique does not constitute in itself a source of conflict. It is when there is an attempt to control others in order to deal with the incompatibility and when such interactions result in and are fuelled by antagonistic emotions, destructive conflict exists (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014). But also, intragroup conflicts arise whenever there is a tendency of favouritism in decision making process. When some individuals are favoured or certain individuals are well treated or considered superior to others of the group, this creates what is called in-group bias (Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2016) ending up to intergroup conflicts.

Intergroup conflicts are conflicts between different groups in an organization each seeking to accomplish their objectives. But also, intergroup conflicts may go beyond a group and take place between two or more groups such as religious groups, ethnic groups, or communities. Muslim and Christians fight in Nigeria is a speaking example of interfaith conflict. The fight between Hutus and Tutsi in the great lakes region of Africa is an ethnic group conflict.

Conflicts between groups often involve perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes at both individual and collective levels, which can intensify the original disagreements. For example, ethnocentrism illustrates how identity groups are often focused on their own ethnicity, embracing and even idealizing members of their group (the in-group)

while disparaging, discriminating against, and rejecting those who differ from them (out-groups) (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014).

Group conflicts call for an analysis of group dynamics. Group dynamics focuses on the study of forces operating within a group. In other words, group dynamics is defined as the social process by which people interact face to face in small groups (Shajahan & Shajahan, 2000). Hence enhancing good relationships among members of the group is an important task of the leader. In addition, five constructs interdependent in group dynamics need to be developed in order to enhance group dynamics and these are norms, goals, roles, cohesiveness and structure (M. Agazarian & Peters, 1995). These constructs in a group dynamic are interlinked to each other and the breaking of one of them by an individual in a group may affect the whole group.

Group dynamics are associated with discovering the personality of groups, their connections with people and another group, and group growth. These human-to-human connections built among team members form the basis for support, cooperation, and team spirit that not only make for high morale but the kind of effective communication and creativity that lead to greater productivity (Gardenswartz & Rowe, 2003). Group actions are specifically described as the “relations that control the approach and performance of persons when they are a group with others” (Nawaz & Khan, 2016). Members must not notice being cruelly judged. When group affiliates feel that they are being cruelly judged by other individuals, this can cause a retrogressive result on group dynamics. Such a discontented affiliate may hold back their optimistic assistance that could sanction the group procedure. Furthermore, these scenarios can lead to group breakdown, creation of an opponent group, or embarrassment of the member. It is common therefore to see struggle between individuals belonging to a particular category and those belonging to an opposing one. Learning from a Marxist theory, the workers or the low class is always struggling with the upper class known as the bourgeoisie class. The exploitation

of the workers by the bourgeoisie led to group or class controversial. What should not be forgotten or left out is the identity group. Each group is identified by its norms, beliefs, practices, and traditions and these characteristics have an influence on how one group interacts with the surrounding environment. Country like Burundi has undergone through ethnic group conflicts. As a result, many people have been killed. In fact, since its independence in 1960, Burundi has been characterized by a cyclic intergroup violence nearly every ten years. These interethnic conflicts have devastating consequences.

Sources of group conflicts include economic, value, and power differences as primary drivers (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014). Economic conflict is competition over scarce resources and can occur in all manner of settings over all manner of desired goods or services. This conflict may be between two departments of the same organization fighting for the allocation of resources. Value conflicts arise from differences in the beliefs held by various groups. Societies, and the world as a whole, consist of diverse cultural and religious groups with a wide range of preferences, practices, and priorities, which can lead to clashes. The key issue lies in how groups, especially dominant ones, choose to address these differences—whether by imposing their cultural norms on others or by promoting multicultural respect and harmony. This is what led to the so-called crusade wars between Christians and Muslims in the 11th century. Power conflict occurs when each group wishes to maximize its influence and control in the relationship with the other.

Group conflicts are connected to organizational conflicts, and especially intra-organizational conflicts. Usually, group conflicts occur also within an organization leading therefore to organizational conflict.

2.3.6.1.3 Organizational conflict

Organizations are not spared from conflicts. Being an entity with more than one person, conflict becomes part of the life of that organization. Conflicts may originate from people, organizational structure and processes and organizational practices. Each of those facets have conflicts attached to it (Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2016). Organizations or institutions are not limited to business companies only. These cover also church institutions, regional institutions such as the East Africa Community, United Nations Organization, Africa Union Organization. Since conflict is inherent to human beings and those organizations are made and managed by human beings, these organizations are not free from conflicts.

Even the church institution that was supposed to be conflict free is not spared from conflicts as well. In fact, conflicts and crisis are part of the church's existence. The church in Corinth experienced crisis (Campbell, 2018). The book of the first Corinthians shows that there was an exchange of letters between the church at Corinth and the Apostle Paul. The church was facing issues related to rival and divisions, prostitution, incest, divorce, speaking in tongues, and so on. The Apostle Paul then wrote back answering to these questions and giving the Corinthian congregation corrective instructions in order to restore the Christian faith (Roberts V., 2011). Church conflicts have led to the splitting of churches and the creation of new denominations as a result of that schism. The United Method Church is a vibrant and contemporary example. Due to ongoing conflict around the human sexuality issue, the church is assisting at an imminent separation.

Every aspect of our everyday life is managed by a particular organization, being a student, a church member, an employee or a client. As mentioned above, conflict may originate within an individual. Hence, any organization has to prepare itself to handle conflicts from its people. Managing workplace diversity for instance is a global concern and effective organizations need to develop a main culture that manages differences that might exist between

the various subcultures (Sims, 2002). Within the same organization, the workforce is heterogeneous in terms of gender, age, race, ethnic, physical, or psychological abilities, culture, religion, sex orientation and so on. This diversity may be a source of organizational conflict, and an understanding of organizational behaviour helps management to deal with these issues. Organizations have objectives to achieve. And sometimes, this may create conflict between employees and management. For instance, a conflict may be between two departments of same organization over budget allocation. In church organization, there may be conflict between different ministries. Leaders of those organizations need to find new ways of motivating and coordinating people to ensure that their goals are aligned with organizational goals. If this is not done properly, it may result in conflicts. Managers have to effectively and efficiently manage, to inspire and motivate human resources in the organization towards higher productivity and better results (Mustafa, 2013).

The sources of organizational conflicts may be from internal or external sources (Bernard & Ashimi, 2014). According to these authors, internal sources constitute inherent factors within the framework of an organization. The SWOT analysis is a suitable tool to determine internal sources of conflict. This may be for instance the leadership style within the organization. Conflict may also be rooted in the structure of the entity, where for instance the reporting channels are not clear. External sources are conflicts originating outside the organization. This may for instance include a new policy introduced by the government that creates misunderstandings among concerned parties. Though most organizational conflicts focus on intra-organizational conflicts, inter-organizational conflicts do also exist. Two organizations or two nations may enter into conflicts over their different interests or national cultures (Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2016). The cases of two nations entering a conflict are common due to various reasons. Russia and Ukraine are a speaking case.

But what about environmental crisis or conflict? The last types of conflict are conflict between individuals or organizations. A conflict between humanity and the environment needs also to be discussed.

2.3.6.1.4 Environmental conflict

Human activities have affected nature, which is the foundation of human life and all living things. Not only living organisms have been affected but also non-living creatures have also been affected. As direct and/ or indirect consequences, these human activities have led to ecological crisis. The ecological crisis is not a current issue. The relationship between human beings and the environment has been there for a long period of time. The impact of human activities on the environment happens gradually and people may not even realize it until consequences appear or the problem becomes very serious. Consequences may appear so rapidly, and sometimes at a considerable distance from the human actions that cause them (Marten, 2001). What has significantly changed in recent human history is the capacity to destroy natural life at an alarming rate and scale. However, overall, our attitude toward nature and the environment remains largely unchanged (Stavros G. & Vassilis J., 2016). One factor that contributed to that destruction at devastating rates is the industrial revolution. Basically, human beings developed an anthropocentrism moral approach to environment. For a long time, this moral status dominated the world. According to this view, only humans have moral status, human beings are the only important creatures in the universe. The natural world matters only in as much as it is important or useful for human beings (Pojman, Pojman, & Mcshane, 2017). With this moral stand, the environment is just there to serve the needs of human beings. And as long as their needs are being met, they don't care about what comes next. In that same line of ideas, human activities contributed and continue to contribute to the ecological crisis (Stavros G. & Vassilis J., 2016). It is true that the industrial revolution has contributed a lot to the well-being of human beings but at the same time, those industrialized societies saw forests

disappearing to fuel the factories, mass migrations of people moving to cities to work in factories, and clouds of pollution hanging over the cities (Pojman, Pojman, & Mcshane, 2017). And not only those industrialized societies were affected, but all the world also found itself facing the consequences of human activities. Hence the global warming or climate change issue that has become a global challenge. This is a result of a long period of human overexploitation of the environment. Not that those human beings were not aware that they are part of the environment and that an interdependent relationship should have been maintained, but mostly, they were more motivated by getting the maximum benefits from the environment without thinking about the consequences of their actions. Change our ways of thinking or viewing the environment is one of the requirements if human race is to continue existing on this earth because these resources that are overexploited are not man made so that they can be replaced but these resources were simply found (Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, 2006).

The ecological crisis is therefore a result of human activities, and this has led to environmental problems. Most scholars agree that the main environmental concerns include population increase, pollution or waste disposal, resource reduction due to rising consumption, reduction in biodiversity, climate change, urbanization and globalization (John, 2006; Barrow, 2006). Burundi is not spared from ecological crisis. Burundi population growth is one major factor for ecological crisis. It is among countries with the fastest growth rate with an annual average growth rate of 3%. The population density in some provinces is above 500 per km². This has led to land degradation and deforestation. There is one forest which is under threat because it was invaded by the population in search of land. The Environmental Protection Board intervened but the issue is still under discussion. The population occupied that forest destroyed part of it so that they can build living houses and also have land for agriculture. The deforestation is a big issue in Burundi. The increase in population has pushed people to look for land but also the forests are being destroyed in search of wood and timber for construction

on the one hand. On the other hand, forests are being destroyed in order to get charcoal for cooking. Only a few use gases and electricity for cooking. Almost all the population use charcoal from trees. Due to this population increase, more towns and cities are being developed. Farmland has therefore been destroyed and replaced by urbanization. This increase in population is also linked to waste disposable problems.

Burundi water is under crisis. In fact, Burundi does not receive water from other countries, Burundi waters other countries instead. It has therefore been realized that some sources of water disappeared because of eucalyptus plantations that were done near those sources of water. Studies demonstrated that eucalyptus trees use a lot of water than any other tree. Water for Burundi is very dear in that it flows out and no water is coming in. It is a scarce resource, and more is being done in order to maintain it even for future generations. Actions such as removing eucalyptus trees near the sources of water and replacing them with other kind of trees that do not use a lot of water have been initiated. Due to those actions, some sources of water have been restored. The Government has also initiated a project of planting of tree called “EWE BURUNDI URAMBAYE” meaning “Dear Burundi, you are clothed”. This project intends to clothe Burundi with millions of trees to make Burundi green. The project is for five years, and each province has the mandate to plant 2 million trees each year.

But also, our Lake Tanganyika, which is the big source of reserve water, is under threat due to pollution and waste disposal. This does not only affect the water resource but also the water living species. The waste disposal has become a big challenge in Burundi. The water is being polluted by plastic waste and other waste from manufacturing companies. In fact, some manufacturing industries have polluted the lake by throwing chemicals residues in it. This affected greatly the fishing activities to the point that the Government was forced to introduce some measures in order to regulate the fishing activities.

Burundi has mineral resources, and the exploitation of those resources presents an environmental concern. The mass of land removed is not restored or replaced. Biodiversity is therefore disturbed, and this has consequences for human beings. Mineral resources are non-renewable resources, and their exploitation needs to be well managed for intragenerational and intergenerational purposes. This means that meeting the needs of the present generation requires that we make judgments about the ethical legitimacy of how economic and environmental benefits and burdens are distributed across presently living people and societies (Desjardins, 2013).

According to Apostle Paul, the entire creation is groaning because of human activities (Douglas J. & Jonathan A., 2018).

“For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.” (Rom. 8:19–23).

The above paragraphs were just a brief description of the impact of human activities on global warming and climate change as well as the consequences of that environmental concern on the ecosystem.

It is true that man was given the mandate to rule over God’s creation but also man was also commanded to take care of that creation. Through technological advancements, human beings have surely used that authority in order to create a better living environment but at the same time, these activities have negatively affected the environment. Global warming and climate change are one of those consequences due basically to pollution and waste disposal. In order words, church leaders should therefore contribute to the restoration of God’s creation. This requires us to develop an environmental moral behaviour and consider that our continuing existence on earth will depend on our changing attitude towards the atmosphere. Once the

atmosphere is damaged, the air gets polluted, and this has consequences as well on our health. As Stott (2006) said, we need to repent of extravagance pollution and wanton destruction. Scholars such as Stott (2006) and Atkinson (1990) invite us, and especially us Christians, to develop a Christian mind, to have a new self-awareness, fresh vision and a reawakening of its moral and religious capabilities on current environmental issues in order to continue taking care of God's creation.

Secondly, church leaders and Christians need to revive the stewardship principles. Dominion is not equated to domination. This principle was well explained by Douglas and Jonathan (2018). According to these authors, what went wrong was the lack of stewardship principles. Among the key principles that emerge from Jesus's parable are the following: (1) stewards, whatever unique responsibilities they may have, remain members of the household within which they serve and are not themselves the owners or masters; (2) stewards care for those people and things entrusted to them on behalf of the true owner and master; and therefore, (3) stewards do not serve themselves or take advantage of their position to exploit what has been given into their care (Douglas J. & Jonathan A., 2018). It is unfortunate that human beings decided to take advantage of their position to overexploit what has been given into their care: God's creation.

In addition to that, concrete actions need to be undertaken in order to achieve environmental or ecological sustainability. In order to achieve that, Rashid, Robert & Neville (2005) suggest that there is a need for understanding the roots of change in ecosystem and ecosystem services before designing appropriate interventions capable of yielding positive impacts over negative ones. These interventions are known as drivers of change (direct or indirect). According to these authors, decision-makers affect ecosystems, ecosystem services, and human well-being. These decisions can be made at three levels: individual, national and international levels. These decisions should help us achieve ecological sustainability, which

involves addressing the Earth's environmental crisis by monitoring, restoring, and protecting the biodiversity and ecosystems that sustain life. This requires ensuring that we do not surpass the Earth's carrying capacity, significantly reducing our carbon footprint by managing greenhouse gas emissions, and ultimately shifting our worldview (Haydn, 2013).

In that perspective, kindly initiate actions of planting trees. The church and church members should be living examples in this. Each local church should at least set a goal of planting trees each year. Trees should be planted even within the church premises. Trees will help a lot in the process of CO₂ and other gases that contribute to global warming and climate change. Waste management programs should be initiated and be part of the church ministry programs. Church members should be educated that plastic bottles and other waste damage the atmosphere. Training should be focused on children so that they grow up knowing the consequences of unmanaged waste disposal. In the community, church leaders should also promote the protection of the environment through initiating related projects. But also, individual church members are to be living examples within their community.

The UMC' s Social Principles on “the natural world” is an appeal to the people called the United Methodists and the rest of the world as a reminder of our stewardship role of God's creation. Paragraph ¶160 of the BOD is very clear on where the people called the Methodists stand regarding God's creation and our responsibility. According to this paragraph, all creation belongs to God, and we are accountable for how we treat it. For this reason, natural resources should be valued and well preserved. These resources are part of God's creation and should therefore be well maintained. Sometimes, humans think that nature is there to provide or to cater for their needs only. This is a misunderstanding of the dominion given to human beings in the book of Genesis. God has entrusted us with the role of stewards, which calls for care, love, and respect in managing the earth. The other observation made by the church is that while advancements in economics, politics, society, and technology have improved human life and

extended its span, they have also caused environmental harm, overpopulation, and resource depletion, especially by industrialized nations. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Stavros G. & Vassilis J., 2016). A properly sustained ecosystem is the one that would help human beings to achieve sustainable development. Unfortunately, our actions create environmental problems with consequences even for the generations to come.

This unsustainable approach risks the natural heritage meant for future generations. In other words, it is a strong appeal to do justice for future generations. Our actions should consider the lives of our future generations. Therefore, the church and its members must prioritize lifestyle changes in economic, political, and technological aspects to foster an ecologically balanced world that ensures the well-being of all creations.

Why should we care about the environment? First and foremost, maintaining clean surroundings is essential not only for human health but also for the well-being of all living organisms. Humans and the environment are deeply interconnected, with each influencing the other. Since the environment plays a crucial role in our overall health, preserving its well-being is vital. The air we breathe is one of the most critical resources nature provides, yet efforts to reduce air pollution are often overshadowed by the constant emissions released in the environment on a daily basis, particularly in major cities. To ensure optimal health, it is clear that a safe, clean, and supportive environment is necessary. Air pollution, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, increases the risk of coronary heart attacks, asthma, bronchitis, and early mortality. Furthermore, evidence suggests that maximum indoor air is up to five times more harmful than outdoor air. However, air pollutants are not the most dangerous type of pollution. Maia (2020) notes that water contamination can increase the risk of gastrointestinal illness, reproductive difficulties, and neurological abnormalities. When you consider that the environment may damage us if we don't do something about it, the need for

mobility becomes even more evident. It is in the interest of humanity to save the environment as humanity highly depends on it. These are a list (not exhaustive) of reasons why we should care about our environment are as follows:

1. *We only have one home on this planet.*

Many people take the environment for granted, but it is crucial to recognize that the Earth is our only home. If we ruin what we have here, we are responsible for the consequences of our actions. When we look after our surrounds, the surroundings will look after us. Unfortunately, human beings have become a threat to their own existence due to their activities destroying the environment on a planetary scale (Stavros G. & Vassilis J., 2016). If we poison the water sources, we may be without easy access to water. Excessive deforestation contributes to global warming, reduced rainfall, and food scarcity. Therefore, valuing our lives means valuing and protecting nature.

2. *A clean environment means healthier lives.*

A well-preserved environment leads to a healthier, more livable world. Disregarding environmental care results in difficulty accessing clean essentials like water, food, and shelter. Pollution, particularly in water and air, can cause severe health issues such as cancer and respiratory diseases. Everyone has a shared responsibility to contribute to a cleaner and safer environment for all.

3. *Temperatures on the earth's surface are increasing.*

Even slight increases in global temperatures can significantly disrupt weather patterns, affecting both plants and animals. Some crops may struggle to survive in changing climates, leading to food shortages. Additionally, extreme weather events such as storms and flooding are becoming more frequent. Global warming is real, and human activities—such as industrialization, deforestation, and improper waste disposal—are major contributors. Cutting down trees reduces the planet's ability to absorb carbon dioxide, further accelerating climate

change. (Julio, 2021). One of the human activities affecting the temperature is deforestation. Not only does deforestation disturb the ecosystem, but it also leads to changes in both regional and global climate. Trees pump out substantial amounts of water into the air, which falls back to Earth as precipitation. When a large forest is cleared, rainfall may decline, and droughts may become more frequent in the region. Tropical deforestation may also contribute to global warming by causing the release of stored carbon into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide (Eric & Aaron, 2008).

4. *Caring for the environment protects the ecosystem and humanity.*

Almost all human sports have some sort of environmental impact. If we have a negative impact on the environment, we have put certain species on the point of extinction. We destroy the species that live in the water if we contaminate it with plastic or spill oil, for example.

As a result, we must examine the influence of garbage generation, use, and disposal on the ecosystem. It no longer just affects the environment around us; it also affects us. Human existence is directly impacted by several toxic gases and radioactive waste.

5. *We Have Moral Responsibility.*

Because we rely on nature for our survival, it's only right that we treat it with respect. Everyone has a moral obligation to protect the environment. It's the right thing to do not only because it protects us, but also because it's the right thing to do.

Nature provides us with everything we need for free. It will be avaricious and inconsiderate of us to destroy the one thing that sustains us. The most honorable thing we can do is to protect this lovely ecosystem so that we can continue to enjoy its luscious fruits. In the words of Stott (2006), we must think and act ecologically. It is an appeal to human beings for radical change and to integrate in our actions the need for including environmental aspects for the justice of future generations.

2.3.6.1.5 Conflict between humanity and the Triune God

Conflict started just with human history. It cannot be separated from humanity. According to (McCully, 2021), conflict is an inherent part of human experience, affecting all areas of life—personal, social, professional, and even within the church. Although individuals may attempt to avoid it, conflict is unavoidable and inescapable. Before the fall, there were no conflicts in the Garden of Eden, noted (Merida, 2020). A conflict between humanity and God is defined as the violation of God’s Law and this violation is called sin. Sin is a voluntary transgression of a known law of God by a moral responsible being or as an attitude or inclination of the heart contrary to the Christian love. (Bugiulescu, 2019) defines sin as the disobedience of God's law, and this transgression is the very opposition to the will of God made with the mind and the will of the transgressor. And Grudem (1994, p.599) defines sin as:

“Any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature. Sin is here defined in relation to God and his moral law. Sin includes not only individual acts such as stealing or lying or committing murder but also attitudes that are contrary to the attitudes God requires of us”.

In the same line of ideas, (Hugh, 2002) notes that sin is more than breaking or the transgression of the divine Law. According to Hugh (2002, p.30), since sin is a failure in a relationship of love it necessarily involves the ‘heart’. For Jesus, as for the prophets before him, the response to God is rooted in the heart and to sin is really to ‘harden one’s heart’ to God’s love. For Anderson (2009, p.13), sin is not easy to define. For this author, sin has a history. It has been defined differently throughout the bible. For Anderson, sins are like stains that require cleansing, burdens that must be removed, or debts that have to be repaid. All of these metaphors can be found in the Bible. (Bugiulescu, 2019) supports this thinking of Anderson. He also notes

that in the Holy Scripture, sin has several meanings: the removal of purpose (Rom.5, 12), the failure to obey the law (I John 2: 2 Peter 2: 6), disobedience (Genesis 2:16, Romans 5:19) fall (Mark 11: 26), rebellion, or any act contrary to God.

The first conflict recorded in the history of humanity is the one that happened between God and Adam and Eve in the Eden Garden. The book of Genesis gives an account on how it went and from that time, man was chased from the garden and a conflict was created between God and mankind. But it did not end there. A conflict between mankind and the serpent was also initiated.

“But the Lord God called to the man, “where are you?” He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from? The man said, “the woman you put here with me-she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “what is this you have done?” The woman said. “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly, and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” (Gen. 3:9-15, New International Version)”.

From the above scriptural passage, the conflict originated from friction among various interests of the parties involved in this community. Competing interests and values resulted in a conflict. God’s interests and values were violated by the interest of Adam and Eve who wanted also to be as gods in order to know good and evil. But the serpent has also its own interest by deceiving Eve. According to Jeong (2008), pursuing material interests, status, power, or privilege at the sacrifice of others is one of the clearest forms of substantive conflict. A close analysis of this scripture indicates that conflict starts within us. In fact, when the serpent pays a visit to Eve and the discussion started, it is written the following:

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food, and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.” (Gen. 3:6, New International Version)”.

Conflict started within Eve. She was tempted and she had the possibility of resisting that. By looking at the tree, she desired to be wise. False wisdom as the Apostle James writes by saying that bitter envy and selfish ambition are the source of many relational conflicts. This interest of becoming wise conflicted with the decree from God. A tentative definition can be drawn from this story. Based on the above scripture, conflict is a confrontation or friction of inner interests or interests of parties in a given group or community. (Merida, 2020) notes that the battle is in the heart even though we too often think that our problems are caused by external factors. This is in line with what James wrote in chapter four of his epistle. The battle starts within us. Whenever someone feels that his interests, values or beliefs are threatened, a conflict is ignited within that person. Conflict arises whenever there is a clash of thoughts, beliefs, or emotions, whether within an individual or between individuals (Barbara, 2014). (Ayojimi, 2019) uses the parable in Matthew to illustrate the conflict that occurred in the Garden of Eden. For this author, ever since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been planting tares among the children of God ever since the Garden of Eden. And for that reason, conflict will remain inevitable in the church.

(Nnamdi, 2023) is of the view the supernatural conflict or the conflict between humanity and God is the mother of all conflicts. The reason being that we are spirit beings in earthen frame and therefore, our earthly manifestation is a product of our spiritual transaction (p.42). In support of this idea, Bugiulescu (2019) concludes that sin severs humanity’s connection with God, the source of life, resulting in the loss of divine grace and the corruption of the human soul. This corruption distorts the divine image in humans, clouding the mind, weakening the will, and corrupting human nature, with its effects extending to all of creation.

The self is responsible for the disputes(conflicts) that are happening. And if conflicts need to be resolved, the self has to be at the center of that process.

2.3.6.2 Conflict management styles

A conflict not managed becomes destructive. However, conflict management style depends on the type of conflict. Sometimes, one management style may not suffice and a combination of two or more styles. And there are five basic conflict management styles that can be used: i) Avoidance (lose/lose style), ii) Accommodation (lose/wine style), iii) Compromise (lose/lose style), iv) Competition (win/lose style), and Collaboration (win/win style). Lussier & Achua (2010) combined two dimensions of interest: the interest in others' needs and the interest in one's own needs. These dimensions of concerns lead to different types of behaviour depending on the high or low interest that someone has in others' needs or own needs. Individuals may demonstrate passive behaviour, aggressive behaviour, or assertive behaviour depending on how he/she values others' needs compared to his/her own needs. For instance, if a person is more or more highly concerned with his/her own needs than others' needs, then that person's behaviour is aggressive.

According to (de Bono, 2018), there are three roads to conflict resolution: fight/litigate; negotiate/bargain; design a way out. Only the first two are available to disputants. The design road demands a third party that can look at the situation from the third-party angle. A mediator comes in as a third party. This idea has been supported by (Afolabi, 2018). It is difficult to expect people in conflict to manage their disagreements. Nevertheless, it is also not impossible. It requires courage from one party to make the first move. It requires the courage to value peace and reconciliation above division, fight, and other outcomes of a conflict.

2.3.6.3 Conflict resolution in Burundi

In the African context, conflict resolution methods included mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration, and negotiation. According to Ajayi and Buhari (2014), conflict resolution in traditional African societies fosters interaction between the parties involved, encourages consensus-building, restores social bonds, and reinforces societal order. Traditional techniques such as mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, negotiation, and cross-examination, which were historically employed by Africans, offer greater potential for promoting peaceful coexistence and harmonious relationships in post-conflict periods compared to modern litigation-based settlements in law courts. In Burundi, many conflicts are related to land issues and the key problem is that the law court settlements have been characterized by corruption. In order to tackle this issue, the government has reintroduced the institution of mediators, an institution that used to deal with conflicts in the community. The main role of those mediators is to help conflicting parties to settle their disagreements through negotiation. These mediators are empowered by the Law to make binding agreements with a purpose of reconciling the conflicting parties. If both are satisfied, the case is therefore closed. But if one party is not satisfied, there is room of making an appeal to the law court for further hearing. Nevertheless, the appeal can only be received if the disputant attaches a copy of the mediation process. It is a copy/minutes of the mediation process because mediators do not pronounce a judgment. Church organizations are subject to a similar mechanism of managing conflicts and more details were provided in further sections.

2.3.7 Church leadership and conflict management

2.3.7.1 Some biblical conflict cases.

From the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation, the bible gives a series of scripture that portray conflicts in the early church. There are many biblical stories narrating family conflicts, tribal conflicts, inter-nations conflicts, and even conflict between humanity and God.

Old Testament cases of conflict

In the Old Testament, the first recorded conflict is the fall of man as described in Genesis 3:1-24. Before that, there was peace and harmony. The relationship between God and Man was perfect. The responsibility of man, as described by (Letellier, 2015), was simply to eat or not to eat. By after Eve was tempted by the snake, decided to eat the fruit, and gave it to her husband, everything changed. Sin finds its origin and source in man's nature, and especially in his/her free will capacity, says (Bugiulescu, 2019). Adam and Eve had the possibility of using their free will with which they were endowed and not eating the forbidden fruit.

The consequence of the fall was the broken relationship between God and humanity, broken relation between Adam and Eve, and broken relationship between man and the environment. When God asked Adam what happened, the answer was to blame his wife, the bone of his bones: "the woman you put here with me gave me the fruit, and I ate" (verse 12). Adam completely ignored the joy he had when God gave him Eve, a suitable helper. But since something happened, Adam was ashamed of taking responsibility, but Eve was the scapegoat. The story ends with a punishment or judgment. As a result of this transgression, Adam and Eve were sent out of the Garden. The relationship between God and man is broken despite a promise to redemption.

In Genesis 4:1-16, another conflict is recorded: between two brothers, the sons of Adam and Eve: Cain and Abel. Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd. From verse 3 to 5, we read:

“In the course of time Cain brought some of his fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering, he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.”

Despite that Cain is given a second chance, he decided to commit what (Bugiulescu, 2019) calls personal sin, which is defined as the sin committed by human as a result of the alignment of his free will to either do evil or to a seeming good that disregards the moral law. Cain decided to kill his brother. This was the first crime of violence or the first human killing in the history of humanity and the name of Cain was registered as the first murderer in human history (Nnamdi, 2023). And since then, other cases are being recorded daily. The story indicates the first case of a broken relationship between brothers. In addition to that, there is a broken relationship between Cain and the soil as it is depicted in Genesis 4:11-12: “Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be restless wanderer on the earth.”

Other similar cases of brotherhood conflicts are narrated in the bible. A conflict erupted between Jacob and Esau, the sons of Isaac, a story that starts in Genesis 25. Rebekah, the wife of Isaac was barren, and Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of her. God answered his prayers and Rebekah became pregnant. Verse 22-23 reads “The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So, she went to inquire about the Lord. The Lord said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.” The fight of these two brothers started while they were still in the womb of their mum. After Jacob stole Esau’s blessings, Genesis 27:41 reads: “Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessings his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.” A crime is planned in the heart of Esau. After the

mother got informed of this evil plan, there was no other solution left for Jacob other than to flee. Verses 42-44 say, “When Rebekah was told what the older son Esau had said, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, “Your brother Esau is consoling himself the thought of killing you. Now then, my son, do what I say: Flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran. Stay with him for a while until your brother’s fury subsides.” A temporary separation was created. Sin separates man and man. Joseph, the son of Jacob, nearly faced the same fatality when he was sent by his father Israel to see his brothers where they had gone to graze their father’s flocks near Shechem. Israel’s instruction was very clear: go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks and bring word back to me. Unfortunately, the brothers have left Shechem and kept moving up to Dothan, a city which lay along a major trade route to Egypt. Joseph’s brothers were already angry over the possibility of being ruled by their little brother. But what fueled more their anger was the gift of a robe that Israel gave him. The robe became a symbol of Jacob’s favouritism toward Joseph, and it aggravated the already strained relationship between Joseph and his brothers. In Genesis 37:18, when they(brothers) saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. What a terrible move for Joseph’s brothers? As (Nnamdi, 2023) says that conflict has a nature that is rooted in the fallen human nature. Dominated by the corrupt nature full of jealousy and hatred, the brothers sold him into slavery. Joseph was lucky and escaped the plot, a chance that Amnon, son of king David, did get. In 2 Samuel 13, a story of sexual abuse is narrated. Amnon, son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom. Instead of following his sister’s advice of not doing something wicked, he refused and went ahead and raped her. What a shame for the nation of Israel? Rape was forbidden by God and the instructions given by the Mosaic laws were very clear (Deuteronomy 22:28-29): “if a man happens to meet a virgin who is not pledged to be married and rapes her and they are discovered; he shall pay the girl’s father fifty shekels of silver. He must marry the girl, for he has violated her. He can never divorce her as long as he

lives.” Amnon violated this divine law. Verse 15 says that Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, “Get up and get out.” Instead of keeping her as Tamar said on verse 16: “No! she said to him. “Send me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me”. But he refused to listen to her. According to (Bugiulescu, 2019), the transgression of the divine law is done either by omission or by commitment, and consists of a work of thought, talk, or deed. Tamar’s brother, Absalom, hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister. Two years later, Absalom’s men killed Amnon as they were ordered by Absalom. What a pity!

Family conflicts are many in the Old Testament books. In Genesis 13, Abraham and Lot are separated following a quarreling between Abram’s herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot. A family conflict erupts between Abraham and his two wives Sarah and Hagar. In Genesis 15:4, when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to despise Sarah. Abraham is caught in between this conflict. And yet, it was Sarah’s initiative to give Abraham a second wife. Abraham had no choice other than to ask Sarah to settle the conflict herself with her slave Hagar. She then decides to mistreat Hagar to the point of pushing her to flee the house. Sarah opted to use the competition style(win/lose) of managing a conflict, though she could have used other styles such as collaboration one where both parties win. Contrary to her approach, God asks Hagar to go back and be submissive to her mistress Sarah. Nevertheless, even though Hagar came back, the case was not closed yet for Sarah. After the birth of Isaac, Sarah decided to finish the business once and for all. In Genesis 21:8-21, Hagar and Ishmael were sent away so that Ishmael may not have a share on Isaac’s inheritance. Another case of family conflict is narrated in the second book of Samuel. Absalom’s conspiracy against his father David pushed the king to flee the royal palace. Absalom took over and became the king of Israel (2 Samuel 16:15). The first coup d’etat is recorded here. King David is overthrown by his own son. Desperate for his life, he decided to flee, leaving everything behind. A war raged between the

army of David and Absalom. Despite the instruction king David gave to Joab, Abishai and Ittai the three commanders of his troops to be gentle with the young man Absalom for his sake (2 Samuel 18:5), the life of Absalom was not spared by Joab. Israel's troops led by Absalom were defeated by David's men, and they incurred a loss of twenty thousand men on that day. And Absalom was also killed on that same day.

Conflicts between communities are also presented. Isaac, the son of Abraham, had conflicts with the Philistines over wells of water. Gen 26: 14-15 reads "He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him. So, all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up, filling them with earth." Isaac was even asked to leave their land by king Abimelech. Isaac's servants dug three other wells but there was a quarrel between the two communities until he moved from there and dug another well. The bible says in Genesis 26:22 that no one quarreled over it. He named it Rehoboth, saying, "Now the Lord has given us room, and we will flourish in the land." The tribe of Benjamin was almost destroyed by the other Israelite tribes. The story is in the book of Judges, chapter 20. After two consecutive victories of the Benjamites over the Israelites, verse 35 states: "The Lord defeated Benjamin before Israel, and on that day the Israelites struck down 25,100 Benjamites, all armed with swords." And only six hundred men turned and fled into the desert to the rock of Rimmon, where they stayed for four months (verse 47). In chapter 21:6 "Now the Israelites grieved for their brothers, the Benjamites. 'Today one tribe is cut off from Israel,' They said."

Conflicts between nations are given Israel fighting with other nations surrounding them. The Book of Joshua is an account of how the Israelites took over the promised land under the leadership of Joshua, a brilliant military leader and with a strong spiritual influence. After crossing the Jordan river, the Israelites camped near the mighty city of Jericho, a city that was conquered by following God's unique strategy. Joshua and his army moved from city to city,

cleansing the land of its wickedness by destroying every trace of idols of worship (Joshua 5:13-12:1-24). For instance, the battle for Gibeon gave a chance to Joshua to wage a unique war against five Amorite kings, a coalition that conspired to destroy Gibeon. David was also involved in many wars and managed to conquer the surrounding nations as it is read in 2 Samuel 8 & 10.

Due to Israelites' sins, the nation of Israel faced many destructions from foreign kings such as the Babylonian kings. The book of Daniel describes some of those incidents. The land of Judah is conquered and besieged. Not only the Babylonians took captives, but they also raided the temple of God, and they took the worship articles to the temple of a god in Babylon.

The conflict cases are numerous and cannot all be discussed and as Nnamdi (2023, p.60) notes, the Old Testament is indeed a testament of conflicts: personal, family, community, tribe, nation, and nation against nation. The people of God, the Jews, were themselves, a product of conflict. Let's move to the New Testament cases.

New Testament cases of conflict

The four Gospels contain many instances of conflicts that Jesus encountered throughout the life of his ministry. Jesus himself found himself in conflictual situations either as an observer or as a participant. The intrapersonal conflict of Jesus happened as he was praying in Gethsemane. But before describing this intrapersonal conflict, let us explore some of the conflict examples that Jesus encountered.

Throughout Jesus' ministry, he had to deal with conflicts with the Pharisees and religious leaders.

In Luke 5:17-26, as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there as well following the teachings of Jesus. Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to get

into the house, but they failed to do so because of the crowd. Then they decided to find a way on the roof of the house and lowered him on this mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. In verse 20, when Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.” Why did Jesus bring the issue of forgiveness of sins and yet the main problem of this man was physical disability? This declaration of forgiving sins created a hot debate between him and the Pharisees and teachers of the law. The story clearly demonstrates that not only Jesus has the power to heal but also the authority to forgive sins. Pharisees and other teachers questioned that authority, and for them, only God alone has the power to forgive sins. (Carroll, 2012) notes that the hybrid healing-and-conflict story culminates in a decisive pronouncement by Jesus that links his power to heal and the gift of forgiveness. It is a performative speech act: the words Jesus speaks effect transformation in ways both spiritual (sin is forgiven) and physical (the man walks).

Luke 13:10-17 presents another story of a crippled woman healed on the Sabbath. This story falls under the category of other sabbath conflicts that Jesus encountered throughout his ministry. Luke 6:1-11 has two other examples of sabbath conflicts that occurred between Jesus and the Pharisees. In verse 1-5, the Pharisees criticize the actions of the disciples, who began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. For the Pharisees, these disciples are violating the Sabbath command (Exodus 34:21 “Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest.”) and this was addressed directly to Jesus, who had to address their criticisms by defending his disciples. Verse 6-11 gives an account of another sabbath conflict that happened as Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. There was a man there whose right hand was shriveled. And the Pharisees and the teachers of the law are also there. Their main interest in this case is to find for reason to accuse Jesus. In a way, they were not more interested in what Jesus was teaching, and for them, a sabbath-day healing would be sufficient. Since Jesus knew what they

were thinking, he invites the man with the shriveled hand to get up and stand in front of everyone (verse 8). In verse 9, Jesus said to them, “I ask you, which is lawful on the sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?” Before they could answer, Jesus looked around at them all, and said to the man, “stretch out your hand.” He did so, and his hand was completely restored”. Marc 3:5 reports this with some emphasis on the behaviour of the Pharisees and it reads “He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “stretch out your hand.” He did so, and the man’s hand became well again. Because of the anger the Pharisees had and how deeply they were distressed at their stubborn hearts, the Pharisees left the synagogue and met at once with some members of Herod’s party and they made plans to kill Jesus (Marc 3:6). Carroll (2012) notes that Jesus’ acts of healing on the Sabbath continued to spark intense conflict and highlight divergent understandings of Scripture and of fidelity to the Torah as held by Jesus and by other teachers (Luke 13:10–17).

Back then to the story of Luke 13:10-17, Jesus is doing his teaching ministry in the synagogue on the Sabbath. At the same time, a crippled woman is among the people following his teaching. She has been suffering for eighteen years, an infirmity that kept this woman in bending position, a position that forbade her to praise God with her hands, enjoy a hug from his family members, or enjoy the beauty of contemplating the stars in the sky as God instructed Abraham to look up at the sky and count the stars (Genesis 15:5). And when Jesus saw her, he called her to move forward over to him. Already in Luke 6:7, Pharisees and teachers of law are more interested in getting a reason for accusing Jesus based on the sabbath-day healing. None ignores that the temple or synagogue represents a sanctified place, and the Sabbath is a holy day on one side. On the other side, the woman with disability is considered as uncleanness. And so, this story is a clash between what is sacred or holy and what is unclean. In verse 12 Jesus says to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” After touching this crippled

woman, she immediately unbent and gave praise to God. In verse 14, in response to Jesus' action of healing on the Sabbath, the leader of the synagogue became outraged and said to the people: "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath." A legal dispute is therefore initiated by the Pharisees and teachers of the law and the purpose of this is to put Jesus to shame in front of the people. But also, knowing what these leaders have been involved in, Jesus is prepared to settle the conflict once and for all. According to McCully (2021), the concept of honor and shame in New Testament culture is key to understanding certain narratives. In such a culture, individuals or groups could gain honor through a process called challenge-riposte. This involved publicly challenging someone in a way that seemed impossible to counter. The person being challenged had to respond, even if with silence. Afterward, the audience would judge whether the challenged person successfully defended their honor or suffered shame.

In responding to this dispute, Jesus does it in a very smart way and says, in verses 15-16, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen years, be set free on the sabbath day from what bound her?" In verse 17, when Jesus said this, two reactions are manifested. All his challengers were put to shame, while the people rejoiced at the wonderful things Jesus was doing. In conclusion, Jesus is honoured, the Pharisees are humiliated.

An intrapersonal conflict of Jesus is recorded in Gethsemane, where Jesus took his disciples for prayer just before being arrested. The case of Jesus' interpersonal conflict is narrated in the synoptic gospels of Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, and Luke 22:39-46. Arriving at that place called Gethsemane, he took three of his disciples with him of which Peter and left the other disciples and told them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray". Marc 14:33 says that Jesus became distressed and troubled. Then, he tells Peter, James and John, in verse

38, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.” Going a little further on, he threw himself face downwards on the ground and prayed, in verse 36, “Abba, Father, he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” Jesus is facing an internal conflict, a dilemma of choosing between not to die and to fulfil God’s will. Though his mind is ready to accomplish God’s will, his body seems not to be ready. In his prayer, he uses the image of the “cup” in comparing it with this suffering he is going through. Throughout the Bible, the image of cup has been used differently for blessing, judgment, and suffering. For instance, when David says in Psalm 23:5 “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” The cup in this case represents a blessing. In most cases, the word “cup” in its metaphoric expression often symbolizes judgment and punishment, as in Ezekiel 23: 31-34, “You have gone the way of your sister; so, I will put her cup into your hand. “This is what the Sovereign Lord says, you will drink your sister’s cup, a cup of large and deep; it will bring scorn and derision, for it holds so much. You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, the cup of your sister Samaria. You will drink it and drain it dry; you will dash it to pieces and tear your breasts. I have spoken, declares the Sovereign Lord.” In Lamentations 4:21, the cup represents suffering: “Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, you who live in the land of Uz. But to you also the cup will be passed; you will be drunk and stripped naked.” Carroll (2012) notes that the cup that Jesus prefers not to drink is metaphorical, an evocative image for the destiny that awaits; in the OT the cup is an image of deliverance (Ps 116:13) but more often of judgment. In the same line of ideas, (Konradt, 2020) notes that the “cup” that Jesus mentions in his prayer metaphorically stands for a deadly fate. This “cup” causes great conflict and trouble within him. Nevertheless, Jesus decides to accomplish the will of his Father. And Clarke (2003) makes the following comment: “Since the di vine plan appears to connect the

two gardens, Eden and Gethsemane, and Adam's sin in Eden was disobedience, it is appropriate that Jesus be shown in Gethsemane as obedient to God's will."

The book of Acts records more than instances of church conflicts. In Acts 6:1-7, with the increasing number of disciples, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked neglected in the daily distribution of food. Basically, a conflict between the Greek speaking disciples and the Hebrew speaking Jews. The Hellenists complained that their widows were being unfairly treated. This favouritism might not have been intentional, but it may have been caused by the language barrier. Then the twelve apostles had to deal with that complaint and a group of seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom were selected and charged of distributing the food to the needy. As the early church increased in number or size, so did its needs. One great need was to organize the distribution of food to the poor. The apostles on the other hand needed to focus on preaching, so they chose others to administer the food distribution program. (Leas, 1985) supports this idea. The size of the congregation has an impact on the life and work of local churches. For instance, a family church with a maximum of 50 attendees on Sunday will not have the same needs as a pastoral church with 50-150 attendees on Sunday.

A conflict over circumcision is recorded in chapter fifteen of the book of Acts. In Acts 15:1-33, the dispute between Paul and Barnabas on one side and a group of men who came down from Judea to Antioch is recorded. According to some of these Jewish Christians, Gentile believers had to adhere to the Mosaic laws and other Jewish traditions, including circumcision. And as it is described in verse 1, these men from Judea started teaching the Gentile brothers that circumcision according to the custom of Moses is necessary for salvation. According to (Maloney, Reimer, & Beavis, 2022), this means that full observance of the Jewish law is a requirement for men to be members of the Jesus communities as well. For (Barrett, 2002),

“The men Jewish Christians are not saying that Gentiles cannot be saved at all. They say: You cannot be saved unless you are circumcised. This almost all Jews would have allowed. A Gentile might enter the Jewish fold if he complied with the regulations; and all male Jews, by birth or by proselytization, were circumcised. Exceptions to this requirement are very hard to find.”

The two missionaries, along with some other believers, are then sent to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. Arriving in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders. As they were joyful reporting everything God had done through them, they are interrupted by the reintroduction of the issues of circumcision and law observance, this time by “believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees”. According to Barrett (2002, p.224), the question before the Council is still, 'On what terms may Gentiles be saved, that is, become Christians?' and not 'On what terms may Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians have fellowship, including table-fellowship, in one body?' A council was then convened to discuss this issue. And after the successive addresses of Peter, Paul and Barnabas, James gave a summary of those speeches and suggested a solution to this conflict. In verse 19, James makes the following judgment: “It is my judgement, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead, we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.” According to James, if Gentile believers would abstain from these practices, they would please God and get along better with their Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ. It seems that the Jews were more concerned about these four. A compromise was then reached, and it enabled the church to grow unhindered by the cultural differences of the Jews and the Gentiles. The apostles and the elders, with the whole church endorsed James’ judgment. And the church leaders (the apostles and elders) decided to write a letter to the Gentiles brothers. In verse 31, the people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.

In the same chapter 15:36-41, another divisive conflict between Paul and Barnabas happens as they wanted to start their second missionary journey. In verse 37, Barnabas wanted to take John his cousin (Col 4:10), also called Mark, with them, but Paul disagreed to Barnabas’ proposal. As Nnamdi (2021, p.33) writes, conflict is what happens when people are different,

opposed or contradictory. It bothers on disagreements or failure to be in one accord. This is what happened between Paul and Barnabas. Verse 39 indicates that the conflict was not resolved. They could not be in one accord about whether to take Mark or not. They had a deep disagreement and finally they separated. Barrett (2002, p.243) notes that the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas was in fact sharp; the partnership of chapters 13 and 14 was broken. For (Maloney, Reimer, & Beavis, 2022), the split between the two evangelists revolved around their attitudes toward Mark. Paul does not trust Mark, but Barnabas is ready to give him a second chance. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed to Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches (v40).

There are many other conflict stories in the Bible. In Galatians 2:11-21, Paul opposes Peter. The key issue being that Paul does not like the hypocritical behaviour of Peter when he sees other Jews, he stopped eating with Gentiles. This behaviour saddened Paul as he saw it as unworthy from a man of God. Still (1999, p.150) notes that Paul experienced opposition in Thessalonica both during and after his founding visit. The division in the church of Corinth is recorded as well. Conflict was part of Jesus' daily life and ministry. Disagreements between Jesus and with friends, family, religious leaders were common. According to (McCully, 2021), there were many different outcomes to Jesus' conflicts: win-win, lose-lose, and win-lose, but they were the best outcomes for each conflict situation.

Sources of these conflicts Jesus was involved in depended on the context or conflict situation. What could be then the sources of the church conflict?

2.3.7.2. Conflict in the United Methodist Church

2.3.7.2.1 *Schism in Burundi Annual Conference*

The Rev Justin NZOYISABA claimed that the election was rigged and was done in violation of the Book of Discipline or the Constitution of the United Methodist Church. The Burundi Annual conference got divided into two rival parties: one group who was against the election of the new Resident Bishop under the leadership of the Rev Justin NZOYISABA and another group under the Rev Lazare BANKURUNAZE who supported the election of the new Resident Bishop. Two groups with different leadership were developed from 2006 till 2018. After the election of the new bishop, the deputy legal representative was replaced by the Rev. Zachariah NIMBONA. All the other church leaders in support of the new elected bishops were also removed. The Burundi annual conference was almost 100% controlled by the Rev. Justin. The other group controlled only one district out of 13 districts of Burundi annual conference. This situation gave the Rev Justin NZOYISABA a chance to convince other church leaders for his consecration. In 2009, the Rev Justin NZOYISABA was consecrated as Bishop of the UMC in violation of the Constitution of the UM Church. The 12 years of conflicts were nightmares for church members: fighting between church members, hatred between families, legal actions, etc. In some instances, the security forces (Police) had to intervene in order to restore peace. Some church members were jailed due to fighting and destruction of farms of their brothers and sisters in Christ. Members of the same families attended church services in different groups and family relationships became cold: family visits became difficult, and a division spirit ruled over many families. In some families, it was a complete family schism. Local church members entered into physical fights, and some left to go start new local churches under the leadership of either Bishop Daniel or the Rev Justin NZOYISABA. Some other church members left the church and joined other church denominations. The case was even taken into the Court by the group under the leadership of Bishop Daniel WANDABULA so that the other group can be

kicked out and prevented using the logo and name of United Methodist Church, but the case was lost in favour of the group led by the Rev Justin NZOYISABA because he had the support of government officials. The president of the Council of Bishop addressed a letter to the President of the Burundi government, but no feedback was given. Nevertheless, the conflicts within the United Methodist Church did not result in the creation of a new church. Both parties kept claiming to be members of the United Methodist Church even though one group had rebelled against the accepted leadership by the Global Church led by Bishop Daniel WANDABULA.

Despite the efforts of the General Board of General Ministry (GBGM) and the Council of Bishops (COB) of the United Methodist Church to reconcile the conflicting parties in Burundi even after the consecration of Rev Justin NZOYISABA, no solution was found. In 2011, a meeting was organized in Germany to seek ways of resolving the conflict. Rev Justin NZOYISABA was advised to renounce its episcopacy title and be appointed as the Dean of Superintends in Burundi annual conference. The implication of this suggestion was to reconnect the annual conference to the connectional church and the authority of the resident bishop be recognized in Burundi annual conference. There is a Burundi proverb saying that “bad advisors are equal to sorceresses.” The Rev Justin’s advisors refused to take the offer of the leaders of the connectional church, and the delegation left Germany without signing the agreement. A similar attempt had previously been organized in Zimbabwe in 2009 but in vain. Even there, the discussions failed. The church members were hoping for the conflict to be resolved during the 2011 Germany meeting, but it also failed.

A series of questions could be raised. Whose interests those leaders were defending? Their own interests or church’s interests? Why were church leaders not willing to resolve the conflict despite the attempts made by GBGM and the COB? Were they motivated to have total control over church properties and church money? Was it for power control? Were they lacking

humility? Were they fearing repression or losing their leadership positions? Was it due to misinterpretation of the BOD? Other questions can be added to the list. At the same time, the global church was also going through another crisis.

2.3.7.2.2 United Methodist Church crisis worldwide

Since 1972 General Conference, the United Methodist Church (UMC) has been debating the issue of human sexuality. This has created a big conflict within the church and three groups have been involved in this longstanding discussion: the traditionalists, the centrists, and the progressives. In the United States of America, some church members started considering the church discriminatory policies towards LGBTQ and same sex marriages. The BOD includes languages that exclude this category of people in the leadership of the church. Conflicts over homosexuality, marriage, and abortion have continued uninterrupted nearly since the formation of the denomination. The position of the church as described in its BOD is that the Christian teaching opposes the practice of homosexuality. In that perspective, any who wants to be certified as a candidate, ordained minister, or assigned in any leadership position must not be a self-avowed practicing homosexual. The church regulations do not even allow homosexual unions: “ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.” Marriage according to the BOD is defined as the union of one man and one woman.

According to the BOD (2016 version), no church structure (annual conference board, agency, committee, commission, or council) is allowed to give church funds to any gay caucus or group, or to use such financial resources to sponsor the promotion of homosexuality practices or to defy the position of the UMC “not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends.” In addition to those regulations, paragraph ¶ 2702 stipulates the following:

“A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference (§ 370), local pastor, clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may be tried when charged (subject to the statute of limitations in § 2702.4) with one or more of the following offenses: (a) immorality including but not limited to, not being celibate in singleness or not faithful in a heterosexual marriage; (b) practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings, including but not limited to: being a self-avowed practicing homosexual; or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies.”

Due to that longstanding disagreement on homosexuality, the 2016 General Conference authorized the formation of a commission to deal with church teachings on homosexuality and find ways to help the church stay together. Two main proposals were submitted by that commission and were subject of the 2019 special General Conference: The traditional plan and the One church. The traditional plan is the one which affirms the church’s current bans on ordaining LGBTQ clergy and officiating at or hosting same-sex marriage. The One church plan, a plan that had the support of UMC bishops, (United Methodist Bishops Recommend a Way Forward (umc.org) allowed for contextualization of language about human sexuality in support of the mission; and allowed for central conferences, especially those in Africa, to retain their disciplinary authority to adapt the Book of Discipline and continue to include traditional language and values while fulfilling the vision of a global and multicultural church. This plan also encouraged a generous unity by giving United Methodists the ability to address different missional contexts in ways that reflect their theological convictions. The One Church Plan was drafted in order to remove the restrictive language of the Book of Discipline and to add assurances to pastors and Conferences who due to their theological convictions could not perform same-sex weddings or ordain self-avowed practicing homosexuals. Delegates to that special GC had to vote between those two plans and the traditional plan was adopted by a vote of 438(53.28%) to 384(46.72%). This vote came to strengthen the enforcement of bans on “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy and same-sex weddings. Consequently, the language that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching was maintained.

The outcome of this special General Conference was divisively viewed among different conferences and church members. For instance, Bishop Scott Jones of the Texas Conference said the vote resolves a long-standing debate about how the church “can best accomplish our discipleship mission of transforming the lives of people so that they reflect Jesus”. This is what Bishop Scott Jones said after the voting process: (2019 General Conference passes Traditional Plan (umnews.org):

“This decision is consistent with our denomination’s historic stance on human sexuality, outlined in the Book of Discipline since 1972. We will continue to welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer persons to our churches and affirm their sacred worth. I pray we, as a denomination, can now move forward, working with each other in the spirit of Christian love and joining together as one. We are stronger together in serving God’s mission as a diverse body of Christ.”

As Bishop Eben Nhiwatiwa announced the results of the 2019 Special General Conference at a service at Ehnes Memorial United Methodist Church, revealing the 438-384 vote in favour of the Traditional Plan, the news was met with loud celebrations, including clapping and ululation, as expressions of joy, acceptance, and gratitude. Washington Magomo, lay leader of the Chitungwiza-Marondera District, stated that Zimbabweans welcomed and supported the endorsement of the Traditional Plan: “As Zimbabweans, we welcome the resolution to the matter on human sexuality. We stand guided by the Traditional Plan principles from the Book of Discipline and the Bible which promotes marriages of opposite sex for multiplication.” (umnews:2019).

Though the General Conference is the top lawmaking body of church and annual conferences are to respect the decisions made by this body, some annual conferences defied the outcome of this special 2019 General Conference. Those supporting the One Church Plan made it clear that their conferences would not implement that decision. The Rev. Donna Pritchard, chair of the Western Jurisdiction leadership team, emphasized their commitment

during the 2019 General Conference. She read a statement affirming that the Western Jurisdiction would remain a united church, fully inclusive and welcoming to all of God's children, regardless of theological or social differences. Additionally, the bishops of the Western Jurisdiction released a statement and a video declaring their region as "a home for all God's people."

Meanwhile, the Rev. Bob Kaylor of Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church in Monument, Colorado, noted that he had been preparing his congregation for the likelihood that the decision would not resolve the church's ongoing divisions. His Traditionalist-leaning congregation belongs to a conference led by Bishop Karen Oliveto, the denomination's first openly gay bishop, who was elected in 2016 and is married to another woman. The Rev. Donna Pritchard, chair of the Western Jurisdiction leadership team, emphasized their commitment during the 2019 General Conference. She read a statement affirming that the Western Jurisdiction would remain a united church, fully inclusive and welcoming to all of God's children, regardless of theological or social differences. Additionally, the bishops of the Western Jurisdiction released a statement and a video declaring their region as "a home for all God's people."

Meanwhile, the Rev. Bob Kaylor of Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church in Monument, Colorado, noted that he had been preparing his congregation for the likelihood that the decision would not resolve the church's ongoing divisions. His Traditionalist-leaning congregation belongs to a conference led by Bishop Karen Oliveto, the denomination's first openly gay bishop, who was elected in 2016 and is married to another woman.

The Rev. Donna Pritchard, chair of the Western Jurisdiction leadership team, emphasized their commitment during the 2019 General Conference. She read a statement affirming that the Western Jurisdiction would remain a united church, fully inclusive and welcoming to all of God's children, regardless of theological or social differences.

Additionally, the bishops of the Western Jurisdiction released a statement and a video declaring their region as “a home for all God’s people.” Meanwhile, the Rev. Bob Kaylor of Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church in Monument, Colorado, noted that he had been preparing his congregation for the likelihood that the decision would not resolve the church’s ongoing divisions. His Traditionalist-leaning congregation belongs to a conference led by Bishop Karen Oliveto, the denomination’s first openly gay bishop, who was elected in 2016 and is married to another woman. The Rev. Kaylor made the following statement:

“For us here in the West, nothing much has actually changed. The leadership of the Mountain Sky Conference has been in opposition to the sexuality language in the Book of Discipline long before General Conference and, even with enhanced accountability procedures in place, will continue to act on their beliefs.”(Outcome of General Conference bittersweet (umnews.org).

Even though the issue seemed to have been resolved during the May 2109 Special Session of General Conference as Bishop Scott had thought, the church continued to experience some cracks within its walls. Ways to resolve this conflict were undertaken. One of them was the protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through separation, a proposal that was agreed as a result of weeks of intense, voluntary mediation in Washington with the help of famed mediator Kenneth Feinberg(goodnewsmag:2019).

The 16-member group of United Methodist bishops and other leaders offered a proposal that would preserve The United Methodist Church while allowing traditionalist-minded congregations to form a new denomination. After the signing of that protocol agreement, the New York Conference Bishop Thomas Bickerton who was also part of the negotiating team group made the following statement:

“This protocol provided a pathway that acknowledges our differences, respects everyone in the process and graciously allows us to continue to live out the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, albeit in different expressions.”

Unfortunately, this protocol was not implemented and churches in the USA jurisdictions started the process of disaffiliation using paragraph 2553 that was approved during the 2019 special General Conference. The amicable separation as described in the protocol was not followed and local churches had to use this paragraph of the BOD as an exit path. Nevertheless, this paragraph was only applicable to local churches in the USA. Following these disagreements over human sexuality, and the definition of marriage as it is laid out in the Social Principles of the BOD, churches in the USA started the process of disaffiliation using paragraph 2553.

Over the past five years, 7673 congregations or local churches, representing 25% of the of the denomination's U.S. churches, have left since 2019 under a denominational policy (paragraph 2553) that expired at the end of 2023. In addition to those disaffiliated churches, there have been other 2004 U.S churches closed due to various reasons such as dwindling membership, financial constraints as depicted in the following table:

Table 4

Number of UMC closed congregations in the U.S.A

Closure reason	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Grand total
Abandoned	3	8	15	21	8	55
Disaffiliation	20	76	145	1835	5597	7673
Discontinued	456	348	287	237	200	1528
Financial	17	38	58	53	65	231
Merger	12	32	54	52	39	189
No longer ecumenical shared ministry		1				1
Grand total	508	503	559	2198	5909	9677

Source: Amid church losses, proposed budget slashed (umnews.org)

The disaffiliations have come after years of intensifying fights over the status of LGBTQ people in the church, with many of the exiting congregations being the ones that

wanted strict enforcement of the denomination's bans on same-sex weddings and "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy.

Every conflict has consequences. It may be destructive or constructive. The church division over human sexuality has produced the following consequences:

The first one is the creation of a new denomination, the Global Methodist Church or GMC (United Methodist Church split: New denomination announces May launch (usatoday.com)). In May 2022, a new, more conservative methodist church denomination was launched. According to the article published by Goodnews, half of the disaffiliated congregations have joined this new denomination. Other churches have gone independent while others are still in the process of discernment. Secondly, funds mobilization was affected. Since the funding of the church general budget comes largely from the apportionments or contributions made by U.S congregations, the disaffiliation has negatively affected the budget to be presented to the 2024 General Conference, a budget that is 21.2% lower than what was approved during the 2016 General conference. Thirdly, the disaffiliation pushed some annual conferences to merge in order to continue doing ministry. The Rev Thomas Lambrecht wrote the following: "The United Methodist Church anticipates a number of adjustments to its ministry and structure. Adjustments are driven substantially by an anticipated drop in financial resources, and also by a drop in the number of churches and members. This second factor is an important driver in the number of U.S. bishops, which will be reduced by jurisdictional conference action this year." (February 16 Revised Perspective (donorview.com)). This statement was also supported by the Council of Bishops President Thomas J. Bickerton: "In this critical period of time in the church," Bickerton said, "to go that low in the number of bishops in the United States would not be helpful — in terms of bridging the transition, providing effective leadership in the midst of all the changes happening and serving as a bridge to the connection."(umnews:2024).

2.3.7.3 Sources of church conflict

Conflict within a church is caused by many issues. After discussing the types of conflicts in the previous sections and after noting that conflict is inherent to humanity, there is no doubt of observing conflict within a church. Even though a church is defined as a community of believers who come together, this does not alter the inherent conflictual characteristic of a human being. According to (Afolabi, 2018), disputes within a church is unavoidable since members come from diverse backgrounds which make their opinions and ways of viewing issues different and sometimes conflicting. In other words, the church is not free from conflicts, an idea supported by (Nnamdi, 2023) who notes conflict have been generally accepted as a feature of the church. Scholars (Akinyemi, 2018; Olayemi, 2016) highlight that leadership disputes are a principal cause of schisms in African Independent Churches, often exacerbated by unclear succession processes and a lack of accountability structures.

(Afolabi, Why Leadership conflict exists in the Church: The Structural Conflict Theory Perspective, 2021) notes that leadership conflict is one form of church conflict. He notes that most conflict in the church turns around leadership, the reason being that church leadership is viewed as being ordained by God, leaders having been given the power to direct adherents in fulfilling the vision and mission of the church. And leadership goes with power and authority. Therefore, if church leaders misuse the power and authority invested in them, or when leaders become subjective in dealing with church matters, or they lack transparency or accountability, the eruption of a conflict is obvious. Power is the main issue that causes leadership conflict (Afolabi, 2021). It is a crucial element in any leadership or governance discourse. Four main types of power exist in the church: (a) spiritual power, (b) influential power, (c) financial power, and (d) intellectual power. And Albert (2003) notes that in the process of exercising power, conflict can occur between leaders and followers, establishing the basis for escalation of existing conflicts.

(Kale & McCullough, 2003) conducted research on 40 pastors on the possible sources of conflict in their churches. According to this study, the identified sources fall into three broad categories of church conflict sources: (i) Relationship problems: communication, personality conflicts, family conflicts, interpersonal relationships, and competition; (ii) Spiritual problems: jealousy, lack of forgiveness, carnality, envy, and (iii) Differences over mission and direction. (Kale & McCullough, 2003) were astonished that only one pastor was bold enough to mention that 50 percent of church conflict is caused by defensiveness on the part of the pastor. This source was also supported by (Ayojimi, 2019). According to this author, Christians should trust their pastors. However, we should not assume that just because someone becomes a pastor, they cannot be a problem for the church (p.61). The author gives three common signs that explain how a pastor can be the problem in the church: 1) he/she would teach you that he/she could never become a problem, 2) a problematic pastor always points the finger and is always the victim, and 3) a problematic pastor usurps the members or forces them out. This is in line with what Afolabi (2021) noted. For this author, leadership conflict also occurs in churches owing to attitudinal expressions. The attitudinal expressions of church leaders sometimes create conflict—especially overbearing attitudes such as arrogance, stubbornness, and becoming domineering, pompous, or heady. Some church leaders become arrogant especially those possessing some spiritual gifts such healing gifts and this leads to misusing their powers and authority.

In addition to the above identified causes, Nnamdi(2023) note other causes of conflicts in today's church include lack of spiritual teaching and discipleship to mature the believers, unfaithfulness of members in money matters, marital abuse, child abuse, poor or lack of welfare package for members of a church body, lack of Kingdom based vision, non-operation of the fivefold ministry gifts, abuse of local and official privileges, abuse of community environment, insensitivity on the part of the leadership and general lack of empathy in the Body. In the same

line of ideas, (Dunaetz, 2019) notes that interpersonal conflict surrounding church programs is a major source of distress for both pastoral staff and lay members of evangelical churches. And yet, some of those church programs are designed for discipleship purposes and the leader may consider bringing some necessary changes to achieve the ministry's goals. Unfortunately, as (Dunaetz, 2019) notes, change in some aspect of a program, however valued it may be by the leader instigating the change, may not be appreciated by all who are affected by this change.

Nnamdi (2023, p.63) notes that the source of conflict in today's church is rooted in the characteristics of the church itself. For this author, the church today is different from what the church was during the time of the early disciples. We have a religious church that resists the kingdom Church because of its structures, traditions, methods and systems which they hold dearer than the kingdom. This does not mean that the early church did not experience conflict. It simply indicates that the focus is no longer the same.

The key issue is not only to identify the causes of the church conflicts, but to design appropriate mechanisms of conflict management.

2.3.7.4. Church conflict management styles

Northouse (2016) defines conflict management as the leader's responsibility to handle conflict effectively. Since conflict is inevitable, leaders need to seek ways of dealing with it. In other words, the role of leaders in resolving conflicts is very instrumental. There are examples in the Bible that indicate the role of leadership is important during troubled times. The example of the church in Corinth indicates that local leaders played a major role in perpetrating the conflicts within congregations. In other words, the church crisis at Corinth was in a way related to the leadership failure (Campbell, 2018). For the division among the church, Paul simply answered them in very clear terms:

‘What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task’ (Roberts, 2011).

To those believers, Paul as the founder of the church and their spiritual leader brought their attention back to God. In fact, Paul and Apollos were mere servants. This case is a speaking example of the role of church leadership in conflict situations. In fact, church leadership should play the role of problem solvers instead of being problem generators. Robert Wuthnow (1997) conducted similar research within the America churches that were facing an economic crisis. The result indicated that the congregations’ economic programs and finances depend heavily on pastoral leadership. The story of the UMC’s conflict either worldwide or locally in Burundi is another case that demonstrates the role of church leadership in managing conflicts.

The approach used may be destructive or constructive. For (Halverstadt, 1991), managing conflicts means coping constructively with parties by constraining those who fight dirty and/ or assisting those who fight fair. Halverstadt (1991, p.8) makes a distinction between dirty fight and fair fight. In addition to that, the author prefers the use of conflict management rather than conflict resolution because, according to him, it is not possible to force unwilling parties to make peace. Managing conflicts is therefore a process of intentionally intervening by proposing constructive processes by which to deal with the differences. And the role of church leadership in managing church conflict is primordial. According to (Afolabi, 2018), church leadership is about good relationship between the clergy and laity. The clergy and the laity are both directed by God in achieving the common goal and vision of the church and that one’s behaviour determines the quality of one’s leadership. Thus, the behaviour of church leadership is germane either to the success or failure of a church (Afolabi, 2018).

Conflict management styles that can be used to manage church conflict include negotiation, conciliation, mediation, and arbitration (Afolabi, 2018). On these methods, (Ajayi

& Buhari, 2014) add adjudication and reconciliation. These methods, used in most of the African tradition are applicable for church conflict too. And these conflicts are also affected by the environment in which they are happening. Recent empirical research in African contexts confirms the deeply embedded nature of church conflict in leadership dynamics, cultural expectations, and structural governance. For instance, Chitando (2014) found that leaders in Zimbabwe often serve as informal mediators, using prophetic critique and community dialogue in conflict contexts. Similarly, Wanyande (2012) observed that in Kenya, ethnic tensions significantly influence church leadership conflicts, complicating resolution efforts and often necessitating broader community involvement.

Mediation involves the non-coercive intervention of a third party, known as a mediator, to help reduce, resolve, or peacefully settle conflicts. Mediators are often selected from within the communities involved, with elders being highly regarded across Africa for their wisdom and experience. Their roles vary depending on traditions, circumstances, and personalities. Olayemi (2016) further emphasizes the value of indigenous reconciliation models—including elder mediation and communal healing rituals—which remain underutilized despite their cultural legitimacy and potential efficacy.

Adjudication requires bringing all disputing parties together, typically in the chambers or compounds of family heads, quarter heads, or palace courts, depending on the setting. Reconciliation is considered the most crucial aspect of conflict resolution, serving as the final outcome of adjudication. Once disputants are persuaded to settle their differences, peace and harmony are restored, based on the principle of mutual compromise where each disputant is asked to give a little and get a little.

Negotiation focuses on aligning the interests of the conflicting parties. Even when an individual is in conflict with their society, the goal is to rehabilitate and reintegrate them back into their community. Negotiation, according to Nnamdi (2023, p.138), is seen as a process of

resolving a dispute or a conflict permanently, by providing for each side's needs, and adequately addressing their interests so that they are satisfied with the outcome. However, Afolabi is sceptic about using negotiation for leadership conflict as it is very difficult to for any of the disputing parties to attempt to negotiate with the other disputing parties.

The bible is filled with conflict resolution models. Jesus Christ has taught his church on how to deal with conflict between brothers in the gospel according to Matthew 18:15-20. Let's do an analysis of this scripture text in order to get the conflict resolution model according to Jesus Christ, the founder and head of the church:

Matthew 18:15-20

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or tax collector. I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them”.

The Gospel according to Matthew contains one of the most common conflicts in a church: dealing with a sinning brother. This Scripture is the most used by Christian leaders to resolve church conflict.

To fully grasp Jesus' instructions in Matthew 18:15-20, it's essential to consider the surrounding teachings and the cultural context. Jesus spoke within an honour/shame culture, urging his disciples to avoid looking down on others. Prior to these verses, in Matthew 18:10-14, Jesus shares the parable of the lost sheep, where a shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep to find one that has strayed. Once found, the shepherd brings joyfully

it back into the herd. This emphasizes the deep concern that God has for His "little ones" and the desire to restore them to the community when they go astray.

In the next story that follows Matthew 18:15-20, Jesus teaches about forgiveness, instructing His disciples to forgive not just seven times, but seventy-seven times, highlighted by the parable of the unforgiving servant. These teachings emphasize the goal of reformation, not conviction, and salvation, not condemnation, aligning with the message of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20.

Jesus gives three steps to take in order to save the life of a believer who has sinned. Care must be taken not to shame him/her. Hence, Jesus lays down a Christian or biblical approach for such situation and according to (McCully, 2021), Matthew 18:15-20 should be understood through the themes of care, redemption, salvation, and the honour/shame culture in which Jesus spoke. The instructions Jesus gave to His disciples address situations where one believer sins against another, and the sin cannot be ignored because of the harm it may cause. These guidelines are not meant for minor disputes or disagreements that don't involve serious or potentially harmful sin, but rather focus on addressing sin in a way that seeks restoration and protection for both individuals and the community.

In Matthew 18:15a, Jesus lays a reconciliation process between two individuals (the offended and the offender) in conflict. The first step of reconciliation should be between the two people only. The importance of this step is to give the believer a chance to confess in privacy so that he/she can be ashamed of the entire church. Privacy should also be on both sides: the one approaching and the offender. It is not good to publicly humiliate our brothers and sisters. This may affect them psychologically and even decide to leave the congregation due to shame. And this is the main concern of Jesus Christ: to protect others from open shame and humiliation. Jesus continues his

instructions in Matthew 18:15b, saying, “If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.” People should give it a try and not close the doors of forgiveness and reconciliation. There is always a chance that when a member is approached, he/she can listen and seek forgiveness and ultimately experience redemption. If the result is successful, the case should be closed between the two of you only. In verses 16-17, Jesus says: “But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or tax collector.” Here Jesus instructs his disciples not to give up for the first attempt. If the first attempt fails, go for a second one. If the second one fails also, go for a third time. All these attempts are to give a chance to the offender to come back. Our God is a God that give a second chance.

Jesus instructs His disciples on how to approach a church member who has committed a serious and harmful sin. This approach is to be carried out with care, using reintegrative shame as a means to guide the lost individual back into the community. This form of shame is not to condemn but to restore, and it is immediately followed by reintegrative rituals that celebrate and affirm the person’s return. Jesus also promises His presence throughout the process, ensuring that no one is ever alone, during reconciliation between congregational members. Jesus is more concerned that we maintain an attitude that desires to forgive and help those who offend us, rather than an attitude of revenge and hatred.

Ayojimi (2019, p.72) notes that conflict in the church is tough, scary, disorienting, confusing, and damaging. And yet, almost every church experiences it. Hence, the church should play its role. According to Nnamdi (2023, p.96), the church is to bring reconciliation, salvation and restoration of God’s original mandate for the earth back into our present nature.

Most of these conflict management styles seek to establish peace and reconciliation between the conflicting parties. Generally, the main purpose of conflict resolution is to restore peace, stability and reduce the negative impacts of that conflict. However, the resolution of conflict requires some important ingredients. Among those ingredients, truth constitutes a covenant logo that disputants or parties in conflict must not miss. The disputants need to have confidence in those who are in charge of resolving the conflicts. It also requires the commitment of the disputants to resolve the conflict. In addition to that, it is also important to note that some church conflicts can be easily solved, and others are unsolvable (McCully, 2021). Nevertheless, though supporting that not all conflicts can be resolved, Nnamdi (2023, p.153) suggests that most conflicts can be managed successfully. It is essential for church leaders to be aware of that truth. The nuance is that with the willingness of disputants and the commitment of the leader, most conflicts can be managed. It is very important to create a favourable environment to help disputants feel safe to share their positions.

In addition to that, Nnamdi suggests four strategies for managing conflicts: avoidance, accommodation, competition, and compromise. For Nnamdi, conflict negotiation, management, resolution and transformation are a process of applying biblical tested principles and disciplines to resolve, manage and transform conflict in such manner that they become constructive and transformational in bring unity, peace, awareness, growth, and positive change in any church organization or institution (p.158).

2.3.7.5. Managing church conflict in the African context

Church conflicts in Africa have gained increasing scholarly attention over the last decade, driven by a rise in institutional fragmentation, theological divergence, and socio-political entanglements. Empirical studies across sub-Saharan Africa highlight that church conflict is rarely isolated from broader cultural, economic, and governance dynamics. Researchers emphasize that while theological disagreements remain prominent, leadership

succession, ethnicity, mismanagement of resources, and institutional ambiguity are central conflict drivers in many African church contexts.

Akinyemi (2018), in his comparative study of African Independent Churches (AICs) in Nigeria and Ghana, observed that leadership succession disputes were among the leading causes of institutional schisms. These conflicts often emerged due to unclear constitutions, centralized power, and the absence of transparent governance structures. Akinyemi found that power struggles typically escalated into permanent divisions, with breakaway factions forming new denominations. The lack of conflict resolution mechanisms was a common thread in most cases studied. Similarly, Baloyi (2014) explored leadership-based conflicts in South African churches and found that untrained pastors frequently lacked mediation or negotiation skills. Most relied heavily on spiritualized interpretations of conflict (e.g., prayer, fasting, exorcism) rather than professional dispute resolution tools, which led to prolonged tensions and diminished congregational trust.

Ethnic dynamics have also been shown to exacerbate church conflicts, particularly in multi-ethnic congregations. Wanyande (2012) demonstrated how ethnicity and tribal politics influence leadership rivalries in Kenyan churches. In his analysis, church appointments and elections were often seen as ethnically biased, triggering internal disputes that aligned with broader political divisions in the country. The study called for a more interculturally competent ecclesiology and accountability mechanisms within leadership.

Despite those conflict challenges, scholars have also provided some conflict resolution mechanisms. Empirical research by Sofoluwe et al. (2013) identified three primary conflict management styles in Nigerian Pentecostal churches: avoidance, negotiation, and spiritual mediation. While prayer and spiritual discernment were highly valued, the lack of formal institutional structures for mediation was a significant weakness. The study proposed the incorporation of conflict management training into theological education and pastoral

leadership programs. Similarly, Chitando (2014), in a study on the role of religious leaders in Zimbabwe's polarized context, showed that clergy often act as informal peacebuilders. He emphasized the importance of local cultural resources—such as proverbs, storytelling, and traditional mediation—being integrated into church conflict resolution strategies. Chitando's work highlighted how African epistemologies can strengthen ecclesial responses to division.

Church conflicts have negative impact on both clergy and congregations. Unfortunately, church leaders are not well prepared or lack some skills on how to properly manage church conflicts. Ajayi & Olorunsola (2021) examined the emotional toll of conflict on clergy in Nigerian mainline churches. Their findings linked unresolved disputes with high levels of clergy burnout, emotional exhaustion, and strained church-community relationships. They advocated for the introduction of wellness programs and institutional counselling as integral to conflict resolution. Ngong (2020) critiqued theological institutions for their limited curriculum on practical conflict transformation. His empirical review of theological colleges in East and Central Africa revealed that while theological doctrine was prioritized, pastoral formation lacked skills in interpersonal mediation, dialogue, and reconciliation theory. He recommended contextually grounded conflict transformation education as a long-term solution.

2.3.7.6. Mechanism of resolving church conflicts in Burundi

In Burundi, faith-based organisations including church organizations do experience internal conflicts. Nevertheless, no conflicts so far have been recorded between two church organizations. Conflicts that so far have been observed originated from within the same church organization. According to Law No. 1/30 of 16 September 2022 amending Law No. 1/35 of 31 December 2014 on the Organic Framework of Religious Denominations, religious organizations are required to set up a hearing or conflict resolution committee as a mandatory body to deal with internal conflicts. Article 16 of this Law states that “The statutory bodies that

are imperative for a religious denomination, organization or movement are: a) The General Assembly, b) The Executive Committee, and (c) The Arbitration Council. And Article 22 requires all religious denominations to put in place this arbitration council in charge of disputes settlement in all its local churches. Even though the Executive Committee and the Arbitration Council carry out the tasks entrusted to them by the General Assembly, the Arbitration Council may decide to jump in and take action if necessary for the general interest of a religious denomination.

This Law gives primarily the authority to the church leadership to deal with its internal disagreements or conflicts before seeking external mediation or settlement. According to (Afolabi, 2018), the use of arbitration in a church leadership conflict is possible but church leaders are advised to understand the rules and doctrines of the church. And unless you belong to that church, it may not be easy for outsider arbitrators. For Afolabi (2018), the preestablished procedures of the church alongside the experience of the mediator or the body of arbiter should be used to deal with the conflict. Consequently, arbitration requires therefore the church to have a committee of arbiters in which the requirement of being an arbiter should include age, sex, years of experience in church conflict, years of experience in church leadership, and years of membership. This is in line with what the Law on Religious organizations in Burundi stipulates. Conflict resolution should be an internal affair and should be done by Arbitration councils created in each local church of the denomination. For instance, the United Methodist Church in Burundi has 347 local churches. This means that 347 arbitration councils are to be set up. The elected members have a term of four years as it is provided by the BOD: each leadership tenure is for four years.

If the case is not resolved internally, the parties in conflict can either require the help of other church leaders (through mediation), or the help of the ministry of home affairs through its directorate general in charge of religious associations. Some church organizations are

grouped into association entities. For instance, the National Council of Churches in Burundi has seven church member denominations: the Anglican Church in Burundi, the Free Methodist Church in Burundi, the UMC in Burundi, the Friends Church of Burundi, the Baptist Church of Burundi, the Lutheran Church in Burundi, and the Kimbanguist Church of Burundi. This organization does also help in managing conflicts arising from its church members. The last is to take the case to court if the mediation process fails to peacefully conclude.

2.3.8 Polity of the United Methodist Church

2.3.8.1 Doctrine of the United Methodist Church

Since the research will be conducted in the UMC- Burundi annual conference, it is very important to give a summary of its history, doctrine, and polity. The United Methodist Church doctrine encompasses all of the teaching that the church does in all of its forms and for the UM church, the authoritative doctrine is determined by the General Conference. The UMC General Conference, as the appropriate body that has the authority to define the church doctrine, deals with three fundamental questions: “1. What to teach; 2. How to teach; and 3. What to do; that is how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice” (Scott, 2002). According to Jones (2002), the shape of the United Methodist doctrine is that of ten texts occupying three different levels of authority:

1. Constitutional standard: Constitution, Articles of Religion, Confession of Faith, Standard Sermons, *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, and General Rules
2. Contemporary statements: *Book of Discipline* (non-constitutional sections) and *Book of Resolutions*
3. Liturgy: *The United Methodist Hymnal* and *United Methodist Book of Worship*

The Wesley and the Methodists recognize four sources of religious authority: Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience (Don, 2018).

2.3.8.2 The mission of the United Methodist Church (UMC)

2.3.8.2.1 *Understanding of the church mission*

It will not make sense if the polity of the United Methodist Church is not discussed before laying down the mission of the church. In fact, the structure of the church depends on the mission statement. In this case, paragraph ¶120 of the 2016 Book of Discipline (BOD) states the UMC mission as follows:

“The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the World. Local churches and extension ministries of the Church provide the most significant arenas through which disciple-making occurs.”

This mission is to be done through and by the Church. Even though John Wesley did not include the church among the means of grace in his sermon “The Means of Grace,” the Methodists believe that the church is what God has chosen as the ordinary way in which to convey grace to the world (Scott, 2002). That is why the church, according to the Methodists, is characterized by three elements: *faith* (a congregation of people that have responded in faith to God’s saving invitation), *preaching* (in which the pure Word of God is preached), and *Sacraments* (sacraments are duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance). Therefore, the United Methodist Church carries out its mission of making disciples using those three elements but also by doing evangelism. This requires people who are truly disciples of Jesus, people who have been spiritually transformed so that they can transform others holistically. These people sent out there for evangelism should demonstrate compassionate and caring presence towards the reached and the unreached people.

In early Methodism, as shaped by Wesleyan theology, faith alone was not sufficient to demonstrate one’s commitment to the Methodist movement. For John Wesley, true Methodists were expected to combine their faith with active social service. The people called Methodists

engaged in various charitable and welfare activities, such as caring for the poor and visiting prisoners, and this balance of faith and action remains a key aspect of Methodism today. John Wesley also promoted the involvement of lay people in preaching, encouraging them to share the gospel while continuing with their regular occupations. Additionally, he held strong views on morality, frequently urging people in his sermons to work diligently, earn and save responsibly, while also stressing the importance of charity and giving back generously to the community. It is therefore the role, responsibility of all Christians to demonstrate that spirit of servanthood towards the society. This is what the Methodists call the Ministry or Priesthood of All believers. In their daily living as the methodists, they are called to live out and witness their Christ-like image through acts of compassion, sharing their own faith experience of the gospel in order to bring more hearts to Christ. The fact of ordaining pastors does not therefore exempt lay church members from participating in the fulfilment of the mission of the church. The laity, through their various movements (men, women, youth), plays a significant role in evangelism activities within the United Methodist Church. But how does the UMC conduct its evangelism activities?

2.3.8.2.2 Meaning of evangelism

It is obvious that when people speak of evangelism, they have different meanings in mind. Richard Briggs gives us different ideas that people may be having while referring to evangelism (Briggs, 1997). It may be that they mean:

- Telling people what the Gospel is,
- Asking people to make a commitment to Christ,
- Seeing people becoming Christians,
- Preaching the gospel whether or not anyone listens,
- Distributing tracts and literature,
- Setting up new churches filled with new believers,

- Leading people to Christ and following up their commitment until they are part of a local church, and many others.

The work of Evangelism is not as easy and cheap as it has been portrayed by many churches. Bishop Wasonga Joseph complains that "most forms of evangelism both present and past have concentrated on making people religious, ensuring that people subscribed to certain doctrines and followed certain rules (Wasonga, 1994). Thus, religion has been made subjective, with the result that a heavy burden has been laid on personal piety that is divorced from real life issues". Instead, Bishop Wasonga proposes that the challenge of evangelism is "to make Christianity a living faith, a movement of believers in Christ rather than a religious system that is blind to the plight of the people.

Since evangelism is rooted in Christian tradition, it is very important to analyze the evangelism model of Jesus Christ among other evangelism models that are described in the New Testament. This should lead us to understanding how we should carry out evangelism within our communities.

2.3.8.2.3 Evangelist model: Jesus the ultimate evangelist

It is important to realize that the four evangelists that we have in the gospels had a well-defined group of people in mind and a message that they wanted to pass across to them. This message is simply the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Savior who came to humanity by crossing the greatest barrier of all when he left his Father's glory and became man (Bowen, 1996). Incarnation, solidarity with mankind, has been the greatest model of evangelism especially in cross-cultural missions. It is this understanding that made Christianity to become the world religion (Dana, 2009) and the New Testament, in the book of Acts, shows the early self-perception of Christians as a multi-cultural people on the move. The incarnation has far reached

implication for evangelism. It is a wise idea for every evangelist to engage with the culture and language of the people he/she is serving with the aim of identifying himself/herself with them.

Jesus' life, death and resurrection were an example to good evangelism. He was a servant king (John 13, Philippians 2:5-11). Servanthood is the only way to success for every evangelist. He was interested in people's needs: He set people free from sin, demons, diseases, ignorance, poverty, oppression, wrong relationship and death, and making them whole-this is what the Bible means by "salvation", not just new ideas but new freedoms and new happenings (Luke 11:20) (Bowen, 1996). He welcomed the outcast who were women, children, lepers, the poor, tax collectors, prostitutes, Gentiles, ... Matthew 9: 10-13) (Bowen, 1996).

He did not work alone but chose to work with a band of twelve other men that he commissioned to carry on his mission at the end of his stay with them on earth. It is perhaps important to have a closer look at what he exactly commissioned them to do.

The classical understanding of the great commission has been that the Evangelicals prefer the Matthean great commission (Mat. 28:18-20)-proclamation of the Gospel while the Ecumenical emphasize the Lukan (Luke 4:18-19) great commission-social action.

In this lecture, John Stott's study of what the great commission actually means and this what he says:

"It is not that the commission includes a duty to teach convert everything Jesus has previously commanded (Mat. 28:20), and that social responsibility is among the things that Jesus commanded, I now see more clearly that not only the consequences of the commission but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibility, unless we are to be guilty of distorting the words of Jesus" (Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, 1975).

So, then what should be the relationship between evangelism and social action? Stott sees them as partners, belonging to each other and yet are independent of each other.

The apparent differences in the Matthean and Lukan great commissions are as a result of their different context but it is clear that Jesus commanded both the proclamation and social action. Let's then consider these two evangelists.

Matthew

It is suggested by many scholars that the first evangelist was addressing a community of Jews believers who lived outside Jerusalem-probably in Syria. David Bosch describes the situation of the community and how Matthew handles it (Bosch, 1991): It was at the eve of the absolute break with the synagogue when Matthew wrote to his community. The community still can defend its right to be viewed as the true Israel but what should be its identity in the coming years? Can it continue as a movement within the Judaism? What attitude should it take towards the Law? Can it give up as viewing Jesus as more than just a prophet? And can it give up on a mission to fellow Jews?

Not everybody in this community agrees on which direction to take at this moment. Some emphasize faithfulness to the law, even to the smallest letter; others claim to have the spirit through whom they perform miracles. Matthew demonstrates that they are both correct and incorrect based on Jesus' teachings. He wants them not only to regard themselves as a sectarian group but as the church of Christ, the true Israel. In order to prove this, he had to show that Jesus is the Messiah and the fulfilment of the law.

Throughout his Gospel, Matthew does not use the Old Testament just polemically-to counter Rabbinic claims to the Old Testament-but because of pastoral and missiological reason: pastoral because he wishes to give self-confidence to a community facing a crisis of identity; missionary because he wishes to help the community to see the opportunities for witness around them. No wonder he calls them to be involved in reminding them that they have been sent to make disciples of all nations starting from their fellow Jews to the rest of the world (Matthew 28:18-20).

Luke

David Bosch describes Luke's community for us (Bosch, 1991). Luke's Christian community was predominantly Gentile and was no longer attracting Jews to it.

"The vigorous missionary program of Paul, in particular, was responsible for the predominantly Gentile character of the church of the eighties.... The return of Christ which was so fervently expected by the first generation of believers did not take place. The faith of the Church was tested in at least two ways: from within, there was a flagging of enthusiasm, from without there were hostility and opposition from both the Jews and pagans. In addition, the gentile Christians were facing a crisis of identity. They were asking "who are we really? How do we relate to the Jewish past, particularly in view of the manifest animosity of contemporary Judaism? Is Christianity a new religion or a continuation of the faith of the Old Testament? And above all, how do we relate to the earthly Jesus, who is gradually and irrevocably receding into the past?"

According to Bowen (1996), Luke had to give hope to his community in his great commission:

- That Jesus fulfilled the Jewish scriptures (4:21) thus that there was continuity between Judaism and Christianity.
- That Jesus came in the power of the Holy Spirit (4:18) thus that he is still with them through this same Spirit (Acts 1:8; 2: 16-21)
- That Jesus had a special concern for the poor –people edged outside of the society like women, Samaritans, lepers, sinners, tax collectors, Gentiles... (4:18)
- That he came to set people free from captivity, sicknesses, oppression, sin, ... (4:18)

So, the division of the tasks of evangelism alongside the emphasis of the Matthean and Lukan versions of the great commission is not justified. They are all part of the evangelistic mission of the Church.

2.3.8.2.4 United Methodist understanding of Evangelism

United Methodist understanding of evangelism is based on the Great Commission as described in Matthew 28. The Book of Discipline, ¶122, indicates the process for carrying out the church mission. According to this paragraph, we make disciples as we:

- proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome and gather persons into the body of Christ.
- lead persons to commit their lives to God through baptism by water and the spirit and profession of faith in Jesus Christ.
- nurture persons in Christian living through worship, the sacraments, spiritual disciplines, and other means of grace, such as Wesley's Christian conferencing.
- send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed, being and becoming a compassionate, caring presence, and working to develop social structures that are consistent with the gospel; and
- continue the mission of seeking, welcoming and gathering persons into the community of the body of Christ (United Methodist Church, 2016).

This process outlines not only specific practices but also a dynamic that may be described as “gathering, going and gathering again (Laceye, 2014)”. According to the same author, United Methodists are encouraged to participate in similar practices of gathering, going and gathering to gain fluency in a new language and form of life. According to Scott (2002), to make disciples of Jesus Christ is described as a process with different stages. For Scott, part of the church's mission is to “proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome and gather persons into the body of Christ” and to “lead persons to commit their lives to God through baptism and profession of faith in Jesus Christ.”

2.3.8.2.5 *The purpose of evangelism*

The purpose of evangelism is therefore to implement the vision or mission of the Church. And the mission of the Church is to “*Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the World*”. Wagner (2003) writes that Evangelism is both communicating the gospel so that a person understands it and persuading that person to respond to the message. According to the same author, he developed three approaches to evangelism: presence evangelism to help people through social works, proclamation evangelism by making the good news of Jesus Christ known so that the lost will hear it and understand it and persuasion evangelism for disciple making objective. In addition to these approaches, Wagner defined evangelism using eight words that are described in the New Testament as an answer to the controversy regarding evangelism:

First, ministers are to witness (*martureo*): "ye shall be witnesses" (Acts 1:8). Witnesses share what they have seen and heard. Second, they are to speak (*laleo*): "As they spoke to the people." (Acts 4: 1), which means to communicate a message. Third, they are to evangelize (*evangelizo*): "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word [evangelizing]" (Acts 8:4), which means "to gospelize," or "to give the gospel message." Fourth, they are to teach (*didasko*): "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded" (Matt. 28:20), which is a systematic explanation of the gospel so people can understand and believe. Fifth, they are to reason (*dialagomi*): "and he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath and persuaded both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 18:4, also see 17:2), which involves answering objections to the message. Sixth, they are to announce (*katangello*): "Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ" (Acts 17:3), which is to call the gospel to people's attention. Seventh, they are to proclaim (*kerusso*): "preached Christ to them" (Acts 8:5), which is publicly to announce the gospel so that people can respond to it. Eighth, they are to make disciples (*matheteusate*): "Go therefore make disciples" (Matt. 28:19), which is to bring people to a conversion experience and get them to follow Christ in the church (Wagner, 2003).

But then how does evangelism link to church growth? Wagner makes a distinction between the two terms. In fact, these two terms are distinct, but they can have the same meaning in case evangelism is not only considered as sharing the gospel message but if it is considered as bringing unbelievers to faith in Jesus Christ and into responsible church membership. According to the author, church growth insists that the evangelistic process does not end until

the lost person becomes a disciple of Jesus, validated by responsible church membership (Wagner, 2003).

2.3.8.2.6 Various understanding of church growth

Church growth encompasses more than merely increasing the number of individuals on church membership lists. It delves into how persons and people become genuinely Christians and revolutionize and bless the cultures and populations in the midst of which God has placed them. Church growth arises in theology and biblical faithfulness. It draws heavily on the social sciences because it always occurs in societies. It continually seeks for instances in which God has granted growth and then asks what are the real factors which he has blessed to such increase” (McGavran, 1990).

Elmer (2008) identifies multiple types of church growth, with most thriving churches experiencing a combination of them. The first type is **internal growth**, which refers to qualitative spiritual development, including deepening in the Word of God, faith in Christ, grace, and overall spiritual maturity—often called the “spiritual factors of church growth.” The second type is **external growth**, or numerical expansion, which includes increases in attendance, membership, offerings, baptisms, and enrolments. A third type is **biological growth**, which occurs naturally as church members have children, leading to a rise in church attendance. **Conversion growth** is another key form, often termed “making sheep,” where evangelism leads people to embrace faith in Christ and become part of the church. A fifth type is **transfer growth**, where churches gain members who relocate or switch congregations. While some criticize this as “sheep stealing,” others recognize the growing mobility of society and see it as an opportunity to welcome believers seeking a new spiritual home. **Expansion growth** refers to the establishment of new churches that mirror the original congregation, extending its ministry within similar communities. Lastly,

extension growth occurs when a church launches a new ministry aimed at engaging different cultural or ethnic groups entering the area. In response to changing demographics, many churches are developing strategies to facilitate both expansion and extension growth.

McGavran emphasizes with reason that church growth is faithfulness to God (McGavran, 1990). By this he means that church growth follows where Christians are actively in the business of finding the lost and obedience in being found. This whole exercise should lead to the restoration of the lost to normal life so that they, as parts of the same body, may participate in the establishment of God's kingdom, constantly fighting for justice without being of the world but "separate enough to maintain a vivid life with Christ".

The church growth goal, in response to the Great Commission, is "to proclaim Jesus Christ as God and Savior, and to persuade persons to become responsible members of his Church." A responsible church member is indicated through behavioural observations (Wagner, 2003). According to Elmer, church growth is defined as the science that investigates the nature, function and health of Christian churches as they relate specifically to the effective implementation of God's Commission to "make disciples of all nations [peoples]" (Matt. 28:19) (Elmer L. T., 2008).

According to Gary (2004) and Elmer (2008), the definition of church is attached to three separate aspects. First, church growth is associated with numerical growth: attendance, offerings, baptisms, memberships, etc. Second, church growth is related to planting churches both within and across cultural and class barriers. The third aspect of church growth is seen as a discipline or science that is researchable (Gary L. M., 2004; Elmer L. T., 2008). However, church growth cannot merely be explained in sociological, political, economic or historical terms. God is behind it all and growth is not possible where there is no faithfulness to Him. We

cannot study church growth merely in the same way as football clubs grow. There is a theology behind church growth. This view is also supported by Elmer. For him, church growth is simultaneously a theological conviction and an applied science, striving to combine the eternal principles of God's Word with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioural sciences (Elmer L. T., 2008).

The essential principles of church growth are summarized in three statements. First, it is important to realize that God wants his lost children found and enfolded. Second, it is important to discover the facts of church growth and lastly, it is vital to develop specific plans based on the facts discovered. This requires setting goals and develop bold strategies for soul winning to Christ and planting new churches (Gary L. M., 2004).

There have been many strategies for evangelism and church growth. One of those strategies that have been used in the early methodism is cell groups.

2.3.8.2.7 Cell group evangelism model

2.3.8.2.7.1 Definition of cell group

A cell group is a cluster of church members who meet weekly in a home, factory, office, or other place for the purpose of evangelism and Christian fellowship through singing, prayer, Bible study, offering giving, announcements, sharing of needs, and praises and ministry to one another (Elmer, John, & David, 2002). Steve defines a cell group as: "a group of three to fifteen people that meets weekly outside the church building for the purpose of evangelism and discipleship with the goal of multiplication (Steve, 2005)."

A cell group typically meets on a weekday rather than Sunday and gathers outside the church building. In many local churches, some cells convene on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, while others meet on Fridays. These meetings, held in family homes, usually last one to two

hours and focus on prayer and devotion. Additionally, most cell groups serve other purposes, such as Bible study, prayer, training, fellowship, and support (Elmer, 2008).

Elmer (2008) notes that early church growth patterns suggest that church life consisted of two key elements. The first was the **cell**, a smaller gathering for fellowship (Acts 4:32). The second was the **celebration**, where multiple cell groups came together for corporate worship and activities (Acts 5:14). The New Testament provides clear evidence of this model beyond the Jerusalem church. For example, the church in Corinth comprised multiple Gentile cell groups (Romans 16:4) as well as several Jewish cells (Romans 16:16)

It is also important to note that the home was the church's center of evangelistic and nurture activities for the first 150 years in Christian church history. According to Dr. McGavran, most groups experiencing growth throughout the world make abundant use of house-church strategy. And this doesn't require to have financial resources or being dependent to missionaries.

Susana Wesley's role at the Epworth rectory serves as a powerful example of how homes can be foundational for church growth. As a mother of ten children, she exemplified discipline in scriptural and religious education, ensuring her children engaged in prayer, literacy, and writing. When John Wesley later founded the Methodist movement, he established **class meetings**, which functioned similarly to cell groups. Wesley emphasized the importance of gathering in smaller groups for preaching and Bible study, fostering accountability and discipline within the Methodist societies through structured class meetings and bands (Frank, 2006). These gatherings allowed for open-air preaching to anyone willing to listen.

As a result, these class meetings significantly contributed to membership growth and were eventually formalized into societies. Although John and Charles Wesley did not intend for the Methodist movement to break away from the Church of England, tensions arose as the

Church of England viewed the movement as divisive (Lacey, 2014). John Wesley firmly opposed schism, stating, “A church member who divides from or leaves the church has no place among the Methodists” (Richard, 2013). However, over time, the movement's mission and structure began evolving into a distinct ecclesiastical identity (Richard, 2013).

Despite the effectiveness of home-based gatherings, they should not replace traditional church services. While resources like Christian television can supplement faith, they cannot substitute the role of the church in a believer's life. Instead, cell groups meeting should be a fostering place for church growth in order to attain the following advantages described in the next paragraph.

2.3.8.2.7.2 The advantages of Cell groups

Cell groups meeting presents a series of advantages. The following list is not exhaustive but includes the main ones.

A good arena through which disciple-making occurs

Cell groups meeting is a good arena through which disciple-making occurs. As these meetings are organized in family's houses, neighbors or relatives may be invited to join. There are two main ways groups can reach out and grow numerically: 1) directly, by inviting unchurched pre-Christians to group meetings, or 2) indirectly, by inviting unconnected worship attenders to cells (Steve, 2005). This is what Rodney called social network and according to the same author, the basis for successful conversionist movements is growth through social networks, through a structure of direct and intimate interpersonal attachments. The reason is that as movements grow, their social surface expands proportionately. That is, each new member expands the size of the network of attachments between the group and potential

converts, but good results can only be produced if the group constitutes an open network (Rodney, 1996). This strategy was used by the early Christians, and this has contributed a lot to the rise of Christianity. Church growth can be attained through many friends and relatives. It is a network growth that so distinguishes the Mormon rate of growth. Meanwhile, other contemporary religious movements will count their growth in thousands, not millions, for lack of a network pattern of growth (Rodney, 1996).

Church growth

There is no doubt that cell groups contribute to church growth even though it is much wider and deeper than adding names to church rolls (McGavran, 1990). One reason groups need to multiply is that evangelism is central to the group's mission. As a group fulfills the Great Commission, it reaches out. When new people are won and added to the group, eventually the group will need to be born in order to keep from becoming too large (Steve, 2005).

As church growth was described above, the increase in number is not the only measure of church growth. Members of the cell groups need to experience internal growth- growth in the Word of God, the Lord, Christ, grace and/or spiritual maturity. This growth can be achieved through cell groups meeting. According to Steve, cell churches have shown the ability not only to reach large numbers of converts, but also to disciple them to be fully devoted followers of Jesus (Steve, 2005).

Discipleship

Apart from sharing the word of God, church members in a cell group promote the discipleship as well among church community and outsiders. According to (Elmer L. T., 2008), discipleship is basically a personal commitment to God in intimate spiritual discipleship to Christ by both a novice and mastered minister who are bound to a divine call to the ministry in

further commitment to each other; the former momentarily submitting to the immediate discipline of the latter and exercising discipline within the context of his or her life and ministry.

According to Dietrich, discipleship means adherence to Christ, and, because Christ is the object of that adherence, it must take the form of discipleship. Discipleship is bound to Christ as the Mediator, and where it is properly understood, it necessarily implies faith in the Son of God as the Mediator. Only the Mediator can call men to follow him. In fact, discipleship without Jesus Christ is a way of our own choosing (Dietrich, 1959). According to this author, cell groups meeting should be a place that enables us to foster our discipleship to Christ. In addition, church members are encouraged to become part of a small group in order to grow spiritually and receive pastoral care. Many believers have benefited greatly from this kind of small group ministry (Steve, 2005). Cell groups meeting will help therefore to invest more in the spiritual growth or in maturing the converted Christians. As Dietrich wrote “Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ” (Dietrich, 1959).

But a person is not evangelized until he or she becomes a responsible member of the body of Christ. Therefore, the goal of discipleship is to make church members to become responsible Christians (Wagner, 2003). Hence, discipleship is one of the characteristics or indicators of church growth. Nevertheless, church leaders should avoid what is called inverted discipleship, that is the tendency within missions to invest an increasing amount of time and resources toward developing maturity in those already converted, at the expense of the unconverted (Wagner, 2003; Elmer L. T., 2008).

A ground of leadership development program

Healthy cell groups produce new leaders. Cell church itself can be described as a leadership-development engine. The goal of the cell-based church is to help equip Christians for the ministry of making disciples who make disciples (Steve, 2005). People are trained in cell groups because cell leadership is open to all. In fact, some are given different roles, and this give confidence for sharing the Word of God with others. And later on, they can be able to teach in church service. Christians are equipped for the ministry. And this is what John Wesley used when he started the Methodist movement: leadership in the class.

Wesley's combination of large group and small group gatherings not only helped converts grow spiritually, but they also helped the Wesleyan movement grow and endure. That is why Wesley's influence lived on long after he died due to the way he organized his ministry (Steve, 2005).

2.3.8.2.8 Church growth and church leadership

Behind every church growth lies successful and responsible leadership. According to Elmer et al. (2002), while the Holy Spirit is the primary force behind growth, pastors play a crucial role in guiding and expanding the church. Jesus exemplified transformational leadership by shaping His disciples into future leaders and empowering them to spread the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20). He emphasized that true leadership comes through service, teaching His followers that greatness is found in humility and servanthood (Mark 9:35). His disciples later performed miracles and carried out His mission (Acts 5:12-16).

Beyond transformational leadership, Jesus also demonstrated transactional leadership, offering rewards for faithfulness. He assured His disciples that their sacrifices would be rewarded in eternity (Matthew 19:27) and emphasized the principle of reciprocity—what one gives, they will receive (Luke 6:38). However, His leadership was primarily rooted in **servanthood**, a concept developed by Robert Greenleaf, which prioritizes serving others first.

Jesus embodied this by humbling Himself to serve humanity, ultimately sacrificing His life for salvation (Philippians 2:6-8).

For church leaders to be effective, they must follow Jesus' example and meet specific spiritual criteria (Elmer, 2008):

1. A burden to serve God, as seen in the Old Testament prophets (Ezekiel 12:10).
2. A deep desire for ministry, shaping their entire outlook (Philippians 3:10-14).
3. Visible fruit in their personal lives and ministry (John 15:16).

2.3.8.2.9 The Methodism and the connectional covenant

The Methodists have committed to a global mission of preaching the gospel in a spirit of connectional covenant, as outlined in ¶125 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*. Additionally, evangelism remains a key focus of the Methodist Church's mission. This is developed in open-ended and imaginative ways to communicate the gospel of Christ properly and effectively. Wesley's realization formed the core basis of his drive to make a difference by allowing others to experience what he had experienced through the realization that he, indeed, trust Christ and believes that all his sis have been forgiven. This global mission necessitates an appropriate church structure.

2.3.8.3. The structure or polity of the UMC

The United Methodist Church is organized in conferences, and this constitutes the Wesleyan traditions. According to Laceye (2014), the UMC is structured in conferences with interrelated accountability and support that visibly represents connection and guides the ministry of the church (Laceye, 2014). For Scott, the conference has been the primary source of authoritative teaching in the church since the beginnings of Methodism in the United States (Scott, 2002). While the General Conference is known as the highest legislative body of the

UMC, the annual conference is considered as the fundamental body of the church (§§8-36 in the 2016 Book of Discipline). Central conferences (outside the United States of America because they are called Jurisdictional Conferences in the U.S.A) are therefore between Annual Conference and General Conference. These are regional bodies and have certain powers, duties and privileges in accordance with the Discipline of the Church. Central Conferences emerged when the church started its evangelical mission work outside of the U.S.A. in the nineteenth century (Frank, 2006). As the number of missions increased, central conferences considered as delegates bodies were then created as a way to obtain training for lay and clergy leaders, to enhance accountability and control of ecclesial matters outside the U.S.A. Later on, these conferences created as missions from the U.S sought autonomy and indigenous leaders replaced gradually the missionaries sent by the U.S United Methodist church. Those conferences that remained within the church were then grouped into regional bodies, called central conferences. Currently there are seven Central Conferences (listed in §540 in the 2016 Book of Discipline) and the composition, organization and powers and duties are listed in §§541-543 in the 2016 Book of Discipline. Some of their responsibilities are:

- Setting boundaries of annual conferences and advising annual conferences to set standards for church membership.
- Electing, assigning bishops within the central conference and electing general agency members.
- Establishing a judicial court as well as a court of appeal.
- Translating and adapting rituals (including marriage) in conformity to cultural norms.
- Providing theological education and publishing a Discipline

2.3.8.4 The ordination processes

The United Methodist Church believes that everyone who is a Christian and is baptized is called to ministries of sharing the gospel (Lacey, 2014). However, even though all Christians are ministers, not all Christians are called to be clergy. The 2016 Book of Discipline, on its ¶ 301. 2 reads as follows:

“Within the church community, there are persons whose gifts, evidence of God’s grace, and promise of future usefulness are affirmed by the community, and who respond to God’s call by offering themselves in leadership as set-apart ministers, ordained and licensed (¶302). Individuals discern God’s call as they relate with God and their communities, and the Church guides and confirms those callings. Calls-and he discernment and confirmation of them- are gifts of the Holy Spirit”.

The BOD in its paragraphs 310-314 and paragraphs 332-340 gives more detail on the candidacy process and the ministry of Elders respectively. Nevertheless, the starting point of the process is to express your call to the ministry. As soon as your call is discerned with the help of a candidacy mentor, it is very important to contact an elder, a deacon or the District Superintendent in order to inquire about admission into the candidacy process and to be able to get the necessary mentorship support from the appropriate candidacy mentoring group. One of the roles of a candidacy mentor is to help the candidate to refine his/her call to the ministry. According to Frank (2006, p.199), once a person’s call has been affirmed by her or his charge conference, the process of preparation, training, testing, placement, and evaluation generally moves into connectional bodies. The district Committee on Ordained Ministry(dCOM) plays a major role in that process. This body is in charge of monitoring annually the progress of candidates who have expressed their call to the ministry. In addition, the candidate must also meet the educational requirements and academic qualifications as stipulated in ¶324. Before becoming an elder in full connection, a certified candidate meeting the educational

requirements has to be ordained as a probationary elder, there are therefore many steps that a candidate must take in order to be ordained as an elder in full connection. First, they must demonstrate their gifts for ministry and leadership to the satisfaction of the district Committee on Ministry (dCOM). Next, they need to fulfil application requirements, which include obtaining a health certificate, undergoing background checks, and submitting a written theological exam and an autobiographical statement. Following this, candidates will participate in interviews with both the dCOM and the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) for a recommendation for commissioning. Upon receiving approval from the Clergy Session for provisional membership, they will be commissioned by a bishop. Once a provisional member has successfully completed all the requirements, she/he can therefore submit an application for recommendation by the BOM to the Clergy session to get the approval for ordination as a full member in connection. The final step involves being ordained by a bishop, completing the journey to becoming an Elder in full connection. But why do candidates have to be ordained? What is really the purpose of ordination in the UMC since its BOD states that the Christian ministry is the ministry of all Christians?

2.3.8.5 The purpose of ordination in the United Methodist Church

In the broader mission of the Church, ordination is considered a divine gift, bestowed by God to sustain and guide the church's ministry. It serves as a means of preserving the apostolic ministry, empowering individuals through the Holy Spirit (Lacey, 2014; United Methodist Church, 2016). Ordination is also a process that evaluates a candidate's ability for theological reflection and readiness for servant leadership. Candidates undergo thorough examination and observation to demonstrate their competence, dedication, and suitability for ministry roles, providing them the opportunity to prove their commitment and leadership skills.

In the United Methodist Church (UMC), ordination is not only seen as a divine gift but also as an affirmation and continuation of the Apostles' ministry, as described in Acts 6. After complaints filed by Hellenist Jews against the Hebraic Jews, the apostles gathered and decided to appoint deacons to address the community's physical needs, allowing the Apostles to focus on prayer and preaching the Word of God. Verses two to four of chapter six read the following:

“²So, the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

Similarly, ordination in the UMC is a way to set individuals apart for ministry and the expression of God's love, as outlined in ¶303 of the Book of Discipline. Clergy members are entrusted with leading God's people through ministries of Service, Word, Sacrament, Order, Compassion, and Justice.

Ordination in the UMC represents a lifelong, covenantal commitment rooted in mutual care and accountability. It builds upon the foundation of baptism, which calls all Christians to a life of service. This commitment reflects complete dedication to the highest ideals of Christian living and serves as a powerful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ (Lacey, 2014).

Ordination strengthens the Church's mission, ensuring the continuity of Christ's ministry within the church community. The UMC recognizes two orders of ordained ministry. Elders: Appointed by the resident Bishop, Elders serve as pastors in local churches or in other Christian ministries, such as chaplaincies in hospitals, schools, and other institutions. Deacons: Although ordained, Deacons do not serve as lead pastors in local churches. Instead, they are called to ministries focused on Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice, connecting the church's mission to the wider community.

Through ordination and pastoral leadership, the Church ensures the continued presence and effectiveness of Christ's mission in the world. Like elders, they can be appointed to serve in various ministries such as evangelism, church administration, pastoral care, legal services, health personnel as nurses or medical doctors, chaplains, etc.

2.3.8.6 Superintendence in the United Methodist Church

The Superintendence nature is defined in the ¶401 in the 2016 Book of Discipline. A District Superintendency is an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference. It is also important to note that the District Superintendency is not a separate Order, but it is a special ministry. The United Methodist Church uses the Itinerant System to appoint its ministers. The appointment of ministers is a process involving bishops, the cabinet, Districts Superintendents, the Board on Ordained Ministry, the Pastor-Parish Relations committee, and pastors. This is a very important process whose goal is to maximize the missional effectiveness of every church. Clergy itinerancy must receive an appointment from a bishop every year. District Superintendents (DS) are therefore appointed by the bishop among full connection elders who are ordained to be ministers of Service, Word, Sacraments and Order. Being an elder in full connection, a DS's main role is to lead and serve the church in the ministries of Word, Service, Sacraments and Order. The specific responsibilities of the District Superintendent are listed in ¶419 in the Book of Discipline and without being exhaustive, the following are some of the key responsibilities of the District Superintendent:

A district Superintendent oversees the total ministry of the clergy (including those in extension ministries) of all local churches within the boundaries of the district by using his or her gifts and skills related to spiritual and pastoral leadership, personal leadership, administration, and program. A district superintendent is in charge of recruiting, assessing, and deploying pastoral leadership within the district, both lay and ordained to facilitate the ministry

of local churches and those in extension. Since the district superintendence is an extension of the bishop's office, the district superintendent assists the bishop and the cabinet in deploying of clergy and set apart ministers, in supervising and providing spiritual leadership, support, care, and counsel to clergy, laity, and local churches on matters affecting their effective ministry. A district superintendent assists also the bishop in administering an itinerant system through the appointment-making of clergy and licensed or set-apart ministers. Additionally, they are also responsible for maintaining appropriate records of all clergy appointed to charges within the district and records related to property, endowments and other tangible assets of the Church within the district. Furthermore, and under the leadership of the resident bishop, a district superintendent assists the bishop in interpreting church law and discipline in his/her district of appointment. And lastly, a district superintendent continues to uphold the spiritual and temporal leadership of the bishop's office as well as any other responsibilities given by the bishop.

When Methodism was founded by the Wesley brothers, it encouraged free preach and service, both with equal emphasis and importance (Rogal, 1983). The Wesley's would travel across the country of English to preach openly in random places to whoever was willing to listen. This kind of free preach became very famous and influenced a vast number of people, so much so that Wesley gained a massive following. The Wesley brothers took it upon them to challenge the orthodox practices of the Church of the time and decided it was time for a reformation. As the brother preached on, followers grew larger in number. As the followers grew in number, so did the structure and detail of the preachers. Wesley decided it was time to introduce a structure to the preach and eventually a new wing of Christianity budded. It was Wesley who introduced all the elements of Methodism which include the priest, bishops, cabinet superintendents, etc.

Superintendents play a crucial role in the overall discipline making and discipline-maintaining of the UMC. The role of a superintendent is to help the Church in creating an environment of discipline and obedience in the Church and among followers and believers (Everhart, 2017). It is the mission of the Methodist Church to make faithful followers or disciples of Jesus Christ will continue to spread the word of God and serve those in need. Hence, to ensure this happens, the church has superintendents. The purpose of superintendence is to aid the discipline-making ministry. It is also the task of superintendents to carry out ease the process of strategies and church structures fir helping Christians to be able to serve in the church as well as in the world in order to serve their purpose on earth as intended for them by Jesus Christ.

According to Frank (2006, p.229), the superintendency (from the translated term from scripture of “*episkopos*” to include facilitation of the work of societies or small groups) as expressed through the bishops and district superintendents of the church is United Methodism’s unique office (Frank, 2006). John Wesley used the term *superintendency* as an alternative to *bishop*, reflecting Pietistic as well as Lutheran and Reformed themes. Hence, the term “general superintendency” is only used to those who superintend (bishops and district superintendents) carry primary responsibility for ordering the life of the Church (Lacey, 2014). According to the 2016 Book of Discipline, “the task of superintending in The United Methodist Church resides in the office of bishop and extends to the district superintendent, with each possessing distinct and collegial responsibilities” (2016 Discipline, ¶401, p.323).

In fact, once the General Conference has approved the need of a Bishop in a particular annual conference, the delegates of that Annual Conference nominate episcopal candidates prior the tenure of the Jurisdictional or Central Conference. The nominees are then sent to that Jurisdictional or Central Conference delegates elect a bishop among the nominees. Also, it is important to take note that electing a bishop is not restricted to race, colour, age, gender, etc.

This is the beauty of the United Methodist Church. As Methodism spread across borders, and having the accommodative nature that it does, The United Methodist Church practices inclusivity not just when it comes to bishops and cabinet superintendents but also pastors, clergymen, and other active members of the church. This kind of diversity can be seen in various Methodist churches and districts across the world. Assignment processes are listed in ¶406 in the Book of Discipline. But what is the understanding of the office of Bishop in the United Methodist?

2.3.8.7 Office of Bishop in the United Methodist Church

John Wesley and Francis Asbury contributed a lot in shaping the episcopacy in the American Methodism. Their distinctive leadership styles influenced greatly the episcopal office, and it constituted a heritage to the United Methodist Church. It is therefore a longstanding practice in the Methodist Church tradition. Nevertheless, the office of the bishop has gone through tremendous paradigm, but it was more shaped with the union that happened in 1968 between the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church (J. Steven & Jason E., 2011). Though in both denominations the office of the bishop was not new, there were few differences on how bishops are elected, the term of service, etc. and these were resolved in the process of merging.

The Office of the Bishop and District Superintendent are not separate order; however, they are a special Ministry altogether. The office of the district superintendent is an extension of the office of the bishop. It is this office which oversees the whole ministry of clergy and overall works of the Church in the communities of the district the church serves. Bishops and superintendents are elders of the church and are in full connection. Upon their election, Bishops are consecrated and become members of the Council of Bishops before being assigned to areas of service. Afterwards, they are given the role in the ministry of servant leadership wherein they are to lead and supervise and provide a general oversight in the operations and services of

the church and all those connected to it. Bishops are followers of Jesus Christ, like all other Christians, but as bishops and followers of Christ, they are given the authority to guard the Christian faith, the discipline of the Church, liturgy, and doctrine.

According to Frank (2006), United Methodist episcopacy uniquely combines elements of both a monarchical and an administrative ecclesiology. From the monarchical side, the bishop is set apart for life and remains “a bishop of the church in every respect” even in retirement (2016 Discipline, ¶409, p.332). From the administrative side, bishops are charged with “general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the entire Church” (Frank, 2006). The Methodism’s understanding of episcopacy is an important part of its ecclesiology. According to Scott (2002), the Church protects its episcopal form of government in the same way it protects its constitutional standards of doctrine. The third Restrictive Rule in the 2016 Book of Discipline says:

“The General Conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to do away with episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency”

The office of Bishops is therefore protected by the Constitution of the Church, the highest authoritative doctrinal text of the UMC. The inclusion of the episcopacy and its itineracy among the Restrictive Rules demonstrates the deep rootedness of the episcopacy in American Methodism (Lacey, 2014). The COB acts as the Executive governance body of the church. Two other governing bodies include the Judicial Council and the General Conference. The first deals with all the legal issues while the second votes laws.

Additionally, in order to maintain progress and oversee the progress of the activities related to the Church, and to practice effective leadership, the Council of Bishops meet at intervals which are predetermined. The Council of Bishops has full authority to assign one of the members to visit another area related to the Methodist church. At the Conference of Methodist Bishops, members are then expected to voice issues of progress as well as of concern

relating to spiritual and temporal issues. Also, this conference is to be held in accordance with ¶423 in the 2016 Book of Discipline.

In the training of staff-parish relations, it is emphasized to have an open nature of itinerancy and make ready for congregations in order to receive the grace and gifts of all those who have been appointed as clergy. These gifts and graces are given without any discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, social group, gender, age, colour, ability or disability, marital status, or age. The concept of itinerancy is an important one the Methodist Church holds it highly. It is the responsibility of the bishop to overlook all and ensure all is executed effectively.

With the formation of an open itinerancy, the church both promotes and holds high the opportunity to create an even bigger Methodist community by being inclusive to various communities across the world. In other words, appointing clergymen of various racial and cultural backgrounds is essential to display a community which is all-inclusive and welcoming to all (Stone, 2006). Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment of clergy men refers to the appointment of clergymen whose own racial and cultural background is different from those in his constituency.

Since the district superintendent is an extension of the bishop's office, the relationship between District Superintendent and Bishops are in that they are both inter-linked. The nature of the relationship is that it is linked, where one is incomplete without the other. It is this linked nature of interdependence with makes a leadership style where responsibility is shared. However, much they may be interlinked and interdependent it is important to understand that they both hold a core of their own set of contexts. Bishops are in mostly elected for a term, but in the United States, they are elected for life. In other central conferences such as in Africa Central Conference, bishops elected serve for a term of four years. Once they are reelected, they serve as bishops for life. In other central conference, bishops serve for a maximum of 12

years only. Therefore, the term of service varies depending on the regulations of the central conference. Also, what differentiates UMC Bishops from other bishops of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican communions is that they remain church elders. Also, it is the General Conference which determines the number of Bishops through a formula listed in ¶404 The 2016 Book of Discipline. This paragraph gives a list of criteria to be considered by the General Conference in order to determine the need of additional bishops in a given jurisdiction or episcopal area.

Tuell (2010) goes to reveal that Bishops do not have a voice, or right to vote in the General Conference, their presence, however, is mandatory because one of them serves as a presiding officer. The bishop who gets elected as the presiding officer is decided by a Committee of Presiding Officers which comprises of lay men and clergy. Also, there is only one position which is permanent in the General Conference, and that is of the secretary. The secretary is nominated by the Council of Bishops, but members of the floor may also cast their own nominations (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009).

2.3.8.7 The BOD and conflict

Conflict resolution is a tradition in the United Methodist Church. John Wesley demonstrated (Outler & Heitzenrater, 1991). Wesley strived for fellowship, cooperation, and tolerance in conflict situations based on his catholic spirit. Wesley's theological dispute with Whitefield encompassed two foci: the doctrines associated with predestination and the question of imputed righteousness (Heitzenrater, 2013, p.118).

God's loving presence is at the heart of the Wesleyan tradition. During his ministry, Wesley experienced moments of disagreement, division, and tensions with his colleagues. Those tensions were sometimes based on their methods and theology. For instance, Josiah Tucker, rector of All Saints in Bristol, was one of the first to attack Whitefield and Wesley in

print by attacking their methods as well as their theology. And yet, Wesley had diverged sharply from Whitefield's Calvinism.

For John Wesley, his ministry was not only limited by the parish boundaries, but rather he considered the entire world to be his parish. His calling was beyond the appointment made by the bishop in a local church or parish, but his calling is even beyond that as it has to fulfill God's commission to preach the gospel to the entire world. This constituted the basic rationale that would undergird the Methodist itinerancy. As for his theology, Wesley not only defends his Arminianism and disclaims any responsibility for what Whitefield preaches but also counterattacks by charging Tucker with preaching incorrect doctrine, namely justification by good works. Maddox (1994, p.55) notes that the main difference between John Wesley and his other friends such as Whitefield on the issue of predestination was that based on the understanding of the nature of God than in their evaluation of the human situation. John Wesley believed in universal atonement and Christian perfection, frequently preaching a sermon on "Free Grace" (based on Rom.8:32). (p.111). This sermon has been considered by Outler & Heitzenrater (1991, p.49) as the signal of a major schism in the ranks of English evangelicals, marked by a personal breach between John Wesley and George Whitefield that was never more than partially healed. For Wesley, salvation is a universal gift to all humankind and not kept for some- only for the elected ones- as it was being taught by Whitefield. Nevertheless, people are also allowed to exercise their free will available to them so that they can accept or reject the universal redemption provided by God. Wesley argued that unconditional election to salvation and damnation is inconsistent with the impartiality of Divine justice and mercy, that it casts doubt on God's sincerity, and especially that it conflicts with the universal love and goodness of God. Whitefield opposed that teaching of universal and perfection. This is what Maddox (1994, 57) concluded with this tension between Wesley and his Calvinist opponents:

“The debate over predestination was a particularly distressful one for Wesley. On the one hand, the issue went to the center of his orienting concern. On the other hand, any open debate on it was likely to alienate some of his closest associates and split the Methodist movement. As a result of this tension, Wesley’s various comments on predestination reveal more contextual variations than perhaps any other doctrine. At times when he is most concerned about the damaging impact of the doctrine on his followers, he issued impassioned defenses of unlimited atonement such as his sermon on “Free Grace.” At times when he is more troubled by the damage being done within the Methodist movement by the debate over the doctrine, he searched for any possible common ground he shared and the most conciliatory ways that he could express his central claims. Through all of these variations, however, his central affirmation of God’s universal resistible grace remained consistent.”

Once again this shows Wesley’s approach to managing conflicts. Depending on the situation, he was willing to adjust without compromising what he called the truth. Heitzenrater (2013, p.357) made the following observation:

“And the people called Methodists did not always agree with Wesley, from his days at Oxford to his dying day. According to Heitzenrater (2013, p.357), many of them heard only what they wanted to hear or heard his message as they wanted to hear it. Some, perhaps, did not fully understand his message or completely share his vision. Some who did not share the same comprehensive perspective considered Wesley to be a confusing if not an elusive figure”.

Although John Wesley founded the Methodist movement, he consistently maintained that it should remain within the Anglican Church. Both John and his brother Charles Wesley never intended for the early Methodist renewal within the Church of England to evolve into a separate denomination (Lacey, 2014). However, the Church of England often sought to distance itself from Wesley and his followers, accusing the Methodist movement of causing division and undermining the church’s authority. In response to these accusations, John Wesley offered a clear and firm defence of his movement’s intentions: “A church member who divides from or leaves the church has no place among the Methodists” (Heitzenrater, 2013).

The UMC has created a JUSTPEACE Center for Mediation and Conflict Transformation. The purpose of this Center is described on ¶ 2401 of the BOD. Conflicts are part of our lives, communities, organizations, etc. We should not run away from conflicts, but we are to engage them in constructive ways, bearing in mind that conflicts should not be viewed as a sign of a weak church, weak church leadership, or even a need for spiritual renewal (Kale & McCullough, 2003), but an agent for change and a stimulus for growth (Kurtz, 1982).

2. 3.9 Summary

The chapter has covered two main issues: the theoretical models and the review of related literature to leadership theories, roots of conflict, and conflict management. Since the study is conducted within the UMC, literature covering pastoral ministry, the polity and the doctrine of the UMC was reviewed. A survey of biblical conflicts as part of this literature review was also conducted. Church leaders should not fear conflicts, but they should be prepared to embrace and manage it.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is very crucial in order to respond to the research identified problem. According to Kothari (2004), research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. Evangelical church organizations in Burundi have been facing and continue to face internal crises and killings, crimes, and hatred among family members have been perpetrated due to these internal crises. In addition to that, new church denominations are created as a result of those conflicts. The case of the UMC has attracted the researcher's attention. The church went through a leadership conflict that lasted more than a decade on a national level.

Though there was no creation of new church denomination, family members were torn apart. Fighting, physical violence and imprisonment were some of the characteristics of this conflict. Legal actions were initiated by both parties over the leadership of the church in Burundi. Two antagonistic leadership blocks were created, and local churches were also affiliated to these two-opposing leadership. Though all claimed to be United Methodist Church, the spirit of being united was no longer there. Many hearts were wounded, hurt. Some church members decided to leave the church and joined other denominations because they could not handle what was going on. It took twelve years for the conflict to end. Twelve years of fighting, hatred, and nightmares. All this happened in the eyes of church leaders, and nothing was done to solve this conflict. Nevertheless, church leaders never gave up. A new church leadership was elected in May 2017 and the team decided to seek ways of ending this conflict. The Global Board of General Ministry supported the idea and in November 2017, the two parties signed a reconciliation agreement in Zimbabwe. A special annual conference session was organized in February 2018 to celebrate the unification of the church (umnews:2018).

This background led to the formulation of the research purpose. The study aims at analysing the role played by church leaders in situations of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow us to detect other possible sources or roots of church conflicts. It is very important to determine whether church leadership might also be a source of church conflict or crisis. The focus of this research is on church leadership and its role in church conflict. The role played by church leaders may be creating conflicts or solving conflicts.

Leadership is fundamental to any organization and conflict resolution is part of leadership mission. Northouse (2016, p.6) defines leadership as a process in which an individual (the leader) influences a group of people to work toward a shared goal. The role of a leader in achieving a given objective in a given society is very crucial. The objectives to attain may be peace, development, well-being of the community, education, etc. And in order to achieve any of those objectives, the leader must influence the rest of the team towards that objective. If the objective is to achieve peace in the community, the leader of the community must bring on board all the involved parties to work towards peace by putting in place a mechanism of conflict resolution. The story of Moses in the Book of Exodus (chapter 18) is a typical example of one of the roles of leadership: conflict resolution. This story indicates once again that there is no society that is free from conflicts. Though Moses had not mastered the delegation style of leadership by empowering others to do what he was doing alone until his father-in-law Jethro advised him how to do it, one of his activities was to spend the whole day in order to judge the people. The cases brought before Moses ranged from small matter to great matter. Following the advice given by Jethro, Moses then selected leaders of small groups in order to deal with the daily conflicts and for hard cases, Moses was to handle them.

The polity of the United Methodist Church has something similar to this style of leadership. Each local church is led by a pastor in charge and an associate pastor if needed. On

the side of laity membership, the congregation elects a lay leader of the parish. The membership is then divided into three main movement: (i) the men movement, (ii) the women movement, and (iii) the youth movement. Each movement elects its own leaders. One of the roles of these movement leaders is to handle conflicts that may happen between members before it is reported to the parish lay leader and to the pastor in charge. The movement leaders report only those cases that they find hard for them to resolve. In this case, they call upon the help of the parish lay leader. If the case is resolved, it is then closed. The pastor in charge is only consulted for cases that have not been resolved at those two levels: the movement leadership and the lay leadership levels. The district level and the conference level have the same structure of leadership and cases that have not been resolved at parish level are referred to district level or to the conference level if a solution was not found at the district level.

The following chapter covers therefore the main body of the research process: the research methodology. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve research problems (Kothari, 2004). It gives details on how the research will be conducted. Therefore, the areas covered by the chapter include research design, population and sample of the research study, instruments of research tools, the study procedures and ethical assurance and data collection and analysis.

3.2 Research Approach and Design

3.2.1 Research approach

The current study objective is to explore the evangelical church leadership and its role in church conflicts. Therefore, there is a need to determine the appropriate research design for this study. Research design is defined as the blueprint for collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Ayiro, 2012; Habib, Maryam, & Pathik, 2014). According to Creswell (2014, p.41),

research designs are specific types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that guide the procedures of a study.

The choice of research design is determined by the nature of the study, with different designs available to suit various research needs. As it is defined, research design leads to the selection of appropriate data collection tools. And data collected must be measured and analysed in order to produce meaningful information. Research design is at the centre of this process. Failure to use the appropriate research design may lead to different conclusions. There are three main research designs that can be used: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research design, being a combination of the first two research designs. According to (Leavy, 2017),

- Quantitative research employs a deductive approach, focusing on testing, confirming, or challenging existing theories. It involves measuring variables and examining relationships between them to identify patterns, correlations, or causal links.
- Qualitative research, on the other hand, takes an inductive approach to knowledge creation, aiming to generate meaning (Leavy, 2014). This method is used to deeply explore social phenomena, uncover the meanings people attach to experiences, activities, or events, and develop a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of social life (Leavy, 2014).
- Mixed methods research combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single study. It involves the collection, analysis, and integration of both types of data, with each phase influencing the other to create a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

Many research studies undertaken fall in the above three categories. Some studies may be purely quantitative, others purely qualitative, while other studies have both quantitative and qualitative elements. The aim or the objective of the research guides in the selection of the research design. Is the objective of the research to establish the correlation between variables? Is the study aimed at exploring, investigating, analysing, etc.? Indeed, the main purpose of selecting a research design is to achieve the aim or objective of the research study. It is therefore

important to select the appropriate research design at this stage as this will lead to data collection tools to be used, and data measurement and analysis techniques to be employed.

Before selecting the appropriate research design to be used, it is very important to come back to the main themes of the research study: leadership and conflicts.

Leadership

The terms “leadership” and “church leadership” have been covered in chapter one of this study. At this point, it is important to note that leadership is attached to more definitions depending on the people who have tried to define it. Leadership definitions have been evolutionary, and it has been difficult to scholars to agree on one common definition of leadership. Yukl (2013) effectively summarized that researchers typically define leadership based on their personal perspectives and the specific aspects of the phenomenon that are most relevant to their interests. Nevertheless, scholars (Shajahan & Shajahan, 2000; Northouse, 2016) have agreed that leadership contains four key concepts: process, influence, group of people and goal. In the words of (Shajahan & Shajahan, 2000), leadership is the process of influencing group members in relation to setting and achieving goals.

From the above, leadership is therefore understood differently. Everyone defines leadership with his/her own understanding. This can even be a source of conflict.

Conflict

A section on the types of conflicts was developed in Chapter two of this study. Conflict is as old as humanity. And our daily lives encounter conflictual situations. Conflict is universal and occurs in all times and places. According (Budjac Corvette, 2014), conflict is universal and unavoidable, emerging from various sources. There has never been a time or a society in which some individuals or groups did not come into conflict. Conflict can therefore be found

everywhere: in families, communities, society, organizations such as church institutions, etc. Conflicts can arise in personal relationships, business and professional interactions, organizations, between groups and organizations, and even between countries (Budjac Corvette, 2014). A conflict has also to be analyzed considering its history, its physical and organizational settings (2008, p.38).

According to Conflict Definition & Meaning | Dictionary.com, conflict is defined as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions. A conflict results in heated arguments, physical abuse and loss of peace and harmony. A conflict can actually change relationships. Psychological opposition between two simultaneous but incompatible wishes or drives sometimes lead to a state of emotional tension and thought to be responsible for neuroses.

Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations. Conflict situations arise because of fear, force, fairness or funds. Other causes of conflict can be communication gaps; personality differences; substandard performance; disputes over approaches, responsibility, and authority; lack of cooperation; or competition for limited resources. It is important to note the following characteristics that are found in conflict: (i) Conflict is a conscious action. It is a deliberate intent to oppose. (ii) Conflict is a personal activity. (iii) Conflict lacks continuity. (iv) Conflict is universal.

In fact, conflict started just with humanity history with the story of the Fall of man in the book of Genesis (Gen. 3: 1ff). In fact, humanity was created with the potential to develop naturally, including socially, spiritually, physically etc. However, human beings are driven by selfish love, the most powerful force in the universe that seeks to be certified. At creation, God created a mature man and woman with a power of freedom to choose as guided with self. And the entire life practice of man was to be guided by conscious spiritual maturity that is

responsible and accountable. Unfortunately, in a state of freedom of choice humanity took a wrong direction and refused to be accountable for the failed responsibility.

The Genesis story of the fall points out origin of conflict that has resulted to the contemporary state of the entire world- Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed serpent. The emphasis on blame resulted in lasting family conflicts e.g., husband wife, siblings, clans, nations etc. Self-centered love was the primary factor that caused conflict in the world. It resulted to separation of man and woman from God at last totaled up to exaltation of self over others. When man lost relationship with God, human concern for self-overrode the original idea of God on maturity that is guided by spiritual consciousness, responsibility, and accountability. Therefore, the roots of conflict and violence started with individual self-centeredness. This selfish pattern expanded from family to the world, and it has led to lack of self-control, dishonesty, domestic violence, abuse of power, diverse and family break down, stealing, murder, racism etc. The fall distorted the original nature that was inclined towards love for God, fellow man, and nature. This has led into conflict between man vs man, man vs nature, and man vs God, etc. It has resulted in self-centered viewpoints that have twisted the understanding of relationships. It has created jealousy, envy, justification of resentments, lying and infidelity; people lie in order to avoid responsible accountability.

The conflicts that occur between friends and loved ones are the most difficult and costly to resolve. A conflict with a spouse, partner, boyfriend or girlfriend, parent, child, sibling, good friend, or a new friend will cost us much more emotionally in the long run if it goes unresolved, than those we have with random strangers(*Why We Fight: the Origins of Conflict* (universalclass.com)). According to this article, there are seven most prevalent roots of conflicts:

1. Two or more parties have differing or opposing agendas, goals, or desires. This is known as the "Opposite Agenda" conflict.

2. One party has something the other party wants or needs, but he or she will not comply, called "You Have Something I Need" conflict.

3. The personalities between two people create tension, labelled as the "Personality" conflict.

4. The significant change conflict based as a result of a change of something significant in life, or an ongoing relationship.

5. One person betrays the trust of another, called also as the "Betrayal" conflict.

6. One person creates conflict by saying or doing something thoughtless or irresponsible. This is known as the "Thoughtless/Irresponsible Behaviour" conflict; and

7. One person's needs in the relationship are not being met and the other party refuses to acknowledge this lack or do anything about it or the "Needs Not Met" conflict.

(Jeong,2008) supports these roots of conflicts. For Jeong, pursuing material interests, status, power, or privilege at the sacrifice of others is one of the clearest forms of substantive conflict.

All relationships experience conflict from time to time and admitting that there is a conflict that needs to be resolved is the reality of social life. The presence of conflict does not imply that the relationship is bad or should end but it is an indication that you have a healthy relationship as an opportunity to learn how to manage conflict. A conflict may help to fix relationships, may incite healthier relationships, etc.

3.2.2 Appropriate research design

Based on definitions provided by Leavy (2017) and the above description of key themes, the appropriate research design for this current study is qualitative design. The research approach to be used for this study is qualitative approach as the main focus of the investigation is on human beings. How do people understand church leadership and church conflict? What

are the perceptions do they have on the topic? This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore how evangelical church leadership contributes to or manages church conflict. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the focus of the study is to understand human perceptions, experiences, and meaning-making within a specific socio-religious context. As noted by Habib, Maryam, and Pathik (2014), qualitative research emphasizes the observation, interpretation, and description of people's spoken words, behaviours, and interactions in their natural settings. It is particularly useful for exploring complex social phenomena—such as leadership, conflict, and religious beliefs—that cannot be quantified or measured in purely objective terms.

The research aims to investigate the cultural, relational, and organizational dynamics that shape how leaders and church members perceive and respond to conflict. Therefore, the qualitative paradigm enables the researcher to interpret participants' views and behaviours through rich, descriptive accounts. Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault (2016) affirm that qualitative research generates data rooted in people lived experiences, allowing for deeper insights into how individuals assign meaning to events and roles in their social world.

Within the qualitative tradition, this study adopts an ethnographic approach. Ethnography is especially well-suited to this research because it involves studying the shared behaviours, language, and practices of a specific cultural group—in this case, members and leaders of the United Methodist Church (UMC) in Burundi—within their natural environment over time (Creswell, 2014). For researchers to use this method, they must engage in participant observation and field interviewing (Tracy, 2013). In the same line of ideas, Creswell (2014, p.43) defines ethnography as:

“a design of inquiry coming from anthropology and sociology in which the researcher studies the shared patterns of behaviours, language, and actions of an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time. Data collection often involves observations and interviews.”

Therefore, ethnography emphasizes immersion, contextual understanding, and the collection of data through participant observation and in-depth interviews. These are essential tools for exploring the nuanced and often implicit cultural dynamics that underpin church leadership and conflict processes.

Ethnography allows the researcher not only to gather what participants say but also to observe how they behave, interact, and interpret conflict within the real-world church setting. This is critical in a study like this, where leadership practices are embedded in longstanding cultural and theological traditions. Church conflict is not simply a rational disagreement; it often involves deeply held beliefs, historical grievances, and contested power dynamics—all of which can be best understood through prolonged engagement with the participants and their environment.

The selection of the UMC as the primary case study is based on both historical and practical considerations. The UMC is one of the oldest and most influential Protestant churches in Burundi, founded in 1937 under the name of the World Gospel church and integrated into the United Methodist Church in 1984. Its long institutional history and reported instances of leadership conflict offer a rich setting for ethnographic inquiry. Church members and clergy have been involved in disputes significant enough to attract legal and governmental intervention, further validating the site's relevance for the study of conflict.

Moreover, recent empirical studies in African church contexts support the use of ethnographic methods. Scholars such as Chitando (2014) and Baloyi (2014) argue that African church conflicts are deeply shaped by local cultures, spiritual beliefs, and leadership structures, which can only be thoroughly understood through immersive, context-sensitive research designs. Ethnography, therefore, is not only methodologically sound but also culturally appropriate for this study's setting.

In conclusion, the qualitative and ethnographic design provides the best fit for this research because it captures the subjective experiences, cultural patterns, and social complexities surrounding leadership and conflict in the Burundian church context. This approach enhances the study's credibility, depth, and relevance by grounding findings in participants lived realities.

3.3 Population and Sample of the Research Study

The UMC is among main churches in Burundi established in many provinces of Burundi. The statistics show that the UM church membership is more than three hundred thousand. Normally, the research population would be the total member of the UMC. However, not all members were concerned with this research. Only church members in leadership positions in one conference charge were targeted. Tracy (2013) noted that the research questions determine the type of population and people who can most appropriately provide data about the phenomena of interest. And the sample was drawn from one of the charge conferences of Bujumbura district. The general provisions of a charge conference are outlined in ¶246-248. This church structure encourages the participation of church members in the affairs of the church. It is under the direct leadership of the district superintendent.

All local church leaders are elected and the procedures of election of leaders and the leaders to be elected are regulated by ¶249. *Election of Leaders*. The following table shows the local church structure or the different leadership positions that a local church can have as described in the church's BOD.

Table 5*Local Church Structure***Charge Conference**

(Must be professing member, members of Church Council, retired ordained ministers and retired diaconal ministers, elders in extension ministry, elders on honourable location or deacons)

Church Conference

(All professing members of the church plus additional persons named in the charge conference)

elects committees

Nominations & Leadership Development
Committee on Pastor Parish Relations
Committee on Finance
Board of Trustees

elects officers

Recording secretary
Lay Leader
Lay member to Annual Conference
Chairperson of Council

Elects Church Council

not fewer than 11 - no maximum size (Chairperson of council, Lay Leader, Rep. Of PPRC, Rep. Of Finance, Rep. Of Trustees, Church Treasurer, Lay Member, UMM, UMW, UMY, Pastor and plus any the Charge Conference determines).

Since it was not possible to investigate the entire population due to limiting factors such as time, budget or costs, a sample of 30 participants in church leadership positions was selected from one charge conference in Bujumbura District. Though the population was selected randomly in order to give equal chances to all church leaders of being selected, the sample of the research was designed using non-probability sampling methods. A non-probability sample design was used, and, in this case, purposive sampling was employed. Where a group of people believed to be reliable for this study, the participants are chosen based on the rich information they have that will assist the researcher on the in-depth analysis related to the church leadership and its role in church conflict (Creswell, 2014). According to Tracy (2013), qualitative researchers engage in purposeful sampling, which means that they purposefully choose data that fit the parameters of the project's research questions, goals, and purposes.

Purposive sample was mostly used to both clergy and laity respondents. The participants were selected purposively to get their understanding and views on church leadership and its role in church conflicts. Though the level of education was not indicated on

the questionnaire forms, the sample of the research integrated that issue in designing it. This criterion was very important for selecting participants for this research. Most of the church leaders selected have at least a high school education level. This choice was made due to the complexity of the topic under study. Patton (2002, as cited by (Merriam, 2009)) argues that “the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information - rich cases for study in depth. Information - rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling.”

Another criterion that was considered was the number of years in a leadership position. Most of the participants have been in leadership positions for more than five years. This was motivated by the fact that participants who have been in leadership positions for many years have been exposed to various conflicts. Their understanding and exposure would be beneficial to the research.

In order to have a range of views, the sample considered the issue of gender and age of participants. At least 35% of the participants should be female and at least 30% be selected among youth. Young participants were included as they are also part of the church leadership but also, they are exposed to various kinds of conflicts. Young participants were made up of boys and girls. According to the UMC polity, all church members aged between fifteen and thirty-five years old are members of the youth movement, whether married or single.

Women participants were not also left out. Gender is a transversal issue that needs to be integrated in all aspects. Women are also affected by leadership and conflicts. As conflicts are part of the human living, women do face many conflictual issues in their families, at work, even at church. In some local churches, women are discriminated and not given a chance for instance to preach on Sunday worship service. Hence, getting their understanding on the role played by church leadership in situation of church conflicts was very important.

In order to have the views and understanding of participants in relation to leadership and conflict issues of this research, questionnaires, interviews, and focus group tools were used to collect data.

3.4 Materials of Research Tools

The researcher used structured interviews, and focused group discussion as data collection tools.

3.4.2 Interviews

Structured in-depth interview was used for the purpose of this study. Again, interviews were conducted in the mother tongue in order to understand how participants feel, think, and perceive church leadership and its role in church conflicts. Interview sessions helped the researcher to get a deep understanding of the respondents' perceptions, emotions, and social relationship regarding the subject under study. Interview is defined as “a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study” (DeMarrais (2004) as cited in Merriam, 2009).

3.4.2.1 Interview participants

Interviews were organized with all selected participants. Since structured interview was used, interview questions were sent before in order to give participants to prepare answers in advance. Note that explanations were explained to those who did not understand the interview questions. Each interview took thirty minutes, and all selected participants were interviewed within the allocated time. A thank-you note was addressed to each participant after each interview. Well-planned tasks were developed before starting this process.

3.4.2.2 Interviewing process

In order to yield good results for this process, the following tasks were performed. The first thing that was done was to seek permission to conduct an interview from the District Superintendent and permission was granted. The interview questions, theme, place, and time were communicated in advance to all the interviewees. A good environment was then created to make interviewees more comfortable. Tracy (2013) states that the first questions should build rapport, helping the interviewee feel comfortable, likeable, and knowledgeable. And building rapport should occur during the beginning of the interview. This is what was done in order to create a productive atmosphere.

Interviewees were also given a consent form, and explanations were given that the information collected will only be used for academic purposes only and that no gains (be financial or other) will result from this study. Interviewees were given explanations regarding their rights and that the information provided will highly be confidential (see appendix). This was done in order to anticipate resistance related to data collection. All participants (interview and questionnaire) were given a consent form to ensure that their rights are preserved. And since recording techniques were used, permission was also sought from interviewees before using it. Many people are not comfortable with being recorded for fear of many reasons.

3.4.3 Focus group discussions

This research tool was used for clergy, women, and youth participants. These discussions were done separately: clergy participants on one side and women and youth on the other side.

As Creswell (2014) noted that good interviewing is more than just asking good questions. According to Creswell, it requires creating a logistically feasible and comfortable interaction that will encourage an engaging, honest, and fun dialogue. Focus group interviews were then conducted while sharing breakfast with participants in order to foster dialogue.

Location, time, and themes to be discussed were shared one week before to facilitate the preparedness of participants. Travel costs were refunded to participants as participation in this research had no financial risks on interviewees.

Informed consent forms were shared and discussed before starting the focus group interviews in order to lift any participation barrier. But also, permission to use recording equipment was sought and given to make participants comfortable sharing their views and understanding on the key themes of the research. Kothari (2004, p.97) noted that structured interviews involve the use of a set of predetermined questions and of highly standardized techniques of recording. The focus group discussion lasted for two hours, and these interviews were organized as planned. Once the interview concluded, participants were thanked for their time given to this research.

For Creswell (2014), researchers record information from interviews by making handwritten notes, by audiotaping, or by videotaping. In this case, a voice recorder was used so that recordings could be transcribed for effective data analysis. Even though notes were taken during the interview, appropriate measures were taken to ensure that the interviews were recorded. This practice ensures that everything said is preserved for data analysis in order to make sense out of the data collected (Merriam, 2009).

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

Once data has been collected, the next step is to analyse in order to make sense out of it (Merriam, 2009). With data analysis, the researcher gives meaning to data collected. Therefore, qualitative data collected were then analysed in order to get meaningful information. This required the researcher to consolidate and interpret what participants have responded to either on the questionnaire or during interview. This is what Kothari (2004) calls data processing, which technically speaking, implies editing, coding, classification, and tabulation of collected data so that they are amenable to analysis.

Qualitative data collected from questionnaires and interviews was analysed using descriptive methods. Since collected data are in forms of words and recorded audios, the researcher had done the editing, codifying, classifying, and tabulate the data in order to facilitate the analysis. Similar themes were grouped for further interpretation in order to determine clear understanding of the information held explained by participants using qualitative methods. Audio recording, interview notes taken, and responses collected were all analysed to ensure that no data was left out.

3.6 Study Procedures and Ethical Assurances

Throughout the research process, ethical issues were considered. This study adhered to rigorous ethical standards throughout all stages of the research process, from problem formulation to data analysis. Ethical research practice is essential in studies involving human participants, especially when exploring sensitive topics such as church leadership and conflict. As Comstock (2013) notes, ethical research is not only a matter of technical rigor but also of emotional and moral responsibility.

Prior to commencing fieldwork, the study received formal ethical approval from the University Research Ethics Committee (See Appendix 3). This clearance confirmed that the study met all institutional requirements regarding the rights, welfare, and safety of participants.

As the researcher tries to identify the social phenomenon to investigate, moral standards involved in this research were considered. Participation in the study was voluntary and based on informed consent. Participants received a written consent form outlining the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Consent was obtained before interviews were conducted, and all participants had the opportunity to ask questions or decline participation without consequence. Therefore, participants were not forced into participating in this research study. Participants were

informed that the data collected were solely be used for academic purposes and that no reward is expected as a result of being a respondent to this study.

Care was taken for terms used because they have ethical considerations attached to them. For instance, the use of the term “research subject” tends to depersonalize the members of the sample and reduces them to a subservient role in the research process (Oliver, 2010). This term, if used, indicates the lack of respect for the church members to be selected as part of the sample and they are being reduced to elements of experimentation. In this research study, those terms were not used.

Justice was maintained in selecting participants. This principle of justice was applied in determining who to be selected, to be excluded, and who will benefit from this study. All participants were selected based on their leadership role or informed position within the church. People with mental disability were excluded as they were considered unable to give their personal consent. This was done so in order to avoid the manipulation of data.

When designing a sample, ethical issues considered included the data protection and confidentiality issues for the selected respondents. All participant identities were treated with strict confidentiality. Personal identifiers were removed from transcripts and data files, and pseudonyms were used during analysis and reporting. At no point were participants’ names or identifying information disclosed in any written or verbal dissemination of the research findings.

During the data collection stage, particular ethical attention was given to questions asked either on questionnaires or during interviews in order to avoid embarrassing participants. Efforts were made to avoid discomfort or psychological harm during interviews. Sensitive questions were framed carefully, and participants could decline to answer any question they found distressing. Additionally, interviews were conducted in safe and private environments chosen in consultation with participants.

Data collected—including audio recordings, interview transcripts, and field notes—were securely stored in encrypted, password-protected digital folders accessible only to the principal researcher. Hard copies of consent forms and notes were stored in a locked cabinet. In compliance with data protection guidelines, all data will be securely retained for a period of five years following the completion of the study and will then be permanently deleted or destroyed.

During the data analysis, the data provided by participants were not subject to any distortion as the outcomes could have affected not only the credibility of the findings but also, this would be considered as the violation of the participants' rights.

By implementing these ethical measures, the study ensured compliance with institutional, legal, and professional research standards, thereby protecting the rights and welfare of all participants and upholding the integrity of the research process.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, research methodology and research design have been discussed. A review of the key themes of this research study was explored. Qualitative research design was discussed and selected as the main research design for this study. Data collection instruments/tools were also covered. Data analysis was briefly discussed, and ethical issues were given due consideration.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The life of any organization encounters periods of peace and periods of crisis. Churches are not also spared. The United Methodist Church in Burundi went through a crisis for almost twelve years. This chaos created bitterness, anger, and divisions among families and church members. Two rival groups evolved then as a result: one group that remained in the connectional global church and another one which opted to be independent from the connectional global church.

The group that remained in the connectional global church was under the leadership of Bishop Daniel Wandabula, elected in 2006 in the Africa Central Conference, a church body that is entrusted of electing and consecrating bishops among their duties. Locally, this group was represented by the Rev Lazare Bankurunaze. The election of Bishop D. Wandabula was rejected by the other group, claiming that the election was conducted in violation of the UMC Book of Discipline. Paragraph of the BOD stipulates that bishops are elected among the first three nominees from the Annual conference. The elected bishop was the fourth on the list. However, delegates to the Central Conference have also the right to nominate other candidates. That is how Bishop D. Wandabula was nominated and elected.

The other group that was led by the Rev. Justin Nzoyisaba (who received the highest votes during the nomination process) refused therefore the election verdict of the Africa Central Conference: a leadership crisis was then launched. Different attempts (in Germany and Zimbabwe) were made to resolve this crisis without success. This group decided to separate itself from the connectional global church under the leadership of the Rev. Justin Nzoyisaba, who decided to be consecrated as bishop in 2009 in violation of the UMC Book of Discipline. Almost 90% of the local churches supported this move. The main reason was that they felt betrayed because they were expecting the election to be in accordance to the nomination votes.

But also, the elected bishop was of a foreign nationality replacing a Burundian bishop. The local churches saw this move as being dispossessed and opted to rebel against this new church leadership. Some local churches were under the leadership of the elected bishop according to the UMC regulations.

The initial stage of this conflict was characterized by violence, disagreements, and even disruption of church services. Some church members had to change their local churches and joined other local churches that they feel comfortable with. Nevertheless, all these groups claimed to be United Methodist church. Despite being independent from the global methodist church, no new denomination was formed as a result of this disagreement. Even the so-called independent group never gave up the United Methodist church logo such as the flame and the cross. A lawsuit was then initiated by the other group that remained connected to the global church. According to this group, it was unconceivable for the independent group to use the UMC logo and frame because it was no longer connected to the global church. In fact, the connectional global church requires the annual conference to respect the prescripts of the global church as defined in the BOD. And in this case, the annual conference had the obligation to accept the leadership of the elected bishop. The President of the Council of Bishops wrote even to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi asking him to intervene so that the independent group stopped using the UMC logo and frame. However, since the case was already in the hands of the Judiciary Courts, the president office never responded. After five years, the court ruled in favour of the independent group.

A question has then to be asked: what was the role of church leaders in that church conflict? What went wrong? Why did the church conflict last for almost twelve years? The change of church leadership in 2017 brought a new era to this church conflict. Ways were initiated locally to end the church conflicts and with the support of the global church, the two

groups were reunited once again in 2018 and an annual conference session was held to celebrate that big event (*United Methodists celebrate unity in Burundi* (umnews.org)).

The purpose of this research is to analyse the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow us to detect other possible sources or roots of church conflicts. In order to carry out this research, four objectives have been formulated, and the research aims at answering them. The four main research objectives to achieve:

1. To assess if the United Methodist congregation value leadership training.
2. To evaluate what kind of training United Methodist church leaders, have.
3. To identify the role of United Methodist church leaders in church conflicts.
4. To identify the possible roots of church crises.
5. To recommend a conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist church in Burundi.

And from these research objectives, the following research questions were formulated from the above purpose statement:

- How do United Methodist church members view the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders?
- What kind of training have the United Methodist church leaders received?
- How do United Methodist church leaders get involved in conflicts?
- What are the possible roots of church crises?

In order to carry out this research, a sample of 30 participants was selected in one of the charge conferences of Burundi annual conference in Bujumbura district. Purposive sampling method was used. Participants were chosen based on the rich information they have that will assist the researcher on the in-depth analysis related to the church leadership and its role in church conflict (Creswell, 2014). In the same line, Tracy (2013) is of the view that

qualitative researchers engage in purposeful sampling, which means that they purposefully choose data that fit the parameters of the project's research questions, goals, and purposes. Purposive sample was mostly used to both clergy and laity respondents. The participants were selected purposively to get their understanding and views on church leadership and its role in church conflicts. Therefore, participants in leadership positions were targeted with the understanding that they have been exposed to church conflicts during their leadership tenure. In a charge conference, there are various church leadership positions. Some are occupied by elders or ordained members and others are reserved for lay members.

All church leaders were considered as the total number of the population, and the research sample was selected from that population. Male and female participants were selected for the inclusiveness of the research. Despite the fact that the research is a qualitative one, a mixed research methodology has been used in data analysis.

The following chapter deals therefore with data analysis, presentation, and interpretation. But before that stage, two sections on data trustworthiness and data reliability and validity must be presented.

4.2 Trustworthiness of Data

What is the meaning of trustworthiness of data? In other words, is data collected trustworthy? This section explains what this trustworthiness is all about with reference to how scholars define trustworthiness of data. It also gives details on how this has been achieved throughout the research process.

Trustworthiness of data is defined as its credibility according to Merriam (2009). The trustworthiness of the research results depends on the degree of seriousness and care in carrying out the study. Therefore, and for Merriam (2009, p.234), ensuring the trustworthiness and

credibility of a study involves the researcher being trustworthy himself or herself in conducting the research in the most ethical manner possible.

According to Leavy (2017), it is crucial to consider the extent to which readers can trust the research process and findings. In other words, the trustworthiness of data addresses the following key questions: Do readers have confidence in the data and its interpretation? What steps has the researcher taken to establish credibility? Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba (1989), as cited by Leavy (2017), further elaborate on the concept of data trustworthiness as follows:

“The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: how can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, what would be persuasive on this issue?”

According to Tracy (2013, p.235), the credibility or trustworthiness of a report exists if readers feel confident in using its data and findings to act and make decisions and, qualitative credibility or trustworthiness is achieved firstly through thick description. This requires the researcher to go deeper in detail to have a clear understanding of the importance of what is not said by participants. And this was achieved during in-depth interviews. Active listening was applied to build good rapport with participants, and the researcher was able to get a clear understanding of what participants thought of church leadership and church conflict. Secondly, trustworthiness is achieved through triangulation or crystallization. This is simply gathering multiple types of data seen through multiple lenses. In addition to secondary data, the researcher collected data through observation. A church conflict is not a hidden event. It is seen or faced by church members and even the community. In addition to that, interviews were also conducted to get participants' understanding. Therefore, data gathering was done through different sources. Thirdly, trustworthiness is achieved through multivocality and partiality. This is to include various voices. In other words, the analysis of a social action must consider

the various points of views of participants, and stress divergent or disagreeable standpoints. This recognizes that subjectivities of the researcher and participants vary depending on age, gender, education, etc. Participants to this study included men and female, young and adults, clergy, and lay members. This enabled the researcher to get different points of view depending on the variety of participants. And lastly, trustworthiness is achieved through engaging in member reflections with participants. Participants are involved in data analysis and findings. It is a process of interacting with participants about the study's findings, providing opportunities for questions, critique, feedback, affirmation and even collaboration.

According to Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault (2016), scholars such as Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Manning (1997) proposed formal frameworks for assessing the authenticity and trustworthiness of qualitative studies. However, these frameworks have been challenged by scholars like Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), who argue that establishing universally accepted criteria for evaluating qualitative research is difficult. Leavy (2017, p.155) reinforces this perspective, stating that there are no standardized approaches to qualitative research since each project is unique. As a result, the credibility of a qualitative study must ultimately be assessed by each individual reader. Based on the above literature, the following strategies have been used to ensure the trustworthiness of data or credibility of data throughout the research process. As Merriam pointed out, the research has to be conducted in an ethical manner. Ethical issues were considered at each stage of the research. Since the study investigates a social phenomenon in which human beings play a major role, the researcher had to ensure that moral values or ethical issues are taken care of.

During the identification stage of the research problem, there were no difficult ethical issues involved that required mitigation strategies. It is true that church conflict and the role of church leaders in church conflict are sensitive issues, but the topic itself does not raise serious

ethical issues. Having said that, the other stages of the research process were carefully analyzed in order to deal properly with all ethical issues involved.

Ethnographic method was adopted as the appropriate research design for this qualitative study and for researchers to use this method, they must engage in participant observation and field interviewing (Tracy, 2013). In the same line of ideas, Creswell (2014, p.43) defines ethnography as:

“a design of inquiry coming from anthropology and sociology in which the researcher studies the shared patterns of behaviours, language, and actions of an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time. Data collection often involves observations and interviews.”

According to (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods, 2016), the researcher is to inform the readers of the methodology used in order to enhance the credibility of data. The ethnographic method requires therefore participant observation, and in-depth interview. Church conflicts are not new issues; it is being observed in many evangelical and mainline churches in Burundi. Church members have been involved in church conflicts and the local government entities had to intervene in order to resolve them. Church-related legal cases are being filed and the example of the UMC speaks for itself. Those are facts, data collected through observation. Furthermore, the researcher carried out in-depth interviews to selected participants in order to understand the cultural beliefs regarding church, leadership, conflict, and conflict resolution. In addition to that, a review of existing literature has been conducted to back up data analysis and findings. The collected and analysed data was primarily qualitative. It comprised interview transcripts, audio recordings, and human experiences or views about the role of church leaders in managing conflicts (Saldana & Leavy, 2011). Hence the necessity of considering ethical issues throughout the process of data collection and data analysis (Piccolo & Thomas, 2009).

Ethical issues were also considered at the sampling stage. Prior clearance was received from the University Research Ethics Committee. Before the selection of sample, participants had the right to all the necessary information related to this research to enable participants to take the appropriate decision. Participants joined the study willingly after being fully informed. They received a detailed consent form outlining the study's aims, procedures, possible risks and benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Interviews proceeded only after obtaining signed consent, and participants were free to ask questions or decline participation. The informed consent tool was used to help participants to appreciate the researcher's commitment to ethical issues. In addition to that, the consent form gave participants the possibility to withdraw from the research process at any time and with no penalty or costs involved (American Psychological Association, 2002).

Justice in selecting or excluding participants was a key ingredient. The research sample included only participants who were able to give their personal consent in order to avoid the manipulation of data. Only church leaders participated in this study, and they were purposively selected in order to richly contribute to the topic of the study. Other criteria considered in selecting those participants were their level of education and the number of years in leadership position. The researcher wanted to get the benefit of their rich experience in church leadership and church conflict resolution.

During the data collection stage, issues related to data protection and confidentiality of participants were discussed. Any question that could lead to the disclosure of participants' identity was avoided. Participants were coded anonymously in order to keep their personal identities confidential. No personal details were disclosed during any phase of the research communication. In-depth interviews were recorded with prior consent of participants. Data was collected for academic purposes, and this information was shared with interviewees. And as per (Piccolo & Thomas, 2009), participants were ensured that the interviews given will have

no dangerous consequences for the lives. Participants were treated respectfully throughout the study. Interviews and questionnaires avoided language suggesting hierarchy or objectification—avoiding terms like “subjects” (Oliver, 2010)—and emphasized participant autonomy and individuality.

During the data analysis, ethical issues were also considered. It is a crucial stage of research because collected data needs to be analysed and presented into meaningfully information. And this can only be achieved if collected data are free from any distortion. Therefore, and in order to preserve the credibility of the finding, collected data was not distorted. And the interviews were accurately transcribed without omissions or fraudulent interpretations. Participants were offered an opportunity to review the draft of the analysis and were satisfied that their views were reported as given.

In concluding this section, there is no relationship between the researcher and the participants that would influence their views. Though they both (researcher and participants) belong to the same church denomination, those who agreed to participate in this research acted with their free will and each one of them responded as he/she felt. For instance, some questions were not answered by all participants and that was their right to do so. Though the researcher is also a church leader, participants did not consider that as a barrier. They openly shared their views on church leadership and its role in church conflict. Instead, the researcher is considered as a trustworthy person because of his contribution in resolving the church conflict.

4.3 Reliability and validity of data

Reliability and validity of data are very important issues for the findings of research, be quantitative or qualitative. According to Merriam (2009, p.220), reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated. In other words, if the study is repeated, will it yield the same results? In the words of Leavy (2017), reliability is also known as or is described as the consistency of the results. In the same line of ideas, reliability according to Tracy (2013, p.228) refers to the stability and consistency of a researcher, research tool, or method over time. According to Tracy, reliable studies are those that can be replicated in exactly the same way, no matter who is conducting the study. For Creswell (2014, p.251), qualitative reliability indicates that a particular approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects.

However, scholars ((Leavy, 2017; Merriam, 2009; Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016; Tracy, 2013) find this principle very difficult for qualitative research, in which researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Porta & Michael, 2008; Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). Merriam (2009) argues that because there are various interpretations of events, there is no standard way to repeatedly measure and establish reliability in the traditional sense. For Tracy (2013), traditional conceptions of reliability have little application to qualitative research, because most qualitative studies are composed of a single analysis, made at a given contextual moment in time. According to Tracy, achieving consistent results in qualitative research is challenging because socially constructed understandings are always evolving and inherently partial. Even if a study were repeated by the same researcher, in the same manner, with the same participants and context, the context and participants would have inevitably changed over time due to factors such as aging, learning, or life changes. Human beings go

through changes, and these changes affect their thinking, appreciation, and even meaning they may assign to a previous social phenomenon. Experiences may shape our way of viewing the world and as a result, attach a different meaning to a previously encountered situation.

Despite the challenges, scholars believe that reliability can still be achieved in qualitative research. Merriam (2009, p.222) suggests that just as quantitative researchers refine instruments and apply statistical techniques to ensure reliability, the researcher, as the "human instrument," can enhance reliability through training and practice. Additionally, the reliability of documents and personal accounts can be evaluated using various analytical techniques and triangulation methods. For Tracy (2013), reliability in qualitative research should focus on the research instrument and according to her, a reliable instrument always works the same way. This idea was also supported by (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016) who focus more on the reliability of the research instruments. This means that the same results are expected by using the other researchers who use the same questionnaire on the same sample soon after and if the conditions of the situation have not changed. This is what Fallon (2016) as cited by Leavy (2017, p.115) calls "Test-retest" reliability, which involves testing the measure twice with the same subjects to see if the results are consistent. However, if the conditions of the situation change, then it would be impossible to achieve this reliability. For Creswell (2014), reliability refers to whether scores to items on an instrument are internally consistent (i.e., are the item responses consistent across constructs?), stable over time (test-retest correlations), and whether there was consistency in test administration and scoring. This is more feasible for quantitative research than for qualitative research but again, if the conditions have not been changed.

Merriam (2009) asserts that although replicating a qualitative study may not produce identical results, this does not undermine the validity of the findings from any particular study. The author explains that multiple interpretations of the same data are possible. For qualitative

research, the key concern is whether the results align with the data collected. Therefore, it is also crucial to consider the validity of the data instruments used.

For Leavy (2017, p.113), validity refers to the extent to which a measure is actually tapping what we think it is tapping. Moving on to the same line of ideas, (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016) note that qualitative researchers emphasize the meaningfulness of their studies, known as validity. According to Creswell & Miller (2000) as cited by (Creswell, 2014), validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account. The findings were a result of the analysis of the collected data after the researcher had edited, coded, classified, and tabulated the data to facilitate data analysis. Similar themes were grouped for further interpretation and got clear meaning as constructed by participants using qualitative methods. From the standpoint of the researcher and the participant, the accuracy of the findings is covered as the analysis was conducted in an ethical manner: data was analyzed as given by participants without any distortion or manipulation.

Validity has been divided into two main types: internal validity and external validity (Creswell, 2014; Leavy, 2017; Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam, internal validity deals with the question of how research findings match reality. In other words, internal validity answers the following question: “do the findings capture what is really there”? And the use of triangulation and the audit trail are some of the methods that can be used as possible strategies for obtaining the validity of data. External validity, known also as generalizability (Creswell, 2014) is concerned with applying results to new settings, people, or samples. In other words, is it possible to apply the findings of one study to other situations? For Leavy (2017, p.114), this cannot be achieved if the setting or the research subjects have highly unique characteristics. Hence, some scholars such Merriam (2009) are of the view that the idea of generalizing or

transferring to other situations (known as external validity) the findings of a qualitative study remain a debatable issue.

Regardless of the type of research, careful data collection, data analysis, data interpretation and findings presentation in addition to careful attention to a study's conceptualization are fundamental factors to consider if validity and reliability are to be achieved. According to Richards (2005), as cited by Merriam (2009, p.225), the validity of good qualitative research is largely derived from the researcher's ability to clearly demonstrate how he/she arrived at his/her conclusions and how she/he built confidence that the findings are the most accurate possible. Merriam (2009, p.209) further emphasizes that ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research requires conducting the investigation in an ethical manner.

In the last section, ethical issues were discussed in order to demonstrate the trustworthiness of data. The same explanation is also applicable to reliability and validity of data section. In addition to those ethical issues covered, the following strategies have been also used in order to ensure the reliability and validity of data collection instruments:

- Double checked the transcripts to detect any mistakes that may be incurred during transcription. In order to carry out this task, the researcher had to play many times the recorded audios in order to ensure that there are no mistakes or data left out during the transcription.
- Codes and themes have been constantly checked and maintained. Since collected data were in word forms, the researcher had to edit, codify, classify, and group similar themes in order to facilitate data analysis.
- The entire project has been reviewed by the supervisor assigned to the researcher. Each stage of the research has been constantly reviewed by the supervisor and comments received were taken into consideration and integrated into the study. The work of the

supervisor is what is known as audit trail. Just as an auditor authenticates the accounts of a business, independent readers can authenticate the findings of a study by following the trail of the researcher (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009);

- What about the researcher's position in terms of managing the researcher's bias? This issue has also been dealt with. The fact that the researcher is also member and a leader in the church under study, care has been taken to analyze strictly data as collected from participants but also personal background, thinking, experiences, and perceptions throughout the research process enabled to shape the researcher's interpretation of findings. The researcher has been in church leadership for fifteen years. Nevertheless, the researcher conducted a member checks or validation from five participants among those who were interviewed for them to validate the preliminary data analysis. This helped the researcher to rule out any misunderstanding or misinterpretation related to researcher's bias.

According to Merriam (2009), if the findings of a study are consistent with the data presented, the study can be considered dependable or reliable. This is to be demonstrated in the following sections of this chapter.

4.4 Data presentation

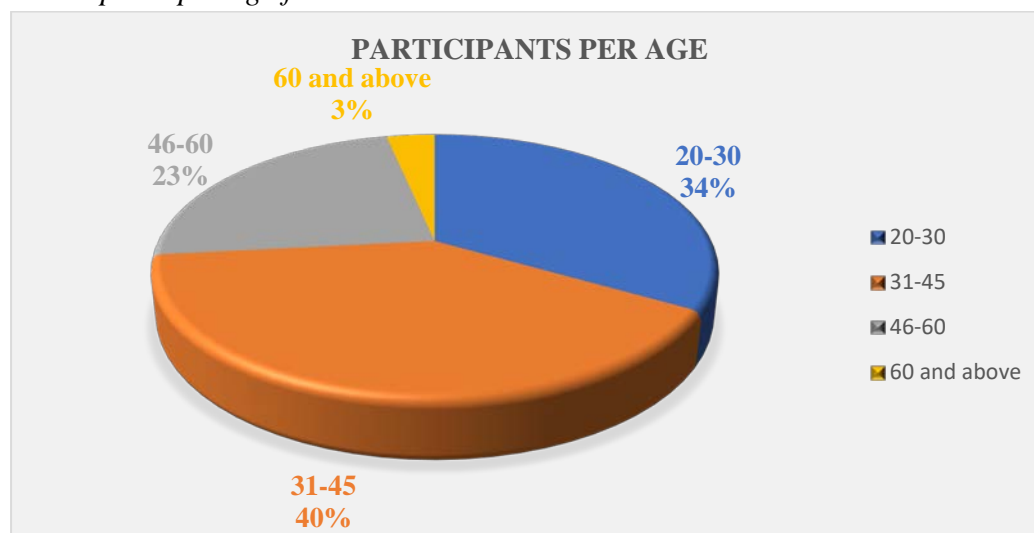
The following section gives an overview of results. Before discussing these results, it is important to present details on the demographic information of participants based on age and gender. In addition to that, each participant indicated whether she(he) is an ordained pastor or a lay member.

4.4.1 Age characteristics of participants

The age of participants was classified into four groups as it is shown in the table below:

Figure 6

Participants per age features



The analysis of participants indicated that 74% are between 20 and 45 years old. Only 26% of participants were above 45 years old. Burundi has a young population, and this is reflected in the different social entities, including church organizations. In terms of number of participants per age category, the demographic data is as follows:

Table 6

Number of participants per age

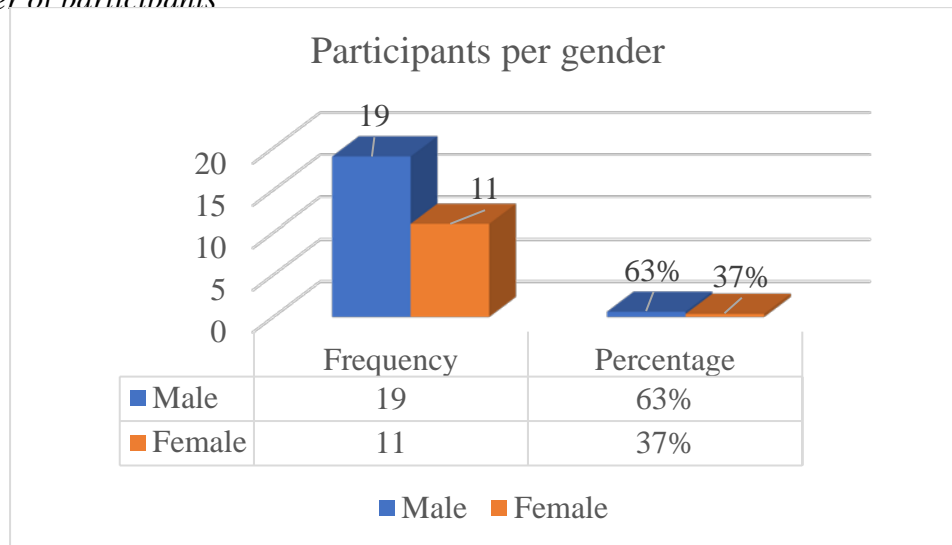
Age	Number of participants	Percentage
20-30	10	34%
31-45	12	40%
46-60	7	23%
60 and above	1	3%
TOTAL	30	100%

4.4.2 Gender characteristics of participants

Considering the gender of participants, the research used both male and female to participate in this study. In overall, 37% which represent 11 participants were female, and 63% representing 19 participants were male as indicated in Table 3 below.

Figure 7

Gender of participants



4.4.3 Characteristics of participants based on membership

Participants to this research were members of clergy and laity, representing respectively 27% which represent 8 participants and 73% representing 22 participants as in the table 4:

Figure 8

Participants based on membership characteristics



4.4.4 Raw data collected per research question

For each research question, data are first presented as collected (raw data) from participants before proceeding to the discussion and interpretation of collected data. The following table gives a summary of responses given by participants on each research question:

RQ	Sub questions	Responses from participants	Major themes
1. How do United Methodist church members view the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders?	1. What do you understand by church leadership training?	Capacity building(x3), learning new ways or new approaches to do things to be able to cope with the changes(x2) , equip them with necessary skills for the church and for the church leader herself(himself), help leaders to fulfill their duties by equipping leaders with new skills/knowledge that they don't have, it is of great value because it enables leaders to have what to teach others, church leadership trainings help leaders to be effective(x2), it is empowering leaders on how to deliver biblical teachings, it is equipping leaders with leadership teachings(x2), to increase the level of understanding/knowledge, be equipped with skills and knowledge in order to be a good servant, be equipped with theological knowledge for the growth of the church, leaders get knowledge of how to lead properly the congregation, teaching related to leadership calling, giving additional skills(to existing ones) so that they can handle properly their tasks, equip leaders with various skills based on their education level in order to help them to fulfill their roles(x2), it is to train trainers: once trained, church leaders are also required to train others(x2), to be trained in all the various areas that the church covers: evangelism, church movement leadership, etc.	Capacity building, learning new skills. Equip leaders with skills, empowering leaders,
	2. Do you see any importance of being trained in leadership? If yes, why? If no, why?	All participants confirmed the importance of leadership training. Reasons given: When church leaders are trained, they improve their leadership abilities and lead well those under their leadership in a similar way as they were taught, a leader who has been trained do things in the right way, church leadership training makes leaders confident of what he/she is doing, it increases the trust and respect of congregation towards its leader, it helps leaders to improve their leadership skills, a person gives what she/he has: good leaders show the way and the vision to others and this requires them to be well trained, capacity building enables leaders to increase their understanding and skills, and to perform well their tasks in an effective and efficient manner(x3), to cope with new issues but also to be able to lead changes in church membership, church leadership training enables leaders to cope with difficulties, trained church leader	Improvement of leadership abilities, confidence, trust, effectiveness, cope with changes, increased performance,

		understands how to perform his/her assignments(x3), it equips leaders on how to properly lead the congregation, it equips church leaders with spiritual and physical church growth strategies, church leadership training enables leaders to adopt new leadership ways and styles or brings changes in the leader's leadership philosophy, leadership training is necessary for every church leader, they are being taught various leadership styles, it brings clarity on the duties of a leader, trained leaders do provide sound theological teachings(however, heresies have been also been noticed within well trained church leaders: give example of UMC teaching heresies), it helps to shape the attitudes of church leaders(how she/he behaves in front of the congregation), it shapes the vision of leaders for the congregation, church leaders get what to teach the congregation(x2), they are equipped with skills and knowledge on how to resolve conflicts and they become leaders who understand their roles and cope with contemporary issues, it helps leaders to be confident, upgrading the knowledge and skills, some church leaders have no education background hence the necessity of leadership training sessions, it helps church leaders to deal with spiritual and physical issues that the congregation is facing(x2), it is a way of reminding them the existing skills and equip them with new skills, it keeps church leaders with up to date knowledge and skills.	
	3. What are the consequences of a church leader not being trained?	Bad or poor leadership because of lack of training(x5), lack of knowledge and skills in what they do(x4), lack of spiritual and economic development(growth) in the church(x6), the church leader feels uncomfortable or inferior to others, ignorance(x3), there is no change brought in(x2), lack of self-confidence(x2), be as source of or can promote conflict within the church(x2), leaders are not up to date(x6) and they hold on obsolete teachings(x2), they poorly perform their duties(x4), they don't develop themselves and develop others(x3), lack of innovation and creativity(x2), difficult for them to accept critics or divergent ideas from others(x2), untrained church leader does not know what to do(x3), very difficult to make good decision especially in situation of crisis(x3), disorder in doing things, no progress be made, false teachings(x2).	Poor leadership, poor performance, ignorance, lack of skills and knowledge,
2. What kind of training have the United Methodist church leaders received?	1. What types of training have you so far received?	Leadership(x4), project management(x3), andragogy, conflict resolution(x5), church administration, the role of laity in the church, biblical preaching(x2), strategic savings groups, medical prevention and health care, bible studies(x5), hotel management, theological studies, HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention, corona virus prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention(x2), trauma healing(x2), youth ministry(x2), The book of Revelation, Christian foundations(x2), marriage and family(x2), servant leadership(x2), peace building, community development(x2), evangelism mission, food security and health care, leading others, administration, human rights, the character of a leader, leadership as a calling.	
	2. Which other training would	Compassion ministry management, family conflict resolution, difference between the order of elders and the order of deacons, leadership(x5), communication skills(x2), church administration(x2), Christian ethics,	

	you like to receive?	conflict resolution(x4), community development(x2), Men ministry, bible studies(x2), theological studies, church history(x2), church growth, church doctrine(x2), project management, peace building, leadership toolbox, the character of a leader, avoiding burnout, resource mobilization, trauma healing, family health, information technology.	
3. How do United Methodist church leaders get involved in conflicts?	1. What do you understand by conflict?	Misunderstanding/disagreement between two people or two groups of people(x4), disagreement over a given objective or common vision(x2), disagreement between a leader and those under his/her leadership, anything between two people or more that leads to disagreement(x6), fighting, killings, separation, or disorder(x5), any disagreement between two people or more over an issue(x2) and that disagreement brings in a mediator, disagreement or anything that creates hatred among team members and leads to destruction, different views on the same issue leading to disagreement(x3), fighting, disagreement between two people, when people do not have the same understanding of an issue, any bad thing that leads to disagreement with others, misunderstanding of leadership leads to conflicts, lack of common understanding of someone's idea or view,	Disagreement, misunderstanding, fighting,
	2. Do you think that church leaders should get involved in managing conflicts? If yes, why and how?	All participants agree that church leaders should be involved in managing conflicts. Why? A church leader should open his ears, be receptive, advises the congregation but also, he/she should be aware of the issues or problems that the congregation is going through and take time to deal with those issues; churches are not spared from conflict(x3), conflict is related to humans therefore it is common to see things differently(x2), church leaders should be mediators, in order to achieve the church objectives since where there is conflict, it is difficult to achieve one's plans or church development or growth can only happen in a conflict free environment(x2), in fact, church leaders are to act as judges of the old testament, to foster church unity, church leaders should be involved in conflict resolution if it concerns them. In order words, they should not get involved in others' businesses. How? church leaders should refer to the word of God in resolving conflict, through prayer, listening to the conflictual parties(x4). Church leaders should be trustworthy and neutral in resolving the conflict. Investigating the sources of the conflict is key determinant of how to manage the conflict. Church leaders should aim at reconciling the parties in conflict(x2), parties in conflict should seek judiciary assistance in case it is beyond church leaders' capacity.	
	3. Have you been involved in conflict resolution? If yes, what style of conflict	Twenty-seven participants have been involved in conflict resolution. And they described the different steps taken to manage the conflict: listen separately each party involved in the conflict(x9), inquiry or investigate the origin of the conflict(x6), have a meeting with both parties involved in the conflict (known also as adjudication) [x10], encourage them to find themselves the appropriate solution to their conflicts(x3), reconciliation(x12), advising the parties in conflict(x2), take decision based on the information collected from both parties, promote dialogue between conflictual parties, the conflict management style depends on the nature of the conflict. The point made here is very fundamental to conflict management or resolution.	

	management did you use?	Another participant addressed the issue of intrapersonal conflict. The participant organized at her workplace a workshop on trauma healing and stress management to enable employees to realize their inner conflict and be able to resolve themselves their intrapersonal conflict.	
	4. What could be a possible way of resolving a church conflict?	Listening to the parties involved(x7), expose the conflict, use the word of God(x5), put in place a committee in charge of conflict resolution (a hearing committee) (x2), investigate the source of the conflict(x4), mediation style should be encouraged(x8), reconciliation(x8), promote Christian ethics teachings (x3), be neutral(x3), be supportive to the loser, prayer(x7), list the mistakes of each party(x2), justice to the victim(x2), organize church meetings and let the congregation discuss openly the issues in order it find together the appropriate ways of resolving the issues, it is very important to analyze the history of the congregation to understand the background of the conflict, organizing meetings and workshops, good governance, and counselling programs should be promoted; be slow to anger and take time to find the appropriate solution for that conflict.	
4. What are the possible roots of church crises?	1. Can you give the possible causes of the church crisis?	Fighting over leadership position(x12); delay, absenteeism in choir or department meetings; misuse of finance resources (x12), violation of the BOD regulations(x7), misunderstanding between leaders or co-partners(x4), jealousies(x3), bad governance in finances management, misappropriation of church properties(x2), unfaithfulness(x2), selfish ambition(x4), conceit, pride, power/honor(x5), nepotism, favouritism, not knowing one's calling(x2), tribalism(x2), despising others(x3), misunderstanding of church ministry(x2), division among church members and church leaders(x4), ignoring the importance of the Holy Spirit as church leaders, lack of knowledge, respect of the church leadership.	
	2. According to you, what is the main root of the church crisis?	Money(x8), self-interest or selfish ambition(x4), violation of the church regulations(x2), fighting over leadership positions(x9), bad or poor leadership(x3), division among church leaders(x3).	
	3. Is it possible for a church leader to be a source of conflict? If yes, how can you address that?	All participants agree that church leaders can be a source of conflict. How to address that? Advise him/her and if he/she refuses to cooperate, he/she can be removed(x3). Alternatively, he can resign(x2). The church leader should be humble and accept to be advised(x11). The conflict be resolved according to the church regulations, prayer(x2), holding meetings, involve a mediator(x4), communication to all concerned with the conflict or promote dialogue (x3), change his/her appointment either in the local church or in other ministries, capacity building for the church leader(x2), be suspended in that leadership position (x2).	

4.5 Discussion and Interpretation

Data collected was based on research questions and a detailed analysis of data collected is presented in the following sections. Each research question is analysed separately to facilitate the understanding of participants on the topic under study.

4.5.1. Church members' views on the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders

In order to collect the views of participants, this question was divided into three sub-questions as follows:

4.5.1.1 Participants' views on church leadership trainings

Most respondents understood church leadership training as capacity building. According to participants, leaders learn new ways or new approaches of doing things that enable them to cope with the changing environment through church leadership training. Training enables church leaders to fulfil their duties in an effective and efficient manner. Key themes that participants mentioned are the following: capacity building, learning new skills and new ways of doing things, getting new knowledge, equipping church leaders with new skills. Participant A made the following statement: *"I understand training as capacity building or improve the skills in their respective tasks"*. For this participant, acquiring new skills in order to be effective and efficient in his/her daily tasks. The performance of a church leader may be jeopardized if new skills are not acquired. Hence there is a necessity of training church leaders.

According to (Grensing-Pophal, 2010), employee development involves anything that prepares employees to do their jobs better. This includes improving their skill levels and encouraging them to work toward common and mutually agreed-upon objectives. As some participants responded, church leadership training is of great value because it empowers church

leaders on how to deliver biblical teachings and on how to lead properly the congregation in an effective way. Church leaders have a role to play if church ministry must attain its objectives. As (Armstrong, 2006) puts it, the human capital of an organization consists of the people who work there and on whom the success of the business and the long-term survival of the organization depends. In the same line of ideas, church leaders do therefore constitute an important resource for the development of the church institution. It is highly recommended to invest in skills, knowledge, and abilities of people in order to achieve competitive advantage. (Xhemajli, Vokshi, & Neziraj, 2022). Some participants were of the view that church leaders need to be trained for the church to grow. Growth does constitute the long-term survival of the church. If the church does not grow, it dies. Growth requires new skills, and these are acquired through training. An introduction of a new church program for instance may necessitate either hiring new skilled personnel or training existing personnel in those new skills before launching the program.

Nevertheless, the church does not operate in a vacuum environment. Considering the rapidly changing environment in which the church operates today, its long-term sustainability of the church requires church leaders to acquire new skills in order to face those changes. And some participants raised this issue: church leaders need to be trained in order to cope with the changing environment. After analysing the nature and needs of our changing world, (Nitze, 1993) realized that the years ahead were likely to be filled with numerous, complex challenges to the global community, problems. Nitze suggested therefore that leaders must be trained for that changing world whose solution would require an extraordinary degree of creativity, technical skill, and appreciation for the interrelationship of national conditions, as well as the sophisticated leadership necessary to harness these resources in effective ways. The COVID-19 pandemic is a speaking example that forced many churches to close around the globe. The church activities were no longer done as usual. The old ways of physical or in-person meetings

were replaced by online meetings. This required many churches to turn to virtual or online worship services. Many church leaders were forced to learn how to cope with this new development and see ways of responding to the needs of the congregants by offering online worship service. Some were not familiar with the use of digital tools. They had to learn how to record videos either on their smart phones or other digital equipment, to use social networks such as Facebook, YouTube and other social media, and how to do livestream sermons and other worship services to reach out to their church members in their confined homes. All these new technologies needed to be mastered by the users so that they would become user-friendly: in the face of this tremendous change, training was inevitable.

In the same line of ideas, (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) write that the twenty-first century requires conscious and competent leaders to tackle effectively the sub- and co-cultures within their territories. Church leaders need to be aware of the changes happening in the community, society, and even changes happening at international level. Too many changes are happening and at a high speed, hence one participant responded that church leadership training should be organized periodically so that church leaders are updated on the new developments. A point that Armstrong (2010, p.364) supported and according to him, there is need for continuous learning. According to Reynolds et al (2002) (as cited by Armstrong (2006, p.135), learning is not to be equated to training. These two terms are different. 'Learning is the process by which a person constructs new knowledge, skills and capabilities, whereas training is one of several responses an organization can undertake to promote learning'. Nevertheless, church leaders are continuously learning due to the changing environment in which the church operates. Tomlinson (2004, p.48) notes that learning to learn is the most fundamental learning. Learning never ends. It is a continuous activity. And learning to learn is an appeal to open our hearts and minds for learning. Stopping learning is synonymous with under development. For the individual, learning is the key to meeting the demands of change, for developing their

potential. Tomlinson considers that learning to learn should be included in all personal development. Personal development can only happen when we accept to learn, to be formed and transformed by when we acquire new skills, knowledge. Through Christian formation for instance, church leaders are shaped in spirit and characters. Therefore, pastoral leadership is inherently educational in nature. Despite the mandatory requirements for church leaders such as pastors to have a theological qualification for ministry preparation, (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) noted that church leaders are also involved in practical learning because what happens in real congregational life cannot be developed in formal classroom settings alone. As Avolio (2004, p.17) noted, life is the training program in which leadership development is rooted. That is why (Farr & Kotan, 2016) are of the views that effective pastors have a practice and philosophy of continuous learning and growth from all directions—peers, mentors, and laity. This principle is to be also applied to all church leaders. Even though pastors or priests are ordained to lead the congregation and require specific pastoral education and training, all Christians, by virtue of their baptism, are called by God to witness, to teach, to heal, and to proclaim (Willimon, 2002). It is the work of all believers to accomplish the great commandment as laid out in Matthew 28:19-20 “Go, then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age” (NIV). Through these verses, there are two important points raised by Jesus Christ. The first point is to reach out people and make them the disciples of Jesus. The second point is to teach them to obey the commandments of God. To do this, someone must be first a disciple of Jesus and secondly, he/she has been taught the commandments so that she/he can teach others. In that perspective, pastors or priests need the support of church members to lead different departments or movements such as youth movement ministry, etc. Therefore, these church leaders need also to be trained so that they can lead properly the assigned teams. And

this is the responsibility of the church leadership to carry out an assessment of training needs for its leadership team. And training programs can be rolled out on a continuous basis. Gamble (1960, as cited by (de Roest, 2020) defined continuing education as “a lifelong program of systematic sustainable study.” And this continuing education may take various forms such as sharing experiences in small groups discussion, study tours, or training trainers who then share the acquired skills with other ministers or lay leaders.

Finally, some participants mentioned the idea of training trainers. According to these participants, church leaders are to be trained so that they can also train others. Those trained should share the newly acquired skills and knowledge. According to (Qasserras & Qasserras, 2023), the training of trainers’(TOT) program has recently been marked as a significant sustainability training intervention in addressing professional development in non-formal education, especially in health, youth work and community development. This attention owes to its flexibility and time efficiency in reaching large scale people in a limited time. Since church institutions are involved with the work of the community with humanitarian or relief programs, evangelism, etc., this way of sharing skills and knowledge can be suitable for churches despite some of its shortfalls.

It is therefore clear from participants’ responses that church leadership training in general (evangelism, basic hygiene and health, medical prevention & care, etc.) presents some important benefits for the church organizations. But, what about the importance of offering training in leadership courses or programs? This question was dealt with in the second sub-question of this research question.

4.5.1.2 Responses on the importance of being trained in leadership

All participants confirmed the importance of leadership training. Nevertheless, various reasons were given. According to participants, there are tremendous results in offering training in leadership. The benefits of such training are not only for church leaders themselves but also for the congregation and the community in which the church is operating.

For (Grensing-Pophal, 2010), training of any kind requires some form of change on the part of the individual being trained, whether a change in knowledge, a change in how a process is performed, or a change in attitude or behaviour. In that perspective, participant B responded as follows: *“church leadership training enables leaders to adopt new leadership ways and styles. Training in leadership brings also changes in the leader’s leadership philosophy. In summary, leadership training is necessary for every church leader as they are being taught various leadership styles, and this sheds more clarity on their leadership duties and on how to be good leaders.”*

At a personal level, a trained leader in leadership becomes confident of what she/he is doing. This is what (Tomlinson, 2004) called self-acceptance. For Tomlinson (2004, p.2), self-affirmation is important for personal success. Self-acceptance is very central because what constitutes the basis for professional and personal development is the willing acceptance of the self. The self is related to someone’s identity, a basis for self-esteem, self-confidence, self-respect and self-regard. A church leader should therefore be self-confident and as (Farr & Kotan, 2016) note, leadership requires confidence. However, continuing those authors, confidence without humility leads to arrogance and is off-putting to most people. Leadership requires a dosage of humility and self-reflection. *When church leaders are trained in leadership, they improve their leadership abilities and lead well those under their leadership in a similar way as they were taught*, said one participant. However, this response is debatable. This is the ideal and as (Grensing-Pophal, 2010) mentioned above, any training received is to

have an impact on the individual trained. However, people do not have the same ability of understanding and the same personality. Avolio (2004, 20) discovered that leadership development training is considered differently. Some people are very serious about those workshops and have a positive impact on their leadership styles. This statement means that there are others who do not take it seriously. They do not gain anything out of those leadership workshops. Despite those points raised by Avolio, participants in this research supported the idea of training church leaders in leadership courses because to them, a person gives what she/he has. Not only does receiving leadership training helps leaders to improve their leadership skills, but it also helps them to perform well their leadership tasks in an effective and efficient manner. Moving in the same line of ideas, (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) wrote this statement:

“As leader, the pastor must master a wide range of skills, from implementing and administrating processes to inspiring the membership in spiritual formation, growing in faith, in knowledge, in stewardship, and in discipleship.”

In addition to that, participants noted that leadership training enables leaders to cope with difficulties or with new issues arising within the church setting or the external environment. On this issue, participant C responded the following: *“Once leaders are trained in leadership, they are equipped with skills and knowledge on how to resolve conflicts and they become leaders who understand their roles and cope with contemporary issues.”* A point that was also raised by (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) who said that the pastor is called to fulfil multiple duties, and this requires the use of a variety of skills and leadership styles depending on the task, the situation, and people involved. (Ayojimi, 2019) adds that the process of continuing education does not only help in learning more but also very useful in preparing church leaders for possible pitfalls that they may encounter in ministry, and also ways to address issues.

Leadership training equips church leaders with knowledge and skills on how to lead properly the congregation and other church ministries. In other words, it increases the congregation's trust and respect towards the leaders. Leadership training converts a church manager into a church leader. And one of the characteristics of an effective church leader is to have a vision. One participant responded that leadership training enables church leaders to have a vision for the congregation. Vision plays a significant role in leadership. Scholars such as (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) and Northouse (2016) support the view of that participant. The effectiveness of a leader is to have a clear vision to guide people's actions in an organization. Adetunji (2010) as cited by (Afolabi, 2018) states that a church leader, in order to be effective, needs to be a person of vision, action, steadfastness, servanthood, and dependence. For Baldoni (2011), as cited by (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2018) argues that effective leadership of others begins with effective self-leadership, including the clarification of personal purpose. This leadership purposefulness helps the leader to formulate a shared vision of change, of where they want to take the church organization or the ministries they are leading.

Leadership training has an impact on the growth of the church. Participant D made the following statement: *"I agree that training church leaders is very beneficial. Church leadership training equips leaders with skills on how to grow the church spiritually and economically"*. According to Ayojimi (2019, p.111), the church will only grow to the extent that the leader/pastor grows. If the leader is not growing, generally, the organization will not grow either. Hence the necessity of investing in church leadership training. According to Armstrong (2006, p.535), the church should establish and encourage a learning culture—an environment where individuals are encouraged to learn and grow, and where knowledge is systematically managed.

The other benefit of leadership training those participants raised is that it helps to shape the attitudes of church leaders, especially how she/he behaves in front of the congregation. The congregation must benefit from church leaders' training in leadership. One of the roles of church leaders such as pastors is to cure the souls (Willimon, 2002) or "*cura animarum*", in Latin. The congregation needs to be fed, to be taken care of, and this is the role of the pastor. And (Vinet, 2017) noted that these individuals, who form the choice ones of the flock, naturally feel a need of more intimate relations with the pastor. According to participants, the importance of offering leadership training is that it equips leaders on how to properly lead the congregation and be able to deal with spiritual and physical issues that the congregation is facing. But also, it empowers church leaders with the necessary biblical knowledge so that the flock be fed well. Participant E made the following statement: "*Nobody gives what he/she does not have*". And another participant added the following statement to emphasize the importance of training church leaders: "*A person gives what he/she has, and a blind person cannot lead another blinded person*". This statement implies that training sheds light, opens someone's eyes. In addition to that, it equips church leaders with spiritual and physical church growth strategies. This principle applies as well to lay leaders because they can play some of the roles attributed to pastors such as preaching, teaching, leading worship, evangelizing, etc. (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009). They have to mentor, guide, and take care of the church members under their leadership. According to the policy of the church, the leaders of various movements must deal with issues related to the members affiliated to those movements. Pastors intervene only if they are seized. Otherwise, the leaders have the authority to deal with those issues.

The last point that some participants raised is the benefit that trained leaders in leadership are beneficial for the community. According to participants, the church operates in the community. Trained leaders will use their leadership skills in serving the community as well. Their point is supported by (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009). There is a lot that

church leaders can bring to the external community (to distinguish it from the church community). Wayne (2010) noted that Christians can adopt only two possible attitudes towards the world or the external community: escape or engagement. For Wayne, the “escape” attitude simply means turning our backs on the world in rejection, washing our hands of it, and steeling our hearts against its agonized cries for help. On the contrary, the “engagement” attitude means turning our faces towards the world in compassion, getting our hands dirty, sore, and worn in its service, and feeling deep within us the stirring of the love of God which cannot be contained. In other words, church leaders have also the mandate to outreach the external community in order to bring support in alleviating the challenges the community is facing. This can be done through providing clean water to the community, building schools and health facilities, etc. The church leaders, through their leadership training, will extend their leadership skills in the community. In connection to that, (Vinet, 2017) writes the following:

“A pastor who would be useful, though in a spiritual respect only, should have exact knowledge and intimate acquaintance with his country, his people, and whatever, even in a material point of view, is important to the welfare of society and each of the classes which compose it.”

But what could then be the consequences of not training church leaders? Participants were given the opportunity to give their views on this question. The following section captures some of their feedback.

4.5.1.3 The consequences of not training a church leader

Participants were asked to mention at least one consequence of not training a church leader. The analysis of their responses indicated that poor performance was cited twelve times. Eleven participants noted that lack of spiritual and economic growth was another outcome of not training a church leader. Poor or bad leadership was named seven times. Participants included false teaching, ignorance, and lack of self- confidence among the consequences of not

training a church leader. Surprisingly, not training a church leader itself was mentioned as a source of a church conflict by five participants. The table below gives a summary of the data analysis:

Table 7

Consequences of not training church leaders

<i>Consequence of not training a church leader</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Poor performance due to lack of skills</i>	12
<i>Lack of spiritual and economic growth</i>	11
<i>Poor or bad leadership</i>	7
<i>Leaders are not up to date</i>	6
<i>Be source of conflict</i>	5
<i>False teachings</i>	4
<i>Ignorance</i>	3
<i>Lack of self-confidence</i>	3

In short, participants in this research raised several consequences of a church leader not being trained. As mentioned above, poor performance was cited as the main consequence of not training a church leader. According to participants, untrained church leaders are characterized by poor performance in their duties due to lack of knowledge and skills in what they are called to do. Gardner (1990) as cited by Avolio (2004), noted: “Many dismiss the subject with the confident assertion that ‘leaders are born not made.’ Nonsense! Most of what leaders have that enables them to lead is learned. Leadership is not a mysterious activity... And the capacity to perform those tasks is widely distributed in the population.” When people are being trained, they learn new skills, new ways of doing things, etc. According to (Xhemajli, Vokshi, & Neziraj, 2022), training affects the individual, the organization and society as a whole.

What participants raised is answered by (Armstrong, 2006)'s understanding of training. For Armstrong (2006), training changes the trainee's behaviour through learning events, programs and instruction that enable individuals to achieve the levels of knowledge, skill and competence needed to carry out their work effectively. Through training, church leaders acquire or learn new knowledge, skills, and capabilities that will help them to perform well their duties. For Avolio (2004, p.17), the purpose of leadership training program is to try changing the life stream in a direction that will result in more effective leadership.

Participants noted that it is very difficult for untrained church leaders to drive spiritual and economic development due to ignorance. With regards to this, participant G made the following statement: *"the consequences of not training church leaders are many. Firstly, he/she does not grow, and in return, those under his/her leadership cannot achieve growth as well. Secondly, untrained church leaders mislead people. Thirdly, untrained leaders are not confident about themselves, they feel inferior to others"*. Participants noted that untrained church leaders fail to develop themselves and in return, they also fail to develop others. This point was supported by Avolio (2004). If a leader opts for his/her own continuous leadership development, this will in turn affect the development of people around him/her. As you limit yourself, so too will it affect the development of others, declares Avolio (2004). These arguments are in line with the analysis of Burns (1978) who notes that the crisis of leadership today is the mediocrity or irresponsibility of so many of the men and women in power, but leadership rarely rises to the full need for it. The fundamental crisis underlying mediocrity is intellectual. According to Burns, if people seem to know more about leaders, they know far too little about leadership. This issue is related also to lack of training, continuous learning culture.

Untrained church leaders experience difficulties in making decisions, especially in times of conflict. In short, lack of training leads to poor or bad leadership. Participant K stated the following: *"untrained leaders are characterized by poor leadership, a feeling of being*

despised, lack of development for them and for followers, remaining behind times, and lack of adaptability to changing environment". According to participants, not only do untrained church leaders perform poorly but also, they find it difficult to be criticized or to receive divergent ideas from others.

Nnamdi (2023) notes that ignorance is one of the sources of church conflict. Ignorance, in church settings, is a wrong interpretation and understanding of the Scriptures. Ignorance leads to false or heretical teaching. As prophet Hosea said in his chapter 4:6 "my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge", ignorance is the source of destruction. In this verse, God accused the religious leaders of keeping people from knowing him and this led to their destruction. Ignorance can destroy the entire congregation. For instance, high levels of sugar consumption have destroyed many of our church members because church leaders never informed of the health consequences of taking too much sugar. Diabetic cases increased rapidly, and church leaders failed to teach congregations how to protect themselves. Due to ignorance, some church leaders do not consider physical body care as something that needs to be taught. Their focus is mainly on spiritual care, and they forget the physical element of a human being. Jesus Christ gave a speaking example of taking care not only the spiritual needs, but also the physical needs when he fed the five thousand people (Luke 9:10-17). For the disciples, it was impossible to feed such a number. Instead, they asked Jesus to send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging. Jesus' answer was astonishing. He told them to give them something to eat. This is one of the main problems of our church leaders. As they work to bring wholeness to people's lives, they must never ignore the fact that all of us have both physical and spiritual needs. And among the physical needs, body care is paramount.

4.5.2 Church leaders and training programs

Apart from collecting information on the kind of training sessions so far received, participants were also asked to give details of other training they would like to receive. Two sub-questions were therefore formulated as follows:

1. What types of training have you so far received?
2. Which other training would you like to receive?

4.5.2.1 Types of trainings so far received by participants

The analysis of data collected from participants indicated that 77%, representing 23 participants have attended at least one training program while 23% representing 7 participants declared that they have not received any training. A further analysis indicated that all the 8 members of clergy representing 27% have attended at least to more than one training.

Nine participants acknowledged having received training in leadership. Training in conflict resolution, in theological studies and in health care and HIV/AIDS prevention appeared six times for each training program. Three participants received training in project management. Other training programs that were mentioned twice include biblical preaching, trauma healing, church administration, community development, youth ministry, Christian foundations, and marriage and family. Note that three programs were raised once by participants, and these are food security, evangelism, and human rights. Considering the mission of the church, the range of training received by participants should serve the church leadership to select areas of focus. Here, the need to train church members in evangelism is to be highly recommended.

The following table gives a summary of trainings that participants have so far received:

Table 8

Training received by participants

<i>Training received</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Leadership</i>	9
<i>Conflict resolution</i>	6
<i>Theological studies</i>	6
<i>Health care and HIV/AIDS prevention</i>	6
<i>Project management</i>	3
<i>Biblical preaching</i>	2
<i>Trauma healing</i>	2
<i>Church administration</i>	2
<i>Youth ministry</i>	2
<i>Christian foundations</i>	2
<i>Community development</i>	2
<i>Marriage and Family</i>	2
<i>Food security</i>	1
<i>Evangelism</i>	1
<i>Human rights</i>	1

Trainings received vary and it indicates that participants attended at least to one training program. The table above indicates that the top four trainings participants received were in leadership, conflict resolution, theological studies, and health care and HIV prevention.

This is an indication that leadership is necessary in the lives of people. The high desire in conflict resolution proves that church is not spared from conflicts and that church leaders need to be skilful in how to handle those challenges as (Kurtz, 1982) puts it in this statement: “because the church is so vulnerable to conflict today, the creative handling of controversy is no longer an option but a necessity”. It was also amazing to see the variety of training received

by those church leaders. What is therefore important is the use of all those acquired skills to the benefit of the entire congregation. A congregation may be gifted but fails to experience growth. The church of Corinth was gifted but it lacked love. Instead of using those different gifts for the spiritual growth of the church, it is noted that the church gets divided. The apostle Paul, using a metaphor of a body, shows how the body is made of different parts, but which work in perfect harmony. He invites then the congregation to be united in their diversity.

In addition to those already received, participants demonstrated their desire to have further training as described in the next section.

4.5.2.2 Future trainings to be received

The table below gives a summary of the responses collected from participants. They expressed their desire to be trained in more areas.

Table 9

Additional trainings desired

<i>Training desired</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Leadership</i>	7
<i>Conflict resolution</i>	7
<i>Information Technology</i>	6
<i>UMC Doctrine and History</i>	4
<i>Theological studies</i>	3
<i>Church Administration</i>	2
<i>Community Development</i>	2
<i>Communication Skills</i>	2
<i>Project Management</i>	1
<i>Church Growth</i>	1
<i>Christian Ethics</i>	1
<i>Trauma Healing</i>	1
<i>Pastoral Counselling</i>	1
<i>Family Health</i>	1
<i>Resource Mobilization Strategy</i>	1
<i>Men Ministry</i>	1

The analysis of the data collected indicates that participants, being church leaders, expressed their desire to be trained mainly in Leadership, conflict resolution, the use of Information Technology, and the UMC Doctrine and History. Other training needs were raised by participants include theological studies, church administration, community development, communication skills. Low interest was shown by participants for the following training programs: project management, church growth, Christian ethics, trauma healing, pastoral counselling, family health, men ministry and resource mobilization strategy. (Grensing-Pophal, 2010) noted that effective training is tied to the needs of the individual as well as the needs of the organization. Participants were affected by what the UMC went through, and their understanding is that the church crisis can be prevented if church leaders are given skills on leadership and conflict management. (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014) supported this idea by saying that in addition to attitudes, norms, and values that foster cooperation, knowledge and skills are also important in promoting constructive resolution of a conflict. In same line of ideas, Northouse (2016, p .56) supported this assertion as well by writing that through training, leaders can become better problem solvers and more effective leaders. For instance, the crisis in the Burundi Annual Conference was due to power struggle but most related to the UMC Doctrine and Polity. And those who mainly got involved in that conflict had no training related to the church polity.

4.5.3 Conflict involvement of church leaders

This research question engaged participants in their understanding of conflict, and the involvement of church leaders in managing conflicts. Further, participants were asked whether they have involved themselves in conflict resolution and the different styles they have used to manage those conflicts. The third research question was analysed under the following four sub-questions:

4.5.3.1 Participants' understanding of "conflict"

Participants gave various definitions related to conflict. However, the following definition was the mostly cited by participants: "a misunderstanding or disagreement between two people or two groups of people over a given objective or common vision." The above definition is in line with the one (Bixby, 2016) gave: conflict is simply a disagreement between two or more parties within a family, community, or organization. And according to Budjac Corvette (2014, p.36) (Budjac Corvette, Conflict Management: A Practical Guide to Developing Negotiation Strategies, 2014), conflict arises whenever there is a clash of thoughts, beliefs, or emotions, whether within an individual or between individuals. The fact that a misunderstanding or disagreement occurs between two people, or two groups of people as raised by participants is a clear indication of competing interests, objectives, or values. It is therefore unrealistic to think that conflicts can be avoided due to differences among individuals' ideas, desires, perceptions and needs and this goes in line with what (Jeong, 2008) said that conflict will never end as long as humanity still exist. This idea was also supported by (Scarafilo & Gruenpeter Gold, 2016) saying that life and conflict are two faces of the same coin: one cannot exist without the other. Therefore, a healthier and effective congregation is not the one without a conflict, but the one in which the congregation and its leaders have established proper policies and mechanisms of handling conflicts.

Participant J gave an interesting definition: "*any disagreement between two people or more over an issue and that disagreement brings in a mediator.*" This participant added another element: a mediator. And the role of the mediator is to bring the parties in conflict to the table of dialogue to help the disputants to settle the disagreement. The result may be to reach a consensus, in which case the disputants agree to resolve their differences in win-win model. Mediation is mostly used in our community to restore harmony, peace and cohabitation between people. Though mediation is a form of third-party intervention in a conflict, it differs

from arbitration, which employs judicial procedure and issues a verdict that the parties have committed themselves beforehand to accept (Zartman, 2008).

Kurtz (1982) noted that defining conflict precisely is challenging without incorporating elements of delimitation or descriptive context. A point that (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014) also supported. According to (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014), it is very difficult to reach to a common definition of conflict. Conflict was also defined in relation to the outcome or results of the disagreement or misunderstanding. To some participants, conflict was defined as anything that leads to fighting, clash, killings, separation, disorder, destruction, tension, violence, hatred among team members, etc. These are indeed the outcomes of the conflict but can as well describe the presence of a conflict, but Kurtz (1982) argued that these terms do not stand alone, or are inadequate in themselves, in providing definitions. According to Kurtz, the following question should be asked in order to get a clear definition: "Is, for instance, the "tension" or "struggle" intra- or inter-personal, intra-, or inter-group?"

Although violence is associated with conflict, it may happen without it. For instance, Martin Luther King Junior used civil disobedient and nonviolent means to fight against the social injustice in the United States of America (King, 1981). The same strategy was used by Ghandhi of India to fight against the British imperialist.

Participant D defined conflict in the following terms: "*lack of common understanding of someone's idea or view.*" And usually this leads to disagreement. Nevertheless, the lack of common understanding or an agreement should not lead to conflict. People can agree to disagree in order to avoid conflict. Being created differently, it is very clear that our views, our perceptions are different. It is unfortunate that our diversity is considered or used as a source of conflict. Our differences should instead constitute our strength. What does it mean? These different views should instead foster the development of an organization or should be the source of the creation of new things, approaches, etc. Conflicts can be a source of growth and

learning opportunities. This point was also raised by Kurtz (1982) who advocates distinguishing between health differences and pathological differences. Not all disagreements are bad or are to be avoided. Some disagreements are beneficial for the organization. Participants missed out this point that conflict may be a source of stimulus for change.

The other issue that participants left out was the intrapersonal conflict. A conflict may also occur within an individual, called also “man against self” conflict (Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019). Our human life is characterized by troublesome periods (Scarafile & Gruenpeter Gold, 2016) and these should not be overlooked. Most of the conflicts originate within us and therefore, individuals constitute the main source of conflict. Conflict cannot be separated from human beings; it is a human activity. It starts within us and affects others. It is difficult for someone to give peace which she/he does not have. If the person is troubled, anxious or angry for any given reason, for instance, she/he feels her values threatened, this ignites conflict inside her/him. And the chance of a conflict occurring is very high.

4.5.3.2 Various views on the involvement of church leaders in conflict management

All participants agree that church leaders should be involved in managing conflicts even though the conflict may be between themselves. In this case, they are also appealed to make sure that conflict is well resolved. The various reasons given include the followings: a church leader should open his ears, be receptive, advises the congregation but also, he/she should be aware of the issues or problems that the congregation is going through and take time to deal with those issues. According to participants, churches are not spared from conflict since conflict is related to humans and therefore, it is common to see things differently. Hence, church leaders should play the role of mediators if church objectives are to be achieved. In order to emphasize the reasons why church leaders should get involved in conflict management, participant N made the following statement: “*it is difficult to achieve one’s plans since there is*

conflict: church development or growth can only happen in a free conflict environment.”

Unfortunately, it is not obvious that a free conflict environment is a guarantee. But also, conflicts can be a source of church growth or development. New ideas, though raising tensions, may help the church to move to the next phase of growth. Some participants believe that church leaders are to act as judges of the Old Testament and foster church unity. This implies that the role of a church leader in conflict resolution or management is important. According to Northouse (2016, p.268), conflict management refers to the leader's responsibility to handle conflict effectively. Effective leaders need to respond with the action that is required for a given situation.

One participant said that church leaders should be involved in conflict resolution if it concerns them. In other words, they should not get involved in others' businesses. According to this participant, church leaders should use the avoiding conflict style. With this style, the church leader's attitude or behaviour is not to show interest to conflict instead of resolving it unless he is concerned with the conflict. This should not be the attitude of a church leader. Whenever conflict remains unresolved, grief follows (Hunsinger & Latini, 2013). Church leaders are shepherds, and they are called to take care of the flock. Since the congregation face multiple challenges and conflicts, one of the actions that a church leader must do is mediating fighting sheep (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009). Hence the role of a church leader in helping church members to handle their personal struggles is very important as stressed by Burns (as cited by Northouse, 2016). But also, responding to these conflicts and challenges requires resilient, courageous, and compassionate leadership (Hunsinger & Latini, 2013). The church leaders should demonstrate their servanthood leadership spirit through pastoral counselling services. Church leaders should help the disputants to handle the conflicts in a constructive manner and take them through the process of healing.

Few participants responded to the how question. For those who responded, church leaders should refer to the word of God in resolving conflict, through prayer and mostly, they should take time to listening to the conflictual parties. This is very important in conflict resolution because an understanding of the other point of view is a most useful step in conflict resolution (de Bono, 2018). Some participants added that church leaders should be trustworthy and neutral in resolving the conflict. People come to church leaders if they have trust in them. Otherwise, they would rather go to an outsider who is judged trustworthy. And trust is built. According to (Farr & Kotan, 2016), in the art of listening up and leading with your ears, you are attempting to build trust. Building trust is imperative. It allows you to deposit trust coins in your pastoral bank account. Investigating the sources of the conflict is a key determinant of how to manage the conflict. Church leaders should aim at reconciling the parties in conflict and parties in conflict should seek judiciary assistance in case it is beyond church leaders' capacity, otherwise, church leaders should act as mediators. This is what (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) wrote on how a church leader should address church conflict:

“In addressing conflict, get the opposing parties together, and listen carefully to each point of view. Seek resolve from the parties themselves and guide the discussion with biblical principles. Time is needed to resolve problems, particularly in cases where long-term conflict has existed and is charged with emotion. Maintain impartiality” (p.89).

4.5.3.3 Participants' experiences in conflict resolution

Twenty-seven participants have been involved in conflict resolution. Not only did participants describe the conflict management style they used, but they also gave the different steps they took in order to deal with the conflict in their hands.

Before resolving the conflicts, they were involved in, some of the participants engaged in the listening skills as a prerequisite to conflict management. This is a statement of one of the participants: *“I tried to listen to both parties in conflict and I asked each one of them to think*

about what was done to her/him. And if it is true that he/she did it, ask for forgiveness to the other party, and the other party be ready to forgive.” Like in any work of counselling in which listening skills help the counsellor to understand and interpret the information the client gives him/her correctly, participants said that one of the techniques they used was to listen separately each conflictual party. Listening skills are very important in conflict management. Those involved in conflict management should develop active listening and this requires more than just listening to what each party says. It involves taking an interest in the other person, making sure they are comfortable about disclosing personal information and providing support and understanding.

Other participants opted to carry out first an inquiry or investigation of the origin of the conflict before starting the process of conflict management. This is in line with what (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) recommend to pastors. According to these authors, pastors must identify the basis of a conflict, establish the significance of the conflict that needs to be brought to resolution, note the impact of the conflict on those involved in the conflict, and note the effect on the flock or total congregation. This is what one participant raised. According to this participant, the conflict management style depends on the nature of the conflict. The point made here is very fundamental to conflict management or resolution. It requires therefore a deep understanding of this conflict. And this is what Jeong (2008, p.4) wrote:

“In understanding conflict, it is imperative to examine the sources of discontent and animosity, to identify the phases of evolving relationships between adversaries, and to illuminate the escalation of their struggles and the eventual recession of violent cycles to the peaceful resolution of differences.”

Most participants claimed that they organized a meeting with both parties involved in the conflict, a style called adjudication (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). According to these authors, adjudication involves bringing all disputants in the conflict to a meeting usually in the chambers or compounds of family heads, quarter heads and palace court as the case may be.

The aim of bringing those disputants in the conflict to a meeting was either to advise them on how to resolve the conflicts or to reach a reconciliation. Participants responded that the main objective of them being involved in conflict resolution was to understand first the problem to be able to reconcile the parties in conflict through the promotion of dialogue. Reconciliation is the result of adjudication.

Some participants involved in conflict resolution opted to act as counsellors. According to them, their role was to encourage those in conflict to find themselves the appropriate solution to their conflicts. Participant M described the following steps she took to manage a conflict case between one couple: *“I listened to them separately. After that session, I tried to investigate the origin of their conflict. And then, I called them for a joint session where I engaged them in an honest discussion. Finally, I encouraged them to find themselves the appropriate solution to their conflict, and they were able to do it.”* The role of a counsellor is not to give advice but to guide the client on how to fix himself(herself) the problem. Counselling is the ability to help others through the decision-making process (Chapman, Knowdell, & Chapman, 1993). According to these authors, the role of marriage counsellors for instance is to help individuals decide how to satisfactorily resolve marital problems. Therefore, independently of the role, the counsellor should emphasize the weighing part of the process and let the other party make the decision. Apart from acting as a counsellor, that participant took another step: investigate the causes of the conflict. The identification of the causes of a conflict is an important step in managing a conflict. If the true causes of a crisis are not clearly identified, the conflict management may not achieve the desired results. Unless the roots are detected, there is a high chance that conflict may persist.

However, there are other participants who advised the parties in conflicts to reach a settlement agreement, and some took a step further of taking correcting measures or decisions based on the information collected from both parties such as asking one party to correct the

damages caused to the other party. Sometimes conflict management leads to damage repairment. It is true that the main purpose of managing church conflict is to restore peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation among the disputing flock. But when damage has been incurred, it is also important to think of repairing it. There is a misconception among believers. Many of them think that being forgiven releases the offender from the responsibility of repairing damages. This is not necessarily true. The story of Zaccheus in Luke 19 is a speaking example of being forgiven but also repairing damages. Zacchaeus was not a mere tax collector, but he was a chief tax collector. This implies that he had many tax collectors below him who reported to him and controlled by him. As a chief tax collector, Zacchaeus received a share of all revenues whether collected by himself or subordinate officials. Tax collectors were hated due to their relationship with the Romans but also due to their frequent extortion by overtaxing. So, Zaccheus was not spared from the above characteristics of tax collectors because he had reached the top of his profession and therefore was the most hated man in the district.

The story tells us that Jesus was passing through Jericho going to Jerusalem. And Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, wanted to see him but he had one problem: he was a short man. He realized that there was a way to overcome that problem. Zacchaeus ran on ahead and climbed a sycamore fig tree to be in a good position to see Jesus. This was a courageous attitude considering Zacchaeus' social position: he was a chief tax collector and a very rich man. It is uncommon for people of his rank to climb trees. But he did because he was missing something. The name Zacchaeus literally means "righteous" or "clean". Was Zacchaeus righteous or clean? Being aware of the meaning of his name, something was burning him, and he was longing for a solution. Zacchaeus decided to put aside his social status and his wealth to see Jesus. Zacchaeus is not ashamed to climb a tree in order to see Jesus. When Jesus stood under the tree and asked Zacchaeus to come down and take Him at his house. Zacchaeus received more than what he was expecting: he just wanted to see Jesus but in addition to that he was

given a chance to spend a night with Jesus at his house. This was good news for Zacchaeus, and there is no doubt, he welcomed joyfully this good news as the Bible declares: he welcomed Him gladly. It was amazing to see this short man, much hated taking Jesus to his home.

Once again, the crowd was very shocked by Jesus' attitude: "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner"! The hostility of the crowd was justified in a way because Zacchaeus was the most hated man in the city, a puppet who was working together with the enemy. The crowd's muttering never bothered Zacchaeus. He was the happiest man because he had found someone who was not like the other folks of the community: a friend who was willing to stay at his house, a friend who was willing to accommodate him while others were rejecting him, a friend who was willing to love him. And this loving friend was JESUS. Touched by this kind of love, Zacchaeus decided to straighten his life. He took steps to show all the community that he was a changed man. Zacchaeus demonstrated inward change by outward action. He decided to give half of his possessions to the poor and use the other half to make restitution for the damage he has been causing in the community: stealing people through overtaxing. Zacchaeus was willing to take up his social responsibility towards his neighbours by taking that decision. It is even surprising how Zacchaeus went far beyond what was legally necessary in a matter of restitution as laid down in the Jewish law and especially with voluntary restitution. (Leviticus 6:5). Zacchaeus, the offender, did not run away from his responsibility of repairing the damages despite the forgiveness, the reconciliation he enjoyed with Jesus. Even though the Bible does not tell what followed this move, especially in the community, but in the eyes of Jesus, this confession of Zacchaeus changed the way he was viewed as now he was being viewed as a son of Abraham. Damage repairing enables to cement the reconciliation achieved among the disputants. But also, it restores confidence and trust within the community.

One participant addressed the issue of intrapersonal conflict. Instead of resolving conflict between two or more individuals, this participant decided to deal with intrapersonal

conflict. Every human being has inner conflict. According to Chand (2010) as cited by (Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019), intrapersonal conflict occurs within the person himself/herself either due to conflicting decisions or dilemma situation. In order to deal with this type of conflict, the participant organized at her workplace a workshop on trauma healing and stress management to enable employees to realize their inner conflict and be able to resolve themselves their intrapersonal conflict.

In summary, participants in general encountered conflict cases, and they brought the disputants on the dialogue table with the main objective of reconciliation. They also provided possible ways of resolving a church conflict as is presented in the next section.

4.5.3.4 Possible way of resolving a church conflict

All the participants suggested at least one possible way of resolving a church conflict. Mediation and reconciliation were cited sixteen times, while listening to congregation and prayer were mentioned seven times each. The use of the word of God, Christian ethics teaching, and investigation committee were cited five, four and three times respectively. Three respondents mentioned neutrality as a possible way of resolving a church conflict. The following table gives a summary of the various responses to this question:

Table 10

Possible way of resolving a church conflict *Possible way*

<i>Frequency</i>	
<i>Mediation and reconciliation</i>	16
<i>Listening to congregation through church meetings</i>	7
<i>Prayer</i>	7
<i>Word of God</i>	5
<i>Promotion of Christian ethics teachings</i>	4
<i>Set up a hearing or investigation committee</i>	3
<i>Be neutral</i>	3

Participants gave many possible ways of resolving a church conflict, and the main ways are mediation and reconciliation, listening to congregation through church meetings, prayers,

the word of God. Participants did not forget the promotion of Christian ethics teachings as a way of preventing a church conflict. Participants focused more on mediating and reconciling church members whenever there is a church conflict. The key issue for participants when it comes to church conflict management is to protect the congregation. Hence mediation and reconciliation ways were considered as the best options. According to (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009), the Christian motivation for reconciliation and forgiveness should undergird all conflict resolution. One of the functions of pastoral care is the reconciling function. (Willimon, 2002) defines this function as pastoral care for the reestablishment of broken relationships among people and between people and God. The story of the fall of man in Genesis is the starting point of broken relationships. Mediation and reconciliation seek therefore to restore those broken relationships among people, between people and nature, and between people and God.

Coleman, Deutsch, and Marcus (2014) note that poor communication leads to misunderstandings, which can result in conflict, and conflict, in turn, often causes a further breakdown in communication. For Bixby (2016), resolving conflict involves clearing up misunderstandings and reaching decisions in appropriate ways about important matters and this is where direct communication helps minimize conflicts. Active listening is a very important component of communication. Northouse (2016, p.227) defines listening as the communication between leaders and followers, an interactive process that includes sending and receiving messages (i.e., talking and listening). According to this author, listening is the first of the ten characteristics of servant leadership: servant leaders communicate by listening first. Participants are aware that mediation and reconciliation can be reached through listening.

According to participants, church leaders should organize church meetings and let the congregation discuss openly the issues in order it find together the appropriate ways of resolving the issues. Therefore, church leaders should organize meetings and workshops,

counselling programs, and promote good governance within the church organization. This will enhance communications among church members and help to have peace of mind and soul and church conflicts will then be avoided. For another participant, it is very important to analyze the historical background of the congregation to understand the background of the conflict. According to this participant, some congregations experience long-term conflicts. There are many reasons to this situation. This may be a result of not managing well the conflicts. Maybe church leaders ignore the conflicts, or they may be scared of getting their hands dirty in that process. Church leaders should be bold to embrace conflicts. Bixby (2016) is of the view that church conflicts can be minimized by improving communication and avoiding triangulation. In addition to what Bixby said, (Jeong, 2008) emphasizes on the need to tackle the root causes of the conflict in order to properly resolve the conflict.

According to Bixby, triangulation is to take sides or be on the side of someone and not for others. No wonder some participants suggested neutrality as a way of resolving church conflict. However, this neutrality is questionable as it may lead to many interpretations and was discussed in further paragraphs. If neutrality meant not to take sides or being impartial as advocated by (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009), then participants are in line with what Bixby talks about triangulation. Even though church conflict is inevitable, Bixby believes that triangulation is something that can be actively resisted by church leaders. (Leas, 1985) agrees with this. For Leas, the power and effectiveness of leadership depends largely on good communication and the ability of the central leader to delegate authority, assign responsibility and recognize accomplishments of others. And this should be done by giving equal chances to everyone, with impartial treatment.

The other ways of resolving church conflicts as suggested by participants are prayers and the word of God. Since it is the church or community of believers involved, prayer and the

word of God should not be left out when it comes to church conflict resolution. In the words of (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009):

“Pastors should follow the scriptural principles that are effective in resolving the conflict. Working person-to-person resolves arguments in the best way, with the leadership of the church assisting. Most importantly, in the effort to resolve conflicts, pastors must use intercessory prayers.”

Some participants suggested the promotion of Christian ethics teachings as a way of resolving conflicts. Christian ethics are embodied in the Bible even though people read the same bible but come up with different ethical conclusions. (Wayne, 2018) defines Christian ethics as any study that answers the question, “What does the whole Bible teach us about which acts, attitudes, and personal character traits receive God’s approval, and which do not? The term ethics come from a Greek word (*ethos*) and it refers to the systematic endeavour to understand moral concepts and justify moral principles and theories. It undertakes to analyse such concepts as *right*, *wrong*, *permissible*, *ought*, *good* and *evil*. Therefore, the promotion of Christian ethics teachings in the church will enable congregations to know what is morally right and wrong. Ethics interrogates morality, it is a critical analysis or evaluation of morality. And morality (from the Greek word “*mores*”) refers to commonly accepted behaviour within a society or community or accepted norms and values. A moral issue is a disagreement on how to deal with a or define a moral problem, which is a point where one’s values are threatened. However, it is important to stress that what is understood as a moral problem by someone may not be necessarily viewed as such by others. This disagreement leads therefore to conflict. According to (Wayne, 2018), the source of morality is therefore God because He has given us moral laws that define what “ought” and “ought not” to be, what is morally right and wrong. Singer (2011) is in line with Wayne in this reasoning according to the following statement on ethical conduct:

“From ancient times, philosophers and moralists have expressed the idea that ethical conduct is acceptable from a point of view that is somehow universal. The ‘Golden Rule’ attributed to Moses, to be found in the book of Leviticus and subsequently reiterated by Jesus, tells us to go beyond our own personal interests and ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you’ – in other words, give the same weight to the interests of others as you give to your own interests. The same idea of putting oneself in the position of another is involved in the other Christian formulation, that we love our neighbors as ourselves (at least, if we interpret ‘neighbor’ sufficiently broadly).”

Promoting therefore Christian ethics teachings may in a way help church leaders to solve conflicts that are generated due to moral issue among church members. This leads to the understanding of how to ethically resolve any disagreement using different approaches of dealing with moral issues that have serious consequences on the wellbeing of human beings and other creation such as utilitarian approach, common good approach, virtue approach, fairness/justice approach, and rights approach. Knowing that our actions may morally affect others, care needs to be exercised, hence the necessity of promoting Christian ethics teachings.

Participant E raised the following way of resolving a church conflict: *be slow to anger and take time to find the appropriate solution for that conflict*. The truth in this statement is that conflict resolution should not be done with anger. This may worsen the conflict instead of resolving it. The church leader may find her/himself using the forcing conflict management style leading to more chaos. Nevertheless, the time issue is debatable. Some conflicts require a quick action while others may necessitate some time in order to fully understand their origins (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009).

Since participants are from UMC, some suggested the way of setting up a hearing or investigation committee as described in paragraph ¶2706 of the church BOD,

“The role of the committee on investigation is to conduct an investigation into the allegations made in the judicial complaint and to determine if reasonable grounds exist to bring a bill of charges and specifications to trial. If so, it shall prepare, sign and certify a bill of charges and specifications. The committee’s duty is only to determine whether reasonable grounds exist to support the charges. It is not the committee’s duty to determine guilt or innocence.”

Investigation committees are necessary in identifying the roots of the conflicts by hearing the disputants or the concerned parties to the conflicts.

Even though participants suggested ways of resolving church conflicts, church leader should be aware that conflicts are inevitable and for that be always prepared. Hence, it is important for them to put in place an early warning system that enables church leaders to detect some signs of conflicts before it explodes. An idea that (Kale & McCullough, 2003) support. According to these authors, identifying early warning signals of conflict and intervening effectively has two important benefits. Firstly, those involved can deal with the conflict when emotions are under control and before it becomes explosive. Secondly, dealing with early warning signs often keeps a second wave of conflict from developing. Church leaders can therefore detect early warning signals of potential conflict in the church through the analysis of attitudes, behaviours, and systemic indicators. (Leas, 1985) adds that sometimes early warning signs are not connected with problems one can solve but are environmental factors which are likely to cause or exacerbate conflict.

As mentioned above, some participants suggested church leadership neutrality as one of the ways of managing conflicts. Does being neutral mean that church leaders should just observe the church conflict taking place hopelessly without taking any action? Should they promote the use of “*The avoiding conflict style*” as defined by (Lussier & Achua, 2010) in which the user attempts to passively ignore the conflict rather than resolve it? Or church

neutrality implies that church leaders should demonstrate a degree of neutrality in managing conflict. For this to be true, church leaders need not to be part of the conflict. But what if the church leader is also a source of church conflict?

4.5.4 Possible roots of church conflicts

The last research question dealt with the possible roots of church conflicts, and three sub-questions were formulated for that purpose.

4.5.4.1 Possible causes of church crisis

Participants were asked to identify the possible roots of a church conflict. After analysing the responses given, it was noted that power struggle was mentioned seventeen times. The other possible cause that was raised fifteen times was funds mismanagement, followed by division that was cited fourteen times. A summary of the possible causes is given in the table below:

Table 11

Causes of a church conflict

<i>Cause of roots of church conflict</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Power or leadership position fighting</i>	17
<i>Funds or church properties mismanagement</i>	15
<i>Division</i>	14
<i>Violation of the BOD regulations</i>	7
<i>Tribalism and nepotism</i>	5
<i>Selfish ambition</i>	4

Participants noted that most church conflicts originate in the fighting over leadership positions. Being members of the UMC, participants brought this out due to what the church went through over twelve years. And participants saw “power or leadership position fighting” as the main source of the conflict. This schism led to two parallel church leaders. One accepted by the connectional church and contested at 90% locally. And another accepted locally at 90%

but contested by the connectional church. A conflict over leadership was observed and as Burns (2012) writes, to understand the nature of leadership requires understanding the essence of power, for leadership is a special form of power. Fighting over leadership position is common in many evangelical churches in Burundi. Even those with episcopacy form of governance are not spared. And in many cases, the ministry in charge of religious organizations is forced to intervene as mediators. In other instances, the cases are taken to legal courts. Nevertheless, the position of Apostle Paul on fighting over leadership positions and on referring our differences to legal courts is very clear. In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul addresses the issue of division over sectarianism. Some said they are of Paul, and others claimed to be of Apollos. And this is what happened in most of our local churches. Church leaders with the support of church members in order to advance their hidden agenda. And this brings division not only between those church leaders in the congregation, but that division affects also the entire congregation. For the apostle Paul, congregation should not be aligned to this church leader or the other. Paul clarifies his position in Corinthians 3, verse 5 “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed as the Lord gave to each one?”. Church leaders are just ministers; they should not fight each other for leadership positions. Each one is called by Jesus for a purpose. With regard to legal cases, the apostle Paul’s advice is that church conflicts should be settled internally. For Paul, it is very shameful to see unbelievers settling or judging believers. Paul is not categorical, or he does not exclude the possibility of using the legal system to settle conflicts. He is rather encouraging believers to try and settle conflicts themselves. It is an appeal to church leaders to get involved in resolving church conflict rather than ignoring it.

Power mentioned by participants related to leadership position fighting in order to achieve one’s goals as stated by (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014). According to these authors, power is commonly used in conflict as leverage for achieving one’s goals. In the same

line of ideas, (Budjac Corvette, 2014) (Budjac Corvette, Conflict Management: A Practical Guide to Developing Negotiation Strategies, 2014) analysed power in two veins - personal and social power. For this author, personal power is power exercised over others. Personal power seeks to control or cause behaviour in others. Social power, on the other hand, is the power to enable others to excel and the power to create a greater good. Leadership position struggle within the church was not characterized by social power. As mentioned above, two church leaderships in conflict were generated.

Jeong (2008, p.26) argues that pursuing material interests, status, power, or privilege at the expense of others is one of the most evident forms of substantive conflict. And according to (Robson, 2013), conflict often occurs because of the way that power is understood to be disposed; conflict happens when people engage to change this. Power encounters are inherent in conflict encounters. The type of power to which participants were referring is not the one of the conflict factors raised by (de Bono, 2018). This author summarized these factors into a grouping of the four 'F': Fear, Force, Fair, and Fund.

The other root of conflict that participants noted is related to financial stewardship, a very important aspect to church ministry. According to (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009), proper use of funds builds confidence among the church members. This was a result of the highly promoted conduct of nepotism. Only relatives to the bishop were assigned to the financial committees and misuse of funds was unpunished. There were no audit or internal controls measures put in place to ensure good financial stewardship and accountability.

The conflict in the UMC- Burundi was over the interpretation of some paragraphs of the BOD related to the election and consecration of a Bishop in the UMC. The election of a bishop is a two-stage process: nominations are done at the annual conference level and election is done at the central conference level among the first three nominees. However, other episcopal candidates can be nominated by delegates during the Central Conference session.

This is what happened in 2006. The elected bishop was the fourth nominee while the first nominee with the highest votes was left out and not elected as a bishop. The annual conference members considered this move a violation of the Book of Discipline. However, ¶ 405 related to “Election and Consecration of Bishops” states the following in connection to Nomination:

“An annual conference, in the session immediately prior to the next regular session of the jurisdictional or central conference, may name one or more nominees for episcopal election. Balloting at jurisdictional and central conferences shall not be limited to nominees of annual conferences nor shall any jurisdictional or central conference delegate be bound to vote for any specific nominee....”

Delegates to the central conference are indeed allowed to nominate other candidates. Those who nominated The Rev. Justin Nzoyisaba considered this as a violation of the Book of Discipline, which according to paragraph 405 is not, and when The Rev Justin Nzoyisaba was consecrated as a Bishop by non- UMC Bishops, this was another violation of the Book of Discipline. Both parties accused each other of violating the Book of Discipline. Why did 90% of church members support The Rev Justin Nzoyisaba and yet, he was violating the BOD? Two reasons can explain this: firstly, church members in Burundi are unaware of the content of the Book of Discipline due to lack of a translated copy of this book either in French or in Kirundi (mother language). Secondly, church members wanted a change of leadership. The church leaders have been promoting favouritism, tribalism, and nepotism conducts and congregations felt that it was the right time to end with those conducts through the change of leadership.

That is why tribalism and nepotism have been cited among the roots of church conflicts. Consequently, the division between church leadership and the congregations became obvious. Church members lost trust in their leaders because of they felt discriminated: most district superintendents were from the same region as the bishop, all benefits were given on that basis, etc. For Peters (1997), people often can no longer trust each other well in a divided church. In the same line of ideas, (Farr & Kotan, 2016) note that trust is the currency of a local church.

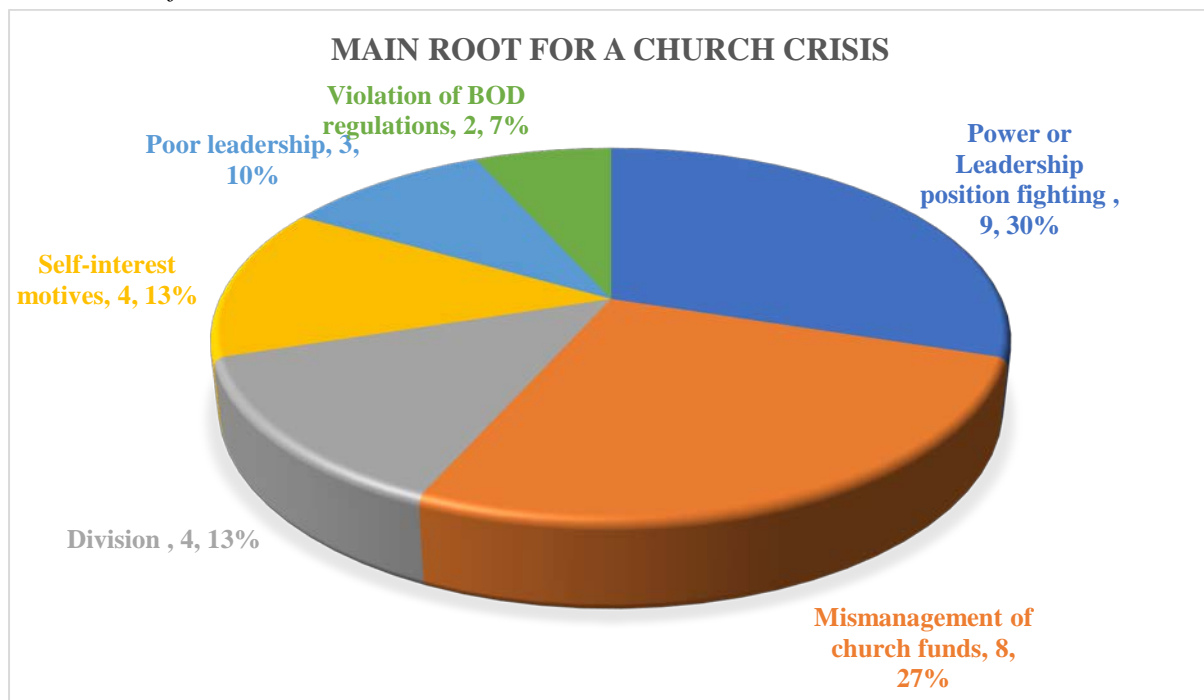
According to these authors, when there is no trust between the pastor and the congregation, it is very hard to move forward. When there is no trust between the leadership and the congregation, it often leads to tension, conflict, rumors, and a whole host of dysfunctional behaviours within the congregation. When there is little or no trust between the pastor and leadership, there is little chance to get any amount of change accomplished.

4.5.4.2 Responses on “what the main root of church crisis is”

Though participants gave possible roots of church conflict, they were asked also to give what they think is the main root of church crisis. Their responses are summarized in the following table:

Figure 9

Main root of church crisis



According to 57% of participants, power and funds mismanagement are the main sources of church conflict. The misuse of leadership power and the fight over leadership positions were seen as the main roots of church conflicts, a point that Afolabi (2021) agrees with. In addition to that, mismanagement of church funds is also a serious issue according to

participants. Financial accountability is a challenge to some church leaders. Funds misappropriation has become a common issue in many church organizations. In some church organizations, especially here in Burundi, the finances of the church are handled by family members. Usually, the accountant is either the wife, a child or a closed relative of the pastor in charge. The BOD (2016) of the UMC does not allow this kind of arrangement. In every local church, a committee on finance must be elected. Under paragraph 258, the following statements are made:

“The positions of treasurer and financial secretary should not be combined and held by one person, and the persons holding these two positions should not be immediate family members.

No immediate family members of any appointed clergy may serve as treasurer, finance chair, financial secretary, counter, or serve in any paid or unpaid position under the responsibilities of the committee on finance, as described herein. These restrictions would apply only to the church or charge where the clergy serves”.

Other roots include division among church leaders, self-interest motives and the violation of BOD regulations. The analysis of these main roots of church crises indicates that there is a possibility for a church leader to be a source of conflict. If a leader is motivated by self-interest, the chances are very high for him/her to be the source of a church conflict.

Participants noted that poor leadership is one of the main sources of church conflict. An idea that was espoused by (Ayojimi, 2019) who notes that conflict may sometimes arise from the church because of poor and bad leadership from the pastor. Poor leadership does not stand on its own. It is related to other factors such as lack of skills and knowledge. It may also be linked to the personality traits of the church leader. Pastor's arrogance may for instance contribute to poor or bad leadership.

Individual self-centeredness is the main root of conflict and violence, which in turn affects the family, tribe, nation, and the world. (Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019) are of the views that an individual may tend to achieve and promote his self-interest or personal gain at the cost of the organization or others. In the same line, church leaders pursuing self-interests at the cost

of the congregation are likely to fall into conflict with others. Self-interests motives lead to leadership struggles, mismanagement of funds, and division among leaders. And 13% of participants mentioned that church conflict is caused by a leader's self-interest.

4.5.4.3 A church leader as a source of conflict: a case that needs to be addressed too

All participants agree that church leaders can be a source of conflict. A point that Leas (1985) subscribes to fully. According to Leas, most significant conflict in local churches is pastor focused even though the pastor is not the sole generator of difficulties in the parish. As Jeong (2008) puts it, conflict and humanity are interlinked. And it would not be wrong to say that the starting point of a conflict is within an individual, what scholars call intrapersonal conflict. Whether a church leader or any other church member is involved in a conflict, strategies to resolve the conflict must be developed.

According to Peters (1997), the process of reconciliation is to begin privately between individuals. It should never start in the public arena. This point raised by this author is very important. The flock needs to be protected from public humiliation or shame. The process of reconciliation should be done based on God's caring love. This is the biblical way of resolving interpersonal or group conflict. It was also supported (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) in this statement:

“Then pastors should follow the scriptural principles that are effective in resolving the conflict. Working person-to-person resolves arguments in the best way, with the leadership of the church assisting.”

Participants have therefore suggested ways of addressing this issue. Most of participants called upon a church leader involved in a church conflict to be humble and accept to be advised in order to resolve the conflict in a peaceful manner. And if he/she refuses to cooperate, some participants suggested that the leader be suspended, removed, or forced to resign. These are extreme solutions that are taken in rare cases. Humility is very important throughout the process. Alternatively, other participants suggested also changing the appointment of that church leader to another local church or to another church ministry. In

doing that, participants encourage communication or dialogue with all the conflictual parties with a view of saving the life of the church leader involved in the conflict. A point that Leas (1985) supports as well. Whether a pastor as a person, the pastor's leadership style, or the pastor's position on issues, or all of these are at stake, the church needs to be very careful to make sure that its dealings with the pastor are fair and appropriate. As Peters (1997) writes, conflict resolution is dependent not only upon the grace of God, but also upon the human demonstration of divine love. In addition to that, said Peters, the spiritual formula for conflict reconciliation is the implementation of God's grace in the lives of each member of a congregation. In that perspective, participants expressed their concerns on preserving the unity of the congregation, hence they opted on resolving the conflict through prayers and giving advice to the concerned church leader. The use of a mediator was also mentioned as a way of handling such cases. According to (Zartman, 2008), mediation is a form of third-party intervention in a conflict. It differs from other forms of third-party intervention in conflicts in that it is not based on the direct use of force, and it is not aimed at helping one of the participants to win. The mediator's responsibility is to enthusiastically help disputants in discovering a terrain of understanding and resolution.

Lastly, some participants suggested that such conflict should be resolved according to the church regulations. If there are clear regulations to follow, this may contribute to making the process easier. This protects the pastor from being blamed on every case even if he/she has nothing to do with it. And Leas (1985) suggests that long before the conflict arises, a church should establish clear, deliberate and agreed upon processes for reviewing, evaluating and dealing with pastoral performance. This idea is also supported by (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009). According to these authors, churches should establish guidelines and procedures for conflict resolution to avoid putting all the blame to pastors.

4.6 Evaluation of Findings

This section gives a brief report of the research findings and how the results are related to reviewed literature. It should be noted that more details were given during the “Discussion and Interpretation” of data. For practicability, the evaluation of findings has been organized per research questions as described in the following paragraphs.

Most participants linked church leadership training to capacity building. Through training and capacity building, leaders learn new ways or new approaches of doing things that enable them to fulfil their duties effectively and efficiently. Leaders acquire skills and knowledge that enable them to cope with the changing environment. According to participants, trained church leaders are equipped with new skills and knowledge, new ideas, new ways of doing things, and this enables them to be effective and efficient in their respective ministries. The results indicated that all participants approved the importance of leadership training sessions and many benefits related to leadership training were given. According to participants, training impacts the life of the trained church leader, the congregation, and the community. Training builds and increases the level of confidence within the trained individual. And in return, the congregation’s trust in their leaders increases as well. The importance of offering leadership training is that it equips leaders with how to properly lead the congregation and be able to deal with spiritual and physical issues that the congregation is facing. These findings reflect some aspects of the contingency, integrative, and contemporary leadership theories. As indicated in the literature review, the findings are in line with the following leadership theories: situational, transformational leadership, servant leadership, adaptive leadership.

The contingency theory framework highlights the significance of situational factors, such as the type of work involved, the external environment, and the characteristics of followers. It is vital for church leaders to be trained to cope with the rapid changing environment as suggested by (Nitze, 1993) and (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009). The

changing world requires church leaders to be aware of that and be equipped with creativity, technical skills, other necessary competencies as well as highly developed leadership skills. This is also linked to adaptive leadership theory, where leaders motivate their followers to adapt by facing and resolving problems, challenges, and changes.

According to Bass & Riggio (2006) and Hay (2006), transformational leaders support the growth and the development of their followers by addressing their individual needs, empowering them, and by aligning the goals and objectives of the followers, the leader, the group, and the broader organization. As Northouse (2016) notes, only transformed church leaders can effectively transform others. Hence it is very important to train church leaders in leadership courses and other necessary training to be able to perform efficiently and effectively their tasks.

The findings are also in line with the servant leadership theory, which puts the leader in the role of servant. For (Heyker & Martin, 2018), servant leadership "focuses on a desire to serve and preparing others to serve as well. This can only be achieved if church leaders are trained. It is through learning and training that church leaders are empowered so that they can also empower others.

In addition to those leadership theories and as highlighted in the Pastoral ministry literature review, one of the good marks of a church leader is the one who especially shows a desire to grow spiritually, and this can be achieved through training. In addition, these findings are in a way linked to Practical theology. According to Willimon (2002), pastoral ministry is an activity that involves pastors engaging in various tasks such as visiting, speaking, studying, praying, and presiding. These activities require the mastery of a wide range of physical, mental, and emotional skills. Though the ministry is to be done by all Christians, the church leader has a major role in pastoral ministry. In order to be effective and efficient in the various church

ministries, church leaders need to be trained. This creates confidence and trust for the church leader her/himself and for the congregation as well. The pastoral functions (tasks to be performed by church leaders, especially pastors) include healing, guiding, sustaining, reconciling, nurturing, liberating, and empowering the congregations. A church leader can only perform these functions if she/he has been trained.

Similarly, participants raised the consequences of not training church leaders. Poor performance due to lack of skills and knowledge was the most cited by participants. The findings indicated other consequences such as poor or bad leadership, lack of spiritual and economic growth, false teachings, etc.

The research indicates that participants attended to at least one training program. It was noted that all clergy participants attended theological training or any church related courses such as church administration, biblical preaching, etc. Other training attended included leadership, conflict management, health care and HIV/AIDS prevention, project management, etc. The results of the study indicated that participants expressed the desire to attend more training programs such as trainings in leadership, conflict management, information technology, theological studies, UMC doctrine, polity and history, church administration, pastoral counselling, Christian ethics, church growth, and in other areas. These findings support the requirement of ordination process in the UMC. Clergy candidates must go through various training. According to Frank (2006, p.199), once a person's call has been affirmed by her or his charge conference, the process of preparation, training, testing, placement, and evaluation generally moves into connectional bodies (Frank, 2006). In addition, the candidate must also meet the educational requirements and academic qualifications as stipulated in ¶324. These are the requirements for provisional and full membership (United Methodist Church, 2016):

“A candidate for provisional membership shall have completed a bachelor’s degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate. Exceptions to the undergraduate degree requirements may be made in consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in some instances, for missional purposes, for persons who have a minimum of sixty semester hours of Bachelor of Arts credit and: a) have been prevented from pursuit of the normal course of baccalaureate education,

b) are members of a group whose cultural practices and training enhance insight and skills for effective

ministry not available through conventional formal education, or c) have graduated with a bachelor’s degree or its equivalent from a college not recognized by the University Senate and have completed one half of the studies of the Master of Divinity or equivalent first professional degree in a school of theology listed by the University Senate.

For full membership, candidates for deacon or elder shall have completed a minimum of one-half of the 27 semester hours of basic graduate theological studies in the Christian faith. These courses may be included within or in addition to a seminary degree. These basic graduate theological studies must include courses in Old Testament; New Testament; theology; church history; mission of the church in the world; evangelism; worship/liturgy; and United Methodist doctrine, polity, and history. a candidate for ordination as an elder shall have completed one half of the studies toward a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent, including one half of the basic graduate theological studies from a seminary listed by the University Senate.”

Participants defined the term “conflict” and according to them, conflict is a misunderstanding or disagreement between two people or two groups of people over a given objective or common vision. Other terms were used to define conflict, and these include fighting, tension, violence, clashes, killings, separation, disorder, destruction, hatred among team members, etc. For participants, conflicts are unavoidable within church organizations. The types of conflicts were described in the reviewed literature. More participants focused on interpersonal or group conflicts. They left out the intrapersonal conflict. Less was discussed on the intergroup and organizational conflicts. This view has been reflected in the reviewed literature as the interactional view that holds that conflict is inevitable and that maintaining and

managing a certain degree of it can be helpful. Organizational conflicts were also discussed in the literature review and accordingly, church organizations are also not spared.

The findings indicated that church organizations are not spared from conflict, hence most participants consider the involvement church leaders in conflict resolution very important for the survival of the church. Almost all the participants, being leaders in various positions of the church, have been involved in the conflict resolution process. Strategies and conflict management styles used varied depending on the cases, but the findings revealed that those involved in conflict resolution started with the inquiry or investigation of the origin of conflict. This was either done through active listening or meetings or adjudication. The resolution conflict style as described by participants described is like the collaborating conflict style. Findings indicated that participants involved in conflict resolution favoured mediation, adjudication, and reconciliation over all other conflict management styles. According to (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014), the purpose of conflict resolution in the African societies was mainly to restore peace, harmony, and participants favoured the traditional methods of conflict resolution compared to law court methods unless the case requires to do so. Hence, they developed active listening skills to find the best solution agreeable to all parties.

Participants consider listening skills as a very important ingredient in conflict resolution. Church leaders should develop these skills as they help build good rapport and trust with the conflictual parties. Situational leadership theory emphasizes the relationship between leader and followers. Trust, confidence, and respect are more fostered in an environment characterized by good relations between a leader and subordinates (Lussier & Achua, 2010).

Some participants suggested that church leaders should not get involved in conflict management. This is the avoiding style. Those in favour of this style simply ignore the conflict instead of managing it. For those participants, church leaders should only be involved in conflict resolution if they are concerned. However, this position could damage the church if

conflicts are not well managed. The literature reviewed indicated that a church leader has disciplinary and administrative functions. She/he must maintain the purity of the church; administer discipline to unworthy members; judge disputes among Christians; and administer the church's property. It will be therefore unconceivable for a church leader to ignore conflicts happening in the congregation. The adaptive leadership theory encourages leaders to support or guide other people to deal with the uncertainty and stress that are associated with adaptive work, change, or conflict. One of the prescribed behaviours for adaptive leaders is conflict management. And this is what Northouse (2016, p.268) describes as the leader's accountability to cope with conflict effectively. According to Yukl (2013), leadership effectiveness is partially determined by how well a manager addresses role conflicts, manages demands, identifies opportunities, and overcomes constraints.

Participants in this study identified possible roots or causes of church conflict: fighting for power or leadership position, mismanagement of church properties or funds, division, violation of church regulations, favouritism and nepotism, and selfish interests. The findings indicated that church conflict is mainly rooted in fighting over power position, misuse of church funds, division, and self-interest motives. These findings are in line with the reviewed literature. Coleman, Deutsch, and Marcus (2014) identify economic, value, and power differences as primary sources of group conflicts. The literature emphasizes that adaptive leaders leverage their expertise or authority to support others by identifying problems and offering potential solutions. Northouse (2016, p. 262) also noted that adaptive challenges are at the core of the adaptive leadership process and to identify those adaptive challenges, Northouse wrote the following:

“In addition to getting on the balcony and observing the dynamics of the complex situations people face, leaders must analyse and diagnose these challenges. Central to this process is differentiating between technical and adaptive challenges. Failures in leadership often occur because leaders fail to diagnose challenges correctly. The adaptive leadership process suggests that leaders are most effective using adaptive leadership behaviours for adaptive challenges and technical leadership for technical challenges. Treating challenges with the wrong kind of leadership is maladaptive.”

The findings indicate that the success of conflict resolution depends on identifying the underlying sources or causes of the conflict. If leaders fail to identify the true roots of the conflict, then solutions provided will not be appropriate. The stand is in line with the problem-solving theoretical framework as developed in chapter two of this study.

4.7 Theoretical Implications and Framework Integration

The findings of this study provide rich insights that reinforce and expand the theoretical frameworks applied to the study. The research was grounded in four complementary theoretical frameworks: Servant Leadership, the McKinsey 7S Framework, Problem Solving Theory, and the Ecclesiological Framework. These frameworks collectively facilitated a multi-dimensional interpretation of church leadership and conflict dynamics.

4.7.1 *Servant Leadership Theory*

The responses from participants highlighted the expectation that church leaders should serve rather than dominate, aligning well with Greenleaf's (1970) concept of servant leadership. Participants emphasized values such as humility, listening, and empathy—core tenets of servant leadership. Leaders who embodied these traits were perceived as peacemakers and stabilizers, while those who exhibited authoritarian tendencies were linked to conflict escalation. The importance of moral authority and spiritual maturity emerged as key indicators of successful leadership under this model.

4.7.2 *McKinsey 7S Framework*

The McKinsey 7S model offers a structural and systemic lens that complements the relational aspects of church leadership. Findings showed that disjointed communication systems (Systems), unclear doctrinal alignment (Shared Values), and unbalanced distribution

of leadership authority (Structure and Style) contributed to the persistence of conflict. When these elements were well aligned, churches demonstrated higher unity and organizational resilience. Thus, strategic alignment across the 7 elements is critical in fostering a cohesive conflict-resistant church structure.

4.7.3 Problem Solving Theory

Participants' calls for root-cause analysis, early intervention, and mediation validate the use of Problem-Solving Theory. Leaders who approached conflict with analytical detachment, collaborative dialogue, and solution-focused processes were better able to defuse tensions. Conversely, emotional reactivity and lack of strategic thinking contributed to the prolongation of disputes. The model's emphasis on structured processes—problem identification, stakeholder engagement, solution generation—was observed in successful cases of resolution.

4.7.4 Ecclesiological Framework

The ecclesiological perspective enriched the study by anchoring leadership and conflict management within the theological identity of the church. Participants referred to biblical mandates of forgiveness, unity, and pastoral care, emphasizing the need for leaders to act as spiritual shepherds. Where leaders upheld ecclesiological integrity—through confession, reconciliation, and sacrificial service—congregations experienced healing and restored fellowship. This supports the notion that theological integrity is not optional, but foundational to long-term conflict transformation in ecclesial contexts.

4.8 Summary

Participants in this research demonstrated an understanding of the concept of conflict and were able to connect it to church organizations. They also recognized the need for and importance of church leaders to pursue leadership training programs in their career of church ministry. Lack of training programs for church leaders weakens the activities of the church and may affect negatively the various church ministry programs. Participants indicated also the training so far received and they expressed their desire to have more training in leadership, conflict management, UM church related courses, etc. Being church leaders, some participants shared their experiences in resolving church conflicts, how they handled the process, and what they discovered as being the main roots of the church conflict. Participants noted that power or leadership position struggles, mismanagement of church funds, division, and self-interest motives are among the main roots of conflicts. Participants suggested that church leaders should play an instrumental role in resolving church conflict with an aim of reconciling and mediating the parties in conflict. The protection of the congregation should be the guiding principle. The same principle should be preserved if a church leader is found to be the source of the church conflict.

What are the implications that can be drawn from this research? How can the research findings be used? And what could be the possible recommendations for future research? These are some of the questions to be covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Human beings and conflicts are interconnected. As scholars (Jeong, 2008; Scarafile & Gruenpeter Gold, 2016) have pointed out, conflict is old as humanity. The United Methodist Church in Burundi experienced a chaos that lasted twelve years. Like any organization, conflicts in church organizations are not new. The early church went through a conflict as it is recorded in the book of Acts. The narrative of the story describes a conflict that opposed Jews and non-Jews Christians over some customs. A church council was then held in order to address the issue in Jerusalem. Another account of conflict is recorded in the church of Corinth, a church that was established by the Apostle Paul. The roots of the church conflict included division, marriages, spiritual gifts, legal actions, etc. Paul addressed these issues in his first letter to the Corinthian church. But other churches also experienced conflictual issues. The churches in Galate and Ephesus experienced doctrinal misunderstanding and the Apostle Paul had to resolve these through letters. There were also conflicts between Jews and Christians too leading to persecution movement. This was done either by the Jews people in order to defend their religion as they considered Christianity as a new sect that may bring the wrath of God upon the nation of Israel. On the other side, persecution was also carried by the Roman Emperor who wanted to protect the roman civilization and the worship of pagan gods. Many Christians of the early church were executed; some burnt others put to death by animals or by other ways.

The church history indicates that the church went through many conflicts. Two main conflicts that can be recalled are the eastern and western schism, and the Protestantism movement. The sorry state of the church during the 14th and 15th centuries gave impetus to various movements of reform, each with its own program. Two brave souls, John Wycliffe and

John Huss, dared to toy with the idea that the Christian Church was something other than a visible organization on earth headed by the pope. The two men are called forerunners of the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation of the church in the 16th century would have been impossible without them. During the age of reformation (1517-1648AD), each reformer started his own church and if you have today many churches, it is what we inherited from these reformers.

The organization of the church required leadership. The early church put more emphasis on organization, on leadership. As Gonzalez (1984) noted, the early church was therefore characterized by three distinct positions of leadership: bishop, presbyter or elder and deacon. The Pastors (bishop and elder) oversaw the spiritual life of Christians and Deacons looked after the social and financial issues of the church.

What the United Methodist church in Burundi went through is not therefore an exception. Under the leadership of the late Bishop John Alfred NDORICIMPA, the church grew tremendously within Burundi and expanded its ministry activities in the east Africa region. Churches were opened in Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. The absence of the Resident Bishop in Burundi due to civil war created an opportunity for those who wanted to take over. They were motivated by the loss of control over Burundi annual conference, the mismanagement of church properties, and the health conditions of the bishop. Though Bishop John Alfred tried to resolve this conflict in 2005, he did not manage and due to his health conditions, he went back in Kenya leaving behind him unresolved conflict. After his death in 2006, the church in Burundi was already divided. His replacement by a Ugandan bishop became the direct cause of the twelve-year conflict. Two groups were created: one group supporting the leadership of the newly consecrated bishop and another group led by Rev Justin Nzoyisaba opposing the leadership. Despite the involvement of the Global church, all the efforts to resolve this conflict failed. The church became a ground of divisions, fighting, hatred,

lawsuits, and other issues. Even though the conflict did not lead to the creation of new denominations as is observed in such cases, damages were incurred in that families were torn apart, and church members were viewed as enemies. Based on that identified problem, this research aims at analyzing the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow us to detect other possible sources or roots of church conflicts.

The study falls under qualitative research and the appropriate design used was ethnographic method. This approach necessitates researchers to actively engage in participant observation and conduct field interviews (Tracy, 2013; Creswell, 2014). In order to select participants, a purposive sampling method was used. Creswell (2014) suggests that this sampling is recommended where a group of people is believed to be reliable for this study. In that case, participants are selected based on the rich information they have that will assist the researcher on the in-depth analysis related to the church leadership and its role in church conflict. Hence, clergy and lay members in leadership position were only selected.

Nevertheless, there were some limitations related to this study. The fact of the researcher is also a member of the church under study may create biases or subjectivities. However, care was taken in making sure that the credibility of data collected is not affected.

Ethical issues were considered throughout the research process. This research aims to explore how participants interpret and assign meaning to a specific social phenomenon. In that perspective, ethical issues need to be taken care of. Even though the topic did not raise any ethical issues, participants were given all the necessary information related to this study. Their rights were explained and informed consent forms given so that they decide whether to participate or not. Freedom to participate or to withdraw at any time was guaranteed. Ethical issues related to confidentiality of identity and data protection were also covered. The researcher shared with participants that there were no monetary gains expected from this study

and that data were collected for academic purposes only. Participants' selection was also done ethically and only mentally fit people, that is people able to give their personal consent, were included in the sample. Embarrassing questions or questions revealing the identity of participants were avoided during the data collection stage. Care was also taken during data analysis by not distorting the data provided by participants as this would have an impact on the findings' credibility.

This chapter covers therefore four main sections: the implications of the results, the conclusions, the recommendations for application, and the recommendations for future research. The implications of the results as analyzed in the previous chapter. In other words, do the results respond to the problem under study? Do the results fit with the purpose statement? Those are some of the questions that will be covered in this chapter. The conclusion of this chapter gives a summary of the entire dissertation study with a specific emphasis on the results of the study to demonstrate how objectives have been achieved. In addition to that, recommendations for application and for future research based on the research findings were also formulated.

5.2 Implications

The results of this research enabled us to respond to the study problem. As a reminder, the study focused on the leadership conflict that occurred within the United Methodist Church in Burundi. The church went through a leadership conflict that lasted more than a decade on a national level. Though there was no creation of new church denomination, family members were torn apart. Fighting, physical violence, hatred, lawsuits, division, and imprisonments were some of the characteristics of this conflict. Legal actions were initiated by both parties over the leadership of the church in Burundi. Two antagonistic leadership blocks were created, and local churches were also affiliated to these two-opposing leadership. It took twelve years of fighting,

hatred, and nightmares for the conflict to end. The unity that used to characterize the church was no longer there. Church members found themselves unable to love each other as they used to connect to each other. Due to that division, some church members left and joined other church denominations. Unfortunately, all this happened in the eyes of church leaders, and nothing was done to solve this conflict. Leaders were busy protecting their leadership positions and the use of power characterized them. The purpose of this research was therefore to analyse the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts and to determine the possible sources or roots of church conflicts.

The findings indicated that participants have a clear understanding of what conflict is even though it was defined differently. Basically, conflict was defined as a disagreement between two individuals or a group of people over a given issue. Some went on to describe conflict as anything that can lead to violence, killing, separation, etc. Nevertheless, participants missed out on the intra-personal conflict facet. They confirmed that church organizations are not spared from conflicts. Therefore, participants endorsed that the role of a church leader in resolving church conflict is very critical. And the results revealed different conflict management styles that participants have been using as church leaders in resolving conflicts. Conflict management styles were provided and since church conflicts were under analysis, the following appropriate management styles were suggested: mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, prayer, and word of God. Teaching Christian ethics was seen as a mitigating strategy for church conflict. Possible roots or causes of church conflict have been identified and the findings showed that church conflicts are mainly caused by power struggles, church property mismanagement, the search for selfish motives, and division either among leaders or division between the church leader and the congregation. Through the analysis, it was found that a church leader can be a source of church conflict as well. These roots were seen as

damaging factors for the congregation. The findings never mentioned the importance of conflict in bringing positive changes within the church organization.

To tackle those issues, participants emphasized the need and the importance of church leadership training so that church leaders to be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to fulfil their leadership roles effectively and efficiently. A trained church leader attracts the confidence, respect, and trust of the congregation. Not only church leaders will be empowered through training but also, they will be able to empower the congregation. One of the ingredients of church growth is the training of church leaders, the human resources of the church organization. It was discovered that church leaders need to be trained in order to cope with the changing environment if the church is to be sustained in the long term. Lack of church leadership training has serious consequences on the church organization, its members, and the community in which the church serves. The results of not training church leaders are poor or bad leadership, lack of spiritual and economic growth, poor performance due to lack of skills, failure to cope with changes, false teachings, lack of self-confidence, etc.

How have therefore studies previously done display the similarities or differences in the findings with the results of this study? In other words, are there similarities or differences between the current results and the results from other studies done? Studies done have produced similar findings and results.

Firstly, conducted studies have demonstrated that reaching a universal definition of conflict is challenging due to its complex and multifaceted nature (Kurtz, 1982; Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). Conflict can be defined in various dimensions. This is what the results of this study showed also. Each participant defined conflict as she/he understood it, even though there was a common theme of “disagreement.” Secondly, the finding confirms that there is no organization or entity including church organizations free from conflict. This is a shared truth to all studies done. Conflict and humanity cannot be separated. (Kurtz, 1982; Peters, 1997;

Jeong, 2008; Budjac Corvette, 2014; Scarafale & Gruenpeter Gold, 2016; Omisore & Abiodun, 2014). Since human beings are part of the organization's resources, it is therefore impossible to have an organization free from conflict. Since conflicts cannot be avoided, the best solution is to manage them. Hence the role of leaders in managing conflicts is very important. Various studies have demonstrated leaders play a critical role in managing conflict (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009; Lussier & Achua, 2010; Northouse, 2016). Kurtz (1982) made a clear statement by saying that "a measure of the health and effectiveness of a congregation would be, not the absence of conflict, but the way the congregation and its leaders handle it." One of the key responsibilities of leaders is the management of crisis because conflicts are damaging if not properly dealt with.

Thirdly, it was found that there is no single conflict resolution style. The appropriate style depends on the situation or the conflict types. This result is in line with findings from other studies (Lussier & Achua, 2010; Marques, Lourenço, Dimas, & Rebelo, 2015; Farah, Çetinkaya, & Rashid, 2019). These studies indicate a positive correlation between different types of conflict and the conflict management styles to be applied. However, and according to Lussier Achua (2010, p.211), no single conflict management style is universally effective in all situations. The behaviour of a leader is contingent or depending on the situation. And the core principle of situational leadership is that no single leadership style is effective in every situation. Since various situations call for different leadership approaches, it has also been observed that different conflicts require different management styles. Fourthly, it is important to understand the causes or roots of conflicts if appropriate conflict management style is to be selected. Results from other studies (Jeong, 2008; Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014; Omisore & Abiodun, 2014; Budjac Corvette, 2014; Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019) have some similarities with the findings of this study. Causes such as struggles for power, economic

resources, self-centred interests, and other roots have been identified in many studies. The results of this study indicated similar causes for the church conflict.

As far as conflict management styles are concerned, participants urged that church conflict resolution should be guided by the love of God, and for them, mediation, active listening, and reconciliation were the main management styles to be encouraged in order to protect the congregation. Peters (1997) and (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) came to similar findings. In the words of Peters (1997, p.112),

“The church is no less than the body of Christ united with God. Leadership in the church is leadership involved with service to God. Conflict resolution must be spiritually founded, ethically conducted, and thoughtfully received. Conflicts must be handled and processed in a style of serving God, not simply seeking to please others.”

And for (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009),

“In addressing conflict, get the opposing parties together, and listen carefully to each point of view. Seek resolve from the parties themselves and guide the discussion with biblical principles. Time is needed to resolve problems, particularly in cases where long-term conflict has existed and is charged with emotion. Maintain impartiality” (p.89).

The results related to leadership training in particular or organization's staff training in general are similar to findings in other studies (Nitze, 1993; Avolio, 2004; Armstrong, 2006; Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009; Gensing-Pophal, 2010; Farr & Kotan, 2016; Vinet, 2017). The results indicated the need and the importance of leadership training for effective leaders. Therefore, church leaders need to be trained if they are to perform effectively their tasks and if they are to play a constructive role in resolving conflicts. On one hand, training empowers church leaders with new skills, knowledge, and increases therefore their abilities to handle church conflicts. On the other hand, untrained church leaders are characterized by poor performance, ignorance, and their leadership is challenged. They do not inspire the confidence

and trust of the congregation. Trust is a very important ingredient in church settings. (Farr & Kotan, 2016) note that trust is the currency of a local church. According to these authors, when there is no trust between the pastor and the congregation, it is very hard to move forward. When there is no trust between the leadership and the congregation, it often leads to tension, conflict, rumours, and a whole host of dysfunctional behaviours within the congregation. When there is little or no trust between the pastor and leadership, there is little chance to get any amount of change accomplished.

Trust can therefore be built through the application of the situational leadership theory based on Fiedler's model. And according to Avery (2004) and Lussier & Achua (2010), the leader-member (or follower) relations is the most powerful determinant of overall situational favourableness. This can create a favourable environment to resolve conflict and even reduce the impact or damage that conflict can cause. Church leaders should establish a good rapport with the members of the congregation.

There are some differences between the findings of studies done and the results of this study. Participants overlooked the intra-personal conflict. And yet, human beings and conflict are interlinked. Studies have linked human beings to conflict as seen in the previous paragraphs. If conflict and humanity cannot be separated (Kurtz, 1982; Peters, 1997; Jeong, 2008; Budjac Corvette, 2014; Scarafile & Gruenpeter Gold, 2016; Omisore & Abiodun, 2014), it is therefore important to note that intra-personal conflict cannot be overlooked. The other difference noticed is that conflict, if well managed, was viewed in other studies as a changing factor. A point that was not picked through this study. Studies conducted (Coser, 1957; Kurtz, 1982; Budjac Corvette, Conflict Management: A Practical Guide to Developing Negotiation Strategies, 2014; Omisore & Abiodun, 2014; Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019) found that conflict present some positive values if well managed. This is what Budjac Corvette (2014, p.39) called the interactionist view, one of the sociological schools of thought on conflict. This perspective

asserts that conflict is unavoidable and, when properly managed, can yield positive outcomes. It emphasizes the importance of embracing conflict, seeing it as a beneficial force unless it is misunderstood, improperly avoided, or mishandled.

5.3 Conclusions

The analysis of the role played by church leaders in church conflict led to the formulation of the following research objectives:

- To assess if the United Methodist congregation value leadership training.
- To evaluate what kind of training United Methodist church leaders, have.
- To identify the role of United Methodist church leaders in church conflicts.
- To recommend a conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist church in Burundi

Data was collected and analysed accordingly. This section describes how the results or findings of the data analysis responded to the research objectives.

5.3.1 The views on the importance of training church leaders

The first research objective covered the views of church members on the importance of offering training sessions to church leaders. Three key areas were examined: the perception of leadership training, the significance of training church leaders, and the impact of failing to train them. Overall, the results indicated that participants valued the importance of training church leaders. Participants are of the view that training church leaders presents more advantages both for the leader her(him) self, the congregation, and the community. Through training, church leaders are equipped with new leadership skills related to their ministries and these enhance their confidence and ability to cope with the changing environment. In addition, the congregation benefits from those acquired skills because a person gives what he/she has.

Training increases therefore the congregation's trust and respect towards their leaders. Trained leaders are transformed from church managers to church leaders. The community is also impacted if church leaders are trained because they become aware of the role to be played in the community as church leaders. Similarly, lack of training produces the opposite effects at personal level, congregational level, and community level. This participants' understanding has serious implications on the life of the congregation and the community in which the church is operating in.

Using the McKinsey 7S framework, a change in one of these seven S does affect the entire organization. According to participants, the training affects the behaviour of the Staff (church leaders) and the Skills (of the trained persons). These two elements have a great impact on the remaining elements of the model. In the words of (Armstrong, 2006), human capital is regarded as an organization's most valuable asset, requiring businesses to invest in it to sustain growth and long-term success. In the same line of ideas and in accordance with what participants responded, there is a great relationship between offering training sessions to church leaders and the survival and the growth of church ministries. Among the benefits of training church leaders are that trained leaders have the capacity and ability to lead the congregation in an effective and efficient way. Leading the congregation effectively and efficiently is instrumental to the survival of the church. Effective ministry for instance involves the entire congregation. As the UMC puts it, the mission of the church is to be achieved through ministry of all believers, both clergy and laity.

Effective pastors do therefore prioritize equipping their congregation to carry out a focused and impactful ministry. There are many activities that church members can do for the sustainability of the church if leaders are well trained, empowered, and in their turn, they empower the congregation. Once equipped, lay members can preach, evangelize, lead worship, etc. With this way of doing things, the Style or culture (the third S element of the Model) of

doing things within the congregation is then affected. According to Northouse (2016), culture is defined as the shared beliefs, values, norms, rules, symbols, and traditions that distinguish a group of people. These common characteristics create a unique identity for the group. Similarly, Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988), as referenced by Northouse (2016), describe culture as the way of life, customs, and guiding principles of a community. Cassimy, Jules, and Satelmajer (2009) argue that for the church to experience revival, individuals needed to have confidence in themselves as representatives of God; without this belief, a resurgence was unlikely. Once the congregation is mobilized and gets involved in carrying out the church ministries, this becomes part of the DNA of that congregation. The congregation plays a major role in church ministries. That is why, for instance in the UMC, the laity members are given a very important place within the leadership of the church. Lay delegates are to be represented at all church meetings. It is believed that pastors cannot be effective in their ministry unless the work is done in association with lay members. The ministry of men, women, youth and young adults, and of children are core values for the sustainability of the church. Pastors are called to teach, enhance, and enforce these beliefs within the congregation, and these become the shared values of the church organization.

The changing environment in which the church operates require also leaders to be continuously trained or be involved in a continuous learning culture. And for participants, church leaders need to be regularly trained if the growth and the long-term sustainability of the church are to be achieved. But also, some participants are of the view that training of church leaders enables them to cope with the changing environment. These changes in the two S (Staff and Skills) of this Model not only affect the remaining soft S's but also the hard S's of the model are also affected: the system, the structure, and the strategy of the church organization. In that perspective, the growth and the long-term sustainability of the church become the strategy of the church leadership. According to (Armstrong, 2006), strategy is about deciding

where you want to go and how you mean to get there. Strategies define longer-term goals, but they are more concerned with how those goals should be achieved. This strategy, if adopted by the congregation, may require a change in the structure of the church organization in order to align not only the staff with the strategy but also the structure that allows easy implementation of that strategy. Nevertheless, strategy is formulated based on the vision of the organization and trained church leaders in collaboration with the congregation need to cast that vision. Additionally, the church leaders need also to put in place a system of procedures that supports the structure and the strategy. These may be financial procedures in order to enhance church funds accountability. This may include for instance a set of procedures that need to be followed by the congregation in case of a new convert or a new worship place or local church as it is known within the UMC. Training church leaders has therefore a positive impact on the overall church ministry: the structure, the system, the strategy, the staff, the skills, the style, and the shared values. And this leads to ownership of church activities by the congregation in line with the ecclesiological framework.

This framework was coined in order to respond to a series of questions after the Second Vatican council. As Helgen (2020) notes, issues around the following questions were discussed: Who is the Church? Where is the Church? What does it mean to be Church? How should the Church be structured? How is ecclesiastical authority exercised? What are the roles of bishops, priests, and the laity? And according to Helgen (2020), these questions constitute the core elements of the worldly manifestation and mission of the Church. Trained church leaders promote this ecclesiological framework as the congregation recognizes the need to be actively involved in the church ministries as people created in the image of God.

The consequences of not training church leaders or having untrained church leaders are enormous. Three main consequences were raised by participants to this research: poor performance due to lack of skills, lack of spiritual and economic growth, and poor or bad

leadership. In addition to those consequences, participants added a very important point: untrained leaders may be source of conflict. The purpose of this study was to determine whether church leaders may be among the roots of conflicts. And all participants agreed that a church leader can be a source of conflict. Being a human being, a church leader is not spared too. This implies therefore that church leaders need to be aware of the danger of being a source of conflict and seek ways of mitigating this either through leadership training sessions or other related training sessions such as conflict management. Participants believe that these trainings can help church leaders to mitigate church conflicts, a point that (Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014) support: knowledge and skills are key ingredients to conflict resolution. For Northouse (2016), leaders can become better problem solvers through training. Training therefore affects the attitudes of the church leaders and turns them into servants. This connects well with the servant leadership theory. Church leaders are called to be servants of the congregation, take care of the interests of others, and serve others first. They are called servants of the house of the Lord and should therefore demonstrate a high degree of stewardship of the people they lead (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). And this requires the church leaders to search for ways and means of empowering the congregations so that they become what they are supposed to be. Doing this will enable the congregation to own the church, to have another perspective of what the church mission is, and their respective role in achieving this mission.

5.3.2 Received and planned training programs

Regarding training programs so far received and those to be received in future, the analysis of data indicated that participants have at least attended to one training program and the top four programs are training on leadership, conflict resolution, theological studies, and health care and HIV prevention. Participants expressed also their desire to have more training courses in leadership, conflict management, information technology, UMC Doctrine, Polity and History, Theological studies, church administration, etc. It is not surprising to note that

participants are eager to be trained in leadership, conflict management, and the UMC Doctrine and History. These three training courses were highly rated because participants are convinced that those who steered up the UMC conflict had no training in leadership in general but in the church polity, in particular. Hence most participants expressed their desire to learn more on leadership, conflict management, and on church related courses.

The findings revealed also that not all participants received training even though they are in leadership positions within the church. What could be the possible implications of this finding? Though it requires more research on establishing the relationship between training and performance for this current study, but scholars such as (Armstrong, 2006; Grensing-Pophal, 2010; Xhemajli, Vokshi, & Neziraj, 2022) have concluded that training plays a major role on the performance of staff. Through training, people acquire new skills and knowledge that enable them to carry out their duties effectively. Therefore, how do those leaders who did not receive training carry out their duties? This may be an interesting topic for further research. Based on the findings of scholars and based on the responses provided by participants on the consequences of not training church leaders, the work of the ministry does suffer if leaders are not trained. Hence, participants expressed their interest in various training programs including leadership, conflict management, church related courses, etc. This is a vibrant call that the church should consider seriously the training of its leaders. The assessment of training needs must be conducted in order to determine which areas church leaders need capacity building.

5.3.3 Role of church leaders in church conflict

Regarding the role of church leaders in a church conflict resolution, all participants do support the idea that the involvement of church leaders in that process is very necessary. The findings proved that conflict is inevitable even in church organizations. In other words, church organizations are also exposed to conflicts. Considering that a church is a community of

believers and the Son of God- the Messiah as the head of the church, someone may jump to a conclusion that the church is spared from conflict. Hence, the role of church leaders in church conflict is very crucial. Church leaders should act as mediators and agents of reconciliation. The aim of their involvement in conflict resolution should be to reconcile and promote peaceful agreement among the fighting sheep. Throughout this process, church leaders are to maintain impartiality attitude. Therefore, if church leaders must play this role in an efficient and effective manner, they must be without reproach. In other words, they need to be solution providers rather than problem creators. They should be trustworthy towards the congregation and promote therefore impartiality behaviour. Nevertheless, a church leader is not only called to resolve conflicts but also called to take prevention measures and this can be achieved through training of the church members.

The findings indicated that most participants have been involved in conflict management cases. They shared the different styles they used, and adjudication was mainly cited by participants. This approach to conflict management entails gathering all parties involved in the dispute for a meeting, typically held in the chambers or compounds of family heads, community leaders, or the palace court, depending on the situation. (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). According to participants, the aim of meeting the parties in conflict was to understand the nature of the conflict as narrated by the concerned parties. Once their stories are heard and confronted, the next step was either to advise them on how to resolve the conflicts in amicable agreement or to reach a reconciliation. For participants, bringing the disputants into the conflict at the same table promotes dialogue and this leads in one way or the other to reconciliation. Others opted to hear disputants in the conflict separately before meeting them. This process enabled participants to first understand how each party to the conflict defines the origin of the conflict. It is in line with the first two steps of a problem-solving model that requires to identify the problem and determine the roots of the problem. It is during this stage that some participants

engaged their active listening skills in order to clearly understand the problem and its main roots. With this information at hand, participants were therefore able to either act as counsellors or as mediators in resolving the conflict. As counsellors, some participants encouraged the parties in conflict to fix themselves the conflict. As mediators, participants promoted dialogue through arbitration and adjudication as a way of reconciling the disputants in conflicts.

The main ways of resolving or managing church conflict as listed by participants include mediation, reconciliation, listening church members, prayer, word of God, and promoting Christian's ethics teachings. Among the many ways that participants shared, mediation and reconciliation were the favoured ways of managing church conflict. A church conflict destroys the congregation and for participants, conflict management styles that protect the congregation should be considered as the best options as noted by (Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009) who wrote that reconciliation and forgiveness should be the foundational Christian motivation of all conflict resolution. In addition to those two main ways of managing church conflicts, participants stressed the importance of communication. Church leaders are to promote communication in order to allow the congregation to be aware of what is going on in their church community. Lack of information may lead to misunderstanding, to perceived conflict. According to (Kurtz, 1982), realistic conflict can be "managed, " but nonrealistic or perceived conflict may require therapy. This point was also supported by (Budjac Corvette, Conflict Management: A Practical Guide to Developing Negotiation Strategies, 2014) who made the following statement: "In interpersonal interaction, perception is more important than reality. What we think-perceive- affects our behaviour, attitude, and communication." This can be therefore prevented through enhanced communication, organizing church meetings so that church members can have the opportunity to contribute to the affairs of their church in accordance with the theoretical ecclesiological framework.

5.3.4 Possible roots of church conflict

Participants listed the possible roots of church conflicts, causes that are supported by other existing studies existing researches (Merriam, 2009; Cassimy, Jules, & Satelmajer, 2009; Budjac Corvette, 2014; Coleman, Deutsch, & Marcus, 2014; Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019).

This issue is related to the second step of the Six-Step Problem Solving model: determining the root causes of the problem. Participants identified three main roots of church conflict: power or leadership position struggle, mismanagement of church funds, and division either among church leaders themselves or among church leaders and church members. These three roots were the main characteristics of the UMC conflict that endured for twelve years. In addition to those roots, participants added another specific cause root of violating the Book of Discipline of the church, especially paragraphs associated with the nomination, election, and consecrating of a bishop in the UMC. Nevertheless, participants did not leave out the self-interest motives as a source of church conflict. Power struggle, mismanagement of funds, and division are all rooted in trying to satisfy or promote self-interest motives. The individual self-centeredness is at the main origin of conflicts.

Participants did also endorse that a church leader may be a source of conflict. And if that is the case, participants suggested that care should be taken in resolving such conflict involving a church leader. However, participants did also suggest ways of resolving conflicts that may happen between individuals or groups of people. Reconciliation was the dominant way of resolving the conflict and it is explained by the fact that in a church setting environment, the love of God must be demonstrated when dealing with church conflict. As Jesus Christ, through his sacrifice, reconciled us to God, church members are also called to reconcile to one another any time there is a misunderstanding between them.

Nevertheless, it was noticed that few participants are aware of the different styles of conflict management. But also, it was realized that participants do not see conflict as a source

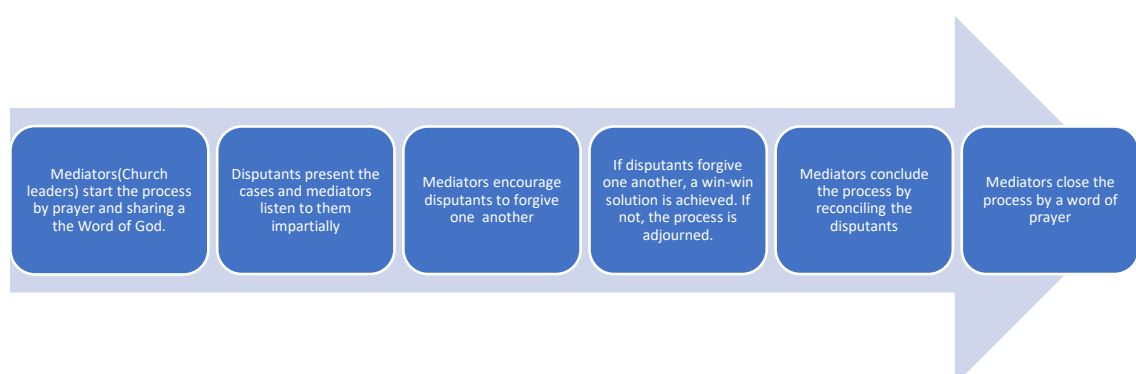
of change. This constitutes a call for church organizations to continuously train their leaders in order to be fully equipped on how to effectively do their respective ministries and be able to tackle challenges or conflicts related to the ministry.

5.4 Recommendations for application

The study focus was on the analysis of the evangelical church leadership and its role in church conflicts. The United Methodist Church in Burundi has been used in order to carry out this analysis. The findings of the research led to the formulation of the following list of recommendations for application.

5.4.1 Suggested conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist church in Burundi

After the analysis of the findings, the following conflict resolution framework for the United Methodist Church in Burundi has been suggested. One of the major concerns of all participants is to maintain unity within church members during conflict resolution. In other words, church leaders must ensure that the flock is protected. Hence, participants are of the views of using mediation and reconciliation as conflict resolution styles. Church leaders should act as mediators and a win-win situation should be promoted to avoid a resurgence of the conflict issues (Nnamdi, 2023). Based on those findings, the Peace-Building framework is recommended for the United Methodist Church in Burundi. This model is built on forgiveness and aims at restoring unity among church members. It is a process made of the following steps:



One of the next steps of this research is to suggest ways of dealing with those identified causes. In other words, since possible roots of church conflicts have been identified, is it possible for church leaders to avoid being trapped by those causes? What can be done to avoid further conflicts based on the identified roots? These few questions lead to the formulation of recommendations, either for application or for future research.

5.4.2 To church organizations and its leaders

- Assess the training needs for its people, especially those in various positions, and develop a human resource development plan. Church organization needs to design a human resource development plan creating therefore suitable learning opportunities to its staff (clergy and lay leaders, and other personnel).
- Organize continuous training for church leaders in various topics such as leadership, conflict management, and in other topics as the situation may require.
- Encourage church leaders to embrace the learning culture. This requires church leaders to be committed to continuous training and learning.
- Share the skills and knowledge acquired through training and learning with other leaders. Trained church leaders should train and empower other leaders so that they acquire skills in solving problems and enhance their leadership effectiveness in their respective ministries.
- Encourage church leaders to promote and increase communication with the congregation under their leadership. This may help to avoid unnecessary conflict.
- Take note of the possible roots of church conflicts and different conflict management styles and use the findings to develop a strategic plan for sensitizing its congregations in general and of its leaders in particular.

- Be aware of the role that church leaders must play in conflictual situations. The success of conflict resolution depends heavily on the shoulders of church leaders.
- View conflict with another perspective. Instead of considering it as something to be avoided, the church should put in place proper mechanism to handle conflict for the advantage of the church.

5.4.3 To leaders of other organizations

- Learn from the findings of this study to address issues related to human resource development programs, conflict management, and other issues that the organizations are facing.
- Have a different perspective and understanding of the conflict concept and learn how to handle it to produce positive results for the organization.

5.4.4 To members of different church denominations

- Support their church leaders in their personal development programs, knowing that training will not only be beneficial for church leaders but also for the congregation.
- Have a role to play in handling conflicts. Even though handling conflicts is primarily the responsibility of church leaders, members involved must demonstrate the willingness to settle the dispute and reestablish peace and harmony between themselves.
- Be aware of the dangers of persistent conflictual situations within the church community and work towards resolving the conflict because living in perpetual disagreements will suck the vibrancy of the flock.

5.4.5 To government entities in charge of religious organizations

- Use the findings of this research to advise church organizations and other organizations in general, and those facing conflicts in particular.

5.5 Recommendations for academic and future research

The findings for this research can be used as secondary data for other researchers. But also, the findings call for further research in this area of church leadership and its role in church conflict. In addition, there are other aspects that were not covered in this study. Further researchers would then:

- Conduct research in order to evaluate the relationship between offering training sessions to church leaders and the survival and the growth of church ministries.
- Evaluate the performance of trained church leaders.
- Evaluate the relationship between training church leaders and handling conflict cases.
- Examine the relationship between servant leadership and church stability.

References

- Adams, J., Raeside, R., & Khan, H. T. (2014). *Research Methods for Business and Social Science Students*. New Delhi: Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd.
- Afolabi, O. O. (2018). Alternative Dispute Resolution: A Tool for Managing Leadership Conflict in a Church. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 41-45.
- Afolabi, O. O. (2021). Why Leadership conflict exists in the Church: The Structural Conflict Theory Perspective. *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* , 90-97.
- Ajayi, A. T., & Buhari, L. O. (2014). Methods of Conflict Resolution in African Traditional Society. *African Research Review*, 138-157.
- Ajayi, K., & Olorunsola, V. (2021). Clergy Burnout in the Context of Nigerian Church Conflict. *African Sociological Review*.
- Akinyemi, B. (2018). Leadership Crisis and Church Schisms in African Independent Churches. *Journal of Church and State*.
- American Psychological Association. (2002). *American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*.
- Anastas, J. W. (1999). *Research Design for Social Work and the Human Services*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Anderson, G. A. (2009). *Sin: A History*. New Haven : Yale University Press.
- Andrews, R. (2003). *Research Questions*. London: Continuum.
- Aquinas, T., Larcher, F. R., Weisheipl, J. A., Keating, D., & Levering, M. (2010). *Commentary on the Gospel of John, Chapters 6-12*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press.
- Armstrong, M. (2006). *A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice* . London: Kogan Page.

- Armstrong, M. (2006). *Strategic Human Resource Management: A Guide to Action* . London: Kogan Page.
- Armstrong, M. (2010). *Armstrong's Essential Human Resource Management Practice: A Guide to People Management*. London: Kogan Page.
- Avolio, B. J. (2004). *Leadership Development in Balance: MADE/Born*. Taylor Francis Group.
- Ayiro, L. P. (2012). *A Functional Approach to Educational Research Methods and Statistics: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Lewiston, N.Y: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Ayojimi, M. (2019). *A Church Conflict: Lamentations, Lessons and Reflections*. Lagos.
- Baloyi, M. E. (2013). Wife beating amongst Africans as a challenge to pastoral care. *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* , 1-10.
- Baloyi, M. E. (2014). The Pastor's Role in Managing Church Conflict in South Africa. *HTS Theological Studies*.
- Barker, A. (2010). *Improve Your Communication Skills*. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Barrett, C. (2002). *Acts of the Apostles: A Shorter Commentary*. London: T&T Clark.
- Barrow, C. J. (2006). *Environmental Management for Sustainability Development*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Bixby, D. J. (2016). *Navigating the Nonsense: Church Conflict and Triangulation*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Board of Discipleship. (2016). *Guidelines Nominations and Leadership Development: Leaders Are the Key to Church Vitality*. Abingdon Press.
- Bosch, D. (1991). *Transforming Mission*. Mary knoll: Orbis.
- Bourke, J., Kirby, A., & Doran, J. (2016). *Survey&Questionnaire Design: Collecting Primary Data to Answer Research Questions*. Ireland: NuBooks.
- Bowen, R. (1996). *So I Send You*. London: SPCK.

- Briggs, R. (1997). *Global Action*. Carlisle: OM Publishing.
- Buchanan, M. T. (2013). *Leadership and Religious Schools: International Perspectives and Challenges*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Budjac Corvette, B. A. (2014). *Conflict Management: A Practical Guide to Developing Negotiation Strategies*. England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Bugiulescu, M. (2019). The Consequence of the Sin at the Level of Human Kind, Will, and Sentiment and of Freedom and Consciousness. *ICOANA CREDINȚEI* , 49-58.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Open Integrated Media.
- Campbell, D. A. (2018, Jan 01). Culture wars at Corinth: Paul's leadership in a divided church. *Christian Century*, 135(1), pp. 28-31.
- Carroll, J. T. (2012). *Luke: A Commentary*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Cassimy, S. D., Jules, A. J., & Satelmajer, N. (2009). *A Guide To Effective Pastoral Ministry*. New York: Pacific Press Publishing Association.
- Chapman, E. N., Knowdell, R. L., & Chapman, E. N. (1993). *Personal Counselling: A practical guide that teaches basic counselling skills*. Course Technology Crisp. .
- Chen, H. X. (2012). *Approaches to Quantitative Research: A Guide for Dissertation Students*. Cork: Oak Tree Press.
- Chitando, E. (2014). Religious Leadership and Conflcit Management in Zimbabwe. *Society*.
- Clarke, A. D. (2012). *Pauline Theology of Church Leadership: A Pauline Theology of Leadership*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Clarke, H. (2003). *The Gospel of Matthew and Its Readers*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Coleman, P. T., Deutsch, M., & Marcus, E. C. (2014). *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: JosseyBass A Wiley Brand.

- Comstock, G. (2013). *Research Ethics: A Philosophical Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Cambridge University Press.
- Coser, L. A. (1957). Social Conflict and the Theory of Social Change. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 197-207.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Washington DC: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2104). *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Washington DC: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Dana, L. R. (2009). *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*. UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- de Bono, E. (2018). *Conflicts: A Better Way to Resolve Them* . London: Vermilion.
- de Roest, H. (2020). Continuing Education in Community Lifelong Learning in Communities of Practice. In H. d. Roest, *Collaborative Practical Theology: Engaging Practitioners in Research on Christian Practices* (pp. 74-89). Brill.
- Demei, S., Moon-Heum, C., Chia-Lin, T., & Rose, M. (2013). Unpaking online learning expereinces: Online learning self-efficacy and learning satisfaction. *Internet and High Education*, 10-17.
- Desjardins, J. R. (2013). *Environmental Ethics: An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Dietrich, B. (1959). *The Cost of Discipleship*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
- Douglas J., M., & Jonathan A., M. (2018). *Creation Care: A Biblical Theology of the Natural World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.
- Dreyer, W. (2015). The real crisis of the church. *Hervorm de Teologieses Studies*, 71(3), 1-5.
- Dunaetz, D. R. (2019). Constructively Managing Program-Related Conflict in Local Churches. *Christian Education Journal* , 259-274.

- Elmer, L. T. (2008). *A Practical Encyclopedia of Evangelism and Church Growth*.
- Elmer, L., John, N. V., & David, J. S. (2002). *The Complete Book of Church Growth*. CA: Institute of American Church Growth.
- Eric, C., & Aaron, B. (2008). *Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Farah, M. D., Çetinkaya, A. Ş., & Rashid, M. (2019). Do Conflict Types Determine Conflict Management Styles? . *International Journal of Management Research and Emerging Sciences*, 107-113.
- Farr, B., & Kotan, K. (2016). *The Necessary Nine: Things Effective Pastors Do Differently*. Abingdon Press.
- Fox-Genovese, E. (2003, March). Crisis in the church, church in crisis? *Society*, 10-12.
- France, R. (1985). *The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary*. Leicester : IVP.
- Frank, T. E. (2006). *Polity, Practice, and the Mission of The United Methodist Church: 2006 Edition*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Gary, L. M. (2004). *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervantm.
- Gary, Y. (2012). *Leadership in Organizations*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Gleason, N. W. (2018). *Higher Education in the Era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Singapore: Palgrave, macmillan.
- Grensing-Pophal, L. (2010). *Human Resource Essentials: Your Guide to Starting and Running the HR Function*. Society for Human Resource Management.
- Habib, M., Maryam, H., & Pathik, B. B. (2014). *Research Methodology--Contemporary Practices: Guidelines for Academic Researchers*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

- Halverstadt, H. F. (1991). *Managing Church Conflict*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Haydn, W. (2013). *Human Dependence on Nature: How to help solve the environment crisis*. New York: Routledge .
- Hecker, L. L., & Wetchler, J. (2003). *An Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy*. Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.
- Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. Boston: Harvard Business Press.
- Heitzenrater, R. P. (2013). *Wesley and the People Called Methodists: Second Edition*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Heyker, S. G., & Martin, J. A. (2018). Servant Leadership Theory: Opportunities for Additional Theoretical Integration. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 230-243.
- Hogan, J., Dolan, P., & Donnelly, P. (2009). *Approaches to Qualitative Research: Theory & Its Practical Application-A Guide for Dissertation Students*. Cork: Oak Tree Press.
- Hugh, C. (2002). *Sin*. London: New Century Theology.
- Hunsinger, D. V., & Latini, T. F. (2013). *Transforming Church Conflict: Compassionate Leadership in Action*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Hussein, A. F., & Al-Mamary, Y. H. (2019). Conflicts: Their Types, and Their Negative and Positive Effects on Organizations. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 9-13.
- Jeong, H.-W. (2008). *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- John W., C. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- John, S. (2006). *Issues Facing Christians Today* (4th ed.). West Bridgford: Zondervan.

- Kale, D. W., & McCullough, M. (2003). *Managing Conflict in the Church*. Kansas: Beacon Hill Press.
- King, C. S. (1981). *Strength to Love*. Boston: Beacon Press .
- Klopper, C., & Steve, D. (2015). *Teaching for Learning and Learning for Teaching: Peer Review of Teaching in Higher Education*. The Netherlands: Sense Publishers .
- Konradt, M. (2020). *The Gospel According to Matthew: A Commentary*. Waco: Baylor University Press.
- Kothari, C. (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International(P) Ltd., Publishers.
- Kurtz, A. (1982). The Pastor as a Manager of Conflict in the Church . *Andrews Uniuersity Seminary Studies*, 111-126.
- Laceye, C. W. (2014). *The Method of our Mission: United Methodist Polity & Organization*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Leas, S. B. (1985). *Moving your Church through Conflict*. New York: Alban Institute Publication.
- Leavy, P. (2017). *Research Design*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Letellier, R. I. (2015). *Creation, Sin and Reconciliation: Reading Primordial and Patriarchal Narrative in the Book of Genesis*. Newcastle: Cambride Scholars Publishing.
- Lightfoot, J., Witherington III, B., & Still, T. D. (2015). *The Gospel of St. John: A Newly Discoverd Commentary*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic.
- Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Appllication, & Skill Development*. United States: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Lynch, G. (2002). *Pastoral Care and Counselling* . SAGE Publications.
- Maddox, R. L. (1994). *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville, Tennessee: Kingswood Books.

- Maia, F. (2020, March 29). *Why We should care about the environment*. Retrieved from www.greenspaces.com/blog/2020/29/30/6
- Maloney, L. M., Reimer, I. R., & Beavis, M. A. (2022). *Acts of the Apostles*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Michael Glazier.
- Marques, F., Lourenço, P. R., Dimas, I. D., & Rebelo, T. (2015). The Relationship between Types of Conflict, Conflict Handling Strategies and Group Effectiveness. *Journal of Spatial and Organizational Dynamics*, 58-77.
- Marten, G. G. (2001). *Human Ecology: Basic Concepts for Sustainable Development*. Earthscan.
- Mayer, B. (2012). *The Dynamics of Conflict: A Guide to Engagement and Intervention*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. .
- McCully, C. (2021). *Conflict Resolution to Preserve Church Unity*. Portland: Digital Commons @ George Fox University.
- McGavran, A. D. (1990). *Understanding Church Growth* (Third ed.). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Merida, T. (2020). *Christ-Centered Conflict Resolution: A Guide for Turbulent Times*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Miller, C. (1997). *The Empowered Leader: 10 Keys to Servant Leadership*. B&H Publishing Group.
- Mills, B. E. (2013). *Let the Church be the Church: Facing the Lack of Moral Leadership Accountability in Christianity*. Morgan: James Publishing.
- Morris, L. (1974). *The Gospel According to St Luke*. Leicester: IVP.

- Ngong, D. (2020). Theological Education and Conflict Management in the African Church .
Studies in World Christianity.
- Nitze, P. H. (1993). Training Leaders for a Changing World. *SAIS Review*, 1-9.
- Nnamdi, G. F. (2023). *Conflicts in the Church: Negotiation, resolution and Management: Key to Church Unity*. Lagos: Commune Writers Int'l.
- Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Olayemi, F. (2016). Church Conflict and Management: The Role of African Traditional Methods. *Journal of Pan African Studies*.
- Omisore, B. O., & Abiodun, A. R. (2014). Organizational Conflicts: Causes, Effects and Remedies. *International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences*, 118-137.
- Outler, A. C., & Heitzenrater, R. P. (1991). *John Wesley's Sermons : An Anthology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Oxford English Dictionary. (2014). *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Peters, D. (1997). *Surviving Church Conflict*. Scottdale, Pa: Herald Press.
- Piccolo, F. L., & Thomas, H. (2009). *Ethics and Planning Research*. Routledge.
- Pojman, L. P., Pojman, P., & Mcshane, K. (2017). *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Pokras, S. (2010). *Problem Solving for Teams: Make Consensus More Achievable*. Rochester, N.Y : Axzo Press.
- Porta, D. D., & Michael, K. (2008). *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rashid, H., Robert, S., & Neville, A. (2005). *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Current State and Trends*. Washington: Island Press.

- Riccards, M. P. (2012). *Faith and Leadership: The Papacy and the Roman Catholic Church*. Lexington Books.
- Richard, P. H. (2013). *Wesley and the People Called Methodists: Second Edition*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Roberts, V. (2011). *Authentic Church: True Spirituality in a Culture of Counterfeits*. IVP Books.
- Robson, S. (2013). *Living with Conflict: A Challenge to a Peace Church*. Scarecrow Press, Incorporated.
- Rodney, S. (1996). *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Russell, R. F., & Stone, G. A. (2002). A Review of Servant Leadership Attributes: Developing a Practical Model. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 145-157.
- Saldana, J., & Leavy, P. (2011). *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research*. USA: Oxford University Press.
- Salkind, N. J. (2010). *Encyclopedia of Research Design*. California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Sarah J., T. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. .
- Scarafie, G., & Gruenpeter Gold, L. (2016). *Paradoxes of Conflicts*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Scott, J. J. (2002). *United Methodist Doctrine: The Extreme Center*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Sendjaya, S., & Sarros, J. C. (2002). Servant leadership: It's origin, development, and application in organizations. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 57-64.
- Shajahan, S., & Shajahan, L. (2000). *Organisation Behaviour*. New Age International Ltd.

- Sofoluwe, A. e. (2013). Conflict Management Strategies in Nigerian Pentecostal Churches .
ResearchGate.
- Stavros G., P., & Vassilis J., I. (2016). *Environment and Development: Basic Principles, Human Activities, and Environmental Implications*. Oxford: Elsevier B.V.
- Stephen D., L., Marylynn T., Q., & Frances Julia, R. (2012). *Qualitative Research: An Introduction to Methods and Designs*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Steve, C. (2005). *The Church in Many Houses: Reaching Your Community through Cell-Based Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Steven J., T., Robert, B., & Marjorie L., D. (2016). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook AND rESOURCE*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. .
- Still, T. D. (1999). *Conflict at Thessalonica: A Pauline Church and Its Neighbours*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Stott, J. (1975). *Christian Mission in the Modern World*. London : Falcon.
- Stott, J. (2006). *Issues Facing Christians Today* (4th ed.). West Bridgford: Zondervan.
- Tahir, S., Almas, S., Anis-ul-HAg, M., & Niazi, G. (2014). Leadership styles: relationship with conflict management styles. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 25(3), 214-225.
- Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. L. (2016). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods*. New Jersey.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. .
- Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. L. (2016). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Tomlinson, H. (2004). *Educational Leadership: Personal Growth for Professional Development*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Tracy, S. J. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

- United Methodist Church. (2016). *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2016*. Nashville, Tennessee: The United Methodist Publishing House.
- van Dierendonck, D., & Patterson, K. (2018). *Practicing Servant Leadership: Developments in Implementation*. Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vandenbosch, B. (2003). *Designing Solutions for Your Business Problems: A Structured Process for Managers and Consultants*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Vinet, A. (2017). *Pastoral Theology or the Theory of the Evangelical Ministry*. United States: Puritain Publications and A Puritan's Mind.
- Wagner, C. P. (2003). *Church Growth: The State of the Art*.
- Walliman, N. (2011). *Research Methods: The Basics*. London: Routledge.
- Wanyande, P. (2012). Ethnicity and Leadership in Church Conflicts in Kenya. *African Journal of Political Science*.
- Wasonga, O. J. (1994). *Reflections on the Decade of Evangelism and Development*. Nairobi: Uzima Press.
- Wayne, G. (2018). *Christian Ethics: An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning*. Illinois: Crossway.
- Willimon, W. H. (2002). *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon Press .
- Word, J. K., & Sowa, J. E. (2017). *The Nonprofit Human Resource Management Handbook: From Theory to Practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Wuthnow, R. (1997). *The Crisis in the Churches: Spiritual Malaise, Fiscal Woe*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Xhemajli, A., Vokshi, B., & Neziraj, E. (2022). The Leadership of Human Resource Training and their Impact on Orgnaisational Performance. *Human Research in Rehabilitation*, 162–170.

- Young, D. S. (1999). *Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs*. Scottdale, Pa: Herald Press.
- Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in Organizations*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Zartman, I. W. (2008). *Negotiation and Conflict Management: Essays on theory and practice*. New York: Routledge.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Data Collection tools

Research questionnaire

RSQ0: Identification

1. Participant ID code:.....
2. How long have you been a member of the church?.....
3. How old are you?.....
4. Are you? Pastor ☐ Lay ☐
5. If you are a Lay, which church leadership position do you occupy?.....
6. Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

RSQ1. How do church members view the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders?

1. What do you understand by church leadership training?
2. Do you see any importance of being trained in leadership? If yes, why? If no, why?
3. What are the consequences of a church leader not being trained?

RSQ2. What kind of training have the church leaders received?

1. Have you been trained in church leadership?
2. What types of training have you so far received?
3. Which other training would you like to receive?

RSQ3. How do church leaders get involved in conflicts?

1. What do you understand by conflict?
2. Do you think that church leaders should get involved in managing conflict? If yes, why and how?
3. Have you been involved in conflict resolution? If yes, what style of conflict management did you use?
4. What could be a possible way of resolving a church conflict?

RSQ4. What are the possible roots of church crises?

1. Can you give the possible causes of church crisis?
2. According to you, what is the main root of the church crisis?
3. Is it possible for a church leader to be a source of conflict? If yes, how can you address that?

Interview Questions

RSQ0: Identification

1. Participant ID code.....
2. How long have you been a member of the church?.....
3. How old are you?.....
4. Are you? Pastor ☐ Lay ☐
5. If you are a Lay, which church leadership position do you occupy?.....
6. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

RSQ1: Understanding of church leadership

1. How do you define church leadership?
2. Do you consider yourself a church leader? If yes, why? If not, why?
3. Do you have any idea on the type of leadership?

RSQ2: Importance of church leaders training session

1. Have you received any leadership training?
2. If yes, which type of training did you receive?
3. Did you find the training beneficial? If yes, how?
4. What was the duration of the training you received?
5. Do you have any other area of training interest?

RSQ3: Church conflicts and sources of conflicts

1. Have you experienced a church conflict?
2. What was the source of that conflict?
3. How did you- as a church leader- deal with it?
4. Can you give other sources of church conflict?
5. What roles do church leader play in church conflict?

Face to face Focus Group Questions:

A. Clergy participants

RSQ0: Identification

1. How long have you been a member of the clergy?.....
2. How old are you?.....
3. Marital status Married ☐ Single ☐ Widowed ☐
4. How long have you been pastoring this local church?.....
5. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

RSQ1: Understanding of church leadership

1. How do you define church leadership?
2. Which leadership style do you use most?

RSQ2: Importance of church leaders training session

1. Which training session have you so far received?
2. Did you find the training beneficial? If yes, how?
3. What was the duration of the training you received?
4. Do you have any other area of training interest?

RSQ3: Church conflicts and sources of conflicts

1. Have you experienced a church conflict?
2. What was the source of that conflict?
3. How did you- as a church leader- deal with it?
4. Can you give other sources of church conflict?
5. What roles do church leader play in church conflict?

B. Youth / Women participants

RSQ0: Identification

1. How long have you been a member of the church?.....
2. How old are you?.....
3. Which church leadership position do you occupy?.....
4. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

RSQ1: Understanding of church leadership

1. How do you define church leadership?
2. Do you consider yourself a church leader? If yes, why? If not, why?
3. Do you have any idea on the types of leadership? If yes, what are the leadership styles that you know?

RSQ2: Importance of church leaders training session

1. Have you received any leadership training?
2. If yes, which type of training did you receive?
3. Did you find the training beneficial? If yes, how?
4. What was the duration of the training you received?
5. Do you have any other area of training interest?

RSQ3: Church conflicts and sources of conflicts

1. Have you experienced a church conflict?
2. What was the source of that conflict?
3. How did you- as a church leader- deal with it?
4. Can you give other sources of church conflict?
5. What role do church leader play in church conflict?

IBIBAZO VY'UBUSHAKASHATSI

RSQ0: UMWIDONDORO

1. Inomero ya karangamuntu:
2. Umaze ikiringo kingana gute uri umurongozi m'urushengero?
3. Ufise imyaka ingahe? 20-3 31 0 uduga
4. Ujejwe iki? Pasitor Umulayike
5. Nimba uri umulayike, ujejwe iki mw'ishengero?
6. Igitsina Gabo Gore Ikindi Akabang

RSQ1. MBEGA ABANYESHENGERO BABONA GUTE AKAMARO KO GUKARIHIRIZWA UBWENGE BW'ABARONGOZI?

1. Utahura gute gukarihiriza ubwenge abarongozi ?
2. Woba ubona akamaro ko gukarihiriza ubwenge abarongozi? Nimba ari ego Kuberiki?
Nimba ari oya kubera iki?
3. Ni izihe nyigisho nkarishabwenge umaze guhabwa?
4. Ni izihe ngaruka mbi z'abarongonzi badakarihirizwa ubwenge?
5. Ni izihe zindi nyigisho nkarishabwenge wipfuza guhabwa?

RSQ2. NI GUTE UMURONGOZI ARABWA N'AMATATI?

1. Kubwawe amatati ni iki?
2. Uribazako Abarongonzi b'ishengero bategerezwa gutatura amatati? Nimba ari ego, Kuberiki? Gute?
3. Uramaze gutatura amatati? Nimba ari ego, Ni ubuhe buhinga wakoresheje?

4. Ni iyihe nzira nziza yogutatura amatati yadutse mw'ishengero?

RSQ3. NI IZIHE SOKO Z'IBIBAZO MW'ISHENGERO?

1. Wotubwira ibikunda gutera ingorane/amatati mw'ishengero?
2. Kubwawe Nikihe kintu nyamukuru gitera ingorane/amatati mw'ishengero?
3. Birashoboka ko umurongozi w'ishengero aba isoko ry'ibibazo? Nimba ari ego, wobikemura gute?

IBIBAZO VY'IKIGANIRO

RSQ0: UMWIDONDORO

1. Inomero ya karangamuntu:
2. Umaze ikiringo kingana gute uri umurongozi m'urushengero?
3. Ufise imyaka ingahe? 20-3 3 uduga
4. Ujejwe iki? Pasitor Umulayike
5. Nimba uri umulayike, ujejwe iki mw'ishengero?
6. Igitsina Gabo Gore Ikindi Akabang

RSQ1: GUTAHURA UBURONGOZI BW'ISHENGERO

1. Uriyumva nk'umurongozi w'ishengero? Nimba ari ego, kubera iki? Nimba ari oya kubera iki?
2. Woba ufise ico uzi k'uburongozi kanaka? Harico woba uzi kubijanye n'ubwoko bw'uburongozi?

RSQ2: AKAMARO KO GUKARISHA UBWENGE KU BARONGOZI

B'AMASHENGERO

1. Uramaze kuronswa inyigisho z'uburongozi?
2. Nimba ari ego, nubuhe bwoko bw'inyigisho mumaze kuronka?
3. Wasanze izo nyigisho ari ngirakamaro?
4. Izo nyigisho mwahawe zamaze ikiringo kingana gute?
5. Woba ufise ikindi kintu wipfuza kwongererezwamwo ubumenyi?

RSQ3: AMATATI MU RUSHENGERO N'INKOMOKO ZAYO

1. Uramaze kuba mumatati y'urushengero?
2. Ayo matati yaraturutse kuki?
3. Nk'umurongozi w'ishengero wayatatuye gute?
4. Wotubwira izindi nkomoko z'amatati mu mashengero?
5. Ni urwahe ruhara Abarongozi b'ishengero bafise mu gutatura amatati ?

IBIBAZO VYO MU MIGWI

A. ABA PASITORI BITABIRIYE

RSQ0: UMWIDONDORO

1. Umaze ikiringo kingana gute uri umu Pasitori mw'ishengero?
2. Ufise imyaka ingahe? 20-30 31-45 46 kuduga
3. Urubatse ntarubaka yarapfakaye
4. Umaze igihe kingana gute urungoye urushengero? 1-5 6-10 11 kuduga
5. Igitsina Gabo Gore Ikindi akabanga

RSQ1: GUTAHURA UBURONGOZI BW'ISHENGERO

1. Usigura gute uburungonzi bw'ishengero?
2. Kenshi urongora gute? N'ubuho bwoko bw'urungonzi mukoresha kenshi?

RSQ2: AKAMARO KO GUKARISHA UBWENGE KU BARONGOZI

B'AMASHENGERO

1. Ni izihe nyigisho nkarishabwenge zijanye nuburungozi umaze guhabwa?
2. Wasanze izo nyigisho ari ngirakamaro?
3. Izo nyigisho mwahawe zamaze ikiringo kingana gute?
4. Woba ufise ikindi kintu wipfuza kwongererezwako ubumenyi?

RSQ3: AMATATI MW'ISHENGERO N'INKOMOKO ZAYO

1. Uramaze kuba mu matati mw'ishengero?
2. Ayo matati yaraturutse kuki?

3. Nk'umurongozi w'ishengero wayatatuye gute?
4. Wotubwira izindi nkomoko z'amatati mu mashengero?
5. Ni uruhe ruhara umurongozi w'ishengero afise mu gutatura amatati ?

B. URWARUKA/ABAKENYEZI BITABIRIYE

RSQ0: UMWIDONDORO

1. Umaze igihe kingana gute murushengero? 1-5 6-10 11-15 6 kuduga
2. Ufise imyaka ingahe? 20-35 36-45 46-55 56 kuduga
3. Ujejwe iki mw'ishengero?
4. Igitsina Gabo Gore ikindi akabanga

RSQ1: GUTAHURA UBURONGOZI BW'ISHENGERO

1. Usigura gute uburungonzi bw'ishengero?
2. uriyumva nk'umurongozi w'ishengero? Nimba ari ego, kubera iki? Nimba ari oya kubera iki?
3. woba ufise ico uzi k'ubwoko bw'urungonzi? Nimba ari ego. Nubuhe bwoko bw'uburongozi uzi?

RSQ2: AKAMARO KO GUKARISHA UBWENGE KU BARONGOZI B'AMASHENGERO

1. Uramaze kuronswa inyigisho z'uburongozi?
2. Nimba ari ego, nubuhe bwoko bw'inyigisho?
3. Wasanze izo nyigisho ari ngirakamaro?

4. Izo nyigisho mwahawe zamaze ikiringo kingana gute?
5. Woba ufise ikindi kintu wipfuza kwongererezwako ubumenyi?

RSQ3: AMATATI MU RUSHENGERO N'INKOMOKO ZAYO

1. Uramaze kuba mumatati y'urushengero?
2. Ayo matati yaraturutse kuki?
3. Nk'umurongozi mw'ishengero wayatatuye gute?
4. Wotubwira izindi nkomoko z'amatati mw'ishengero?
5. Ni urwahe ruhara Abarongozi b'ishengero bafise mu gutatura amatati ?

Appendix 2: Paragraph 2553 of the 2016 BOD

Section VIII. Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality

¶ 2553. Disaffiliation of a Local Church Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality.

1. Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the Book of Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues which follow.

2. Time Limits.

The choice by a local church to disaffiliate with The United Methodist Church under this paragraph shall be made in sufficient time for the process for exiting the denomination to be complete prior to December 31, 2023. The provisions of ¶ 2553 expire on December 31, 2023 and shall not be used after that date.

3. Decision Making Process.

The church conference shall be conducted in accordance with ¶ 248 and shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) days after the district superintendent calls for the church conference. In addition to the provisions of ¶ 246.8, special attention shall be made to give broad notice to the full professing membership of the local church regarding the time and place of a church conference called for this purpose and to use all means necessary, including electronic communication where possible, to communicate. The decision to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the professing members of the local church present at the church conference.

4. Process Following Decision to Disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.

If the church conference votes to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church, the terms and conditions for that disaffiliation shall be established by the board of trustees of the applicable annual conference, with the advice of the cabinet, the annual conference treasurer, the annual conference benefits officer, the director of connectional ministries, and the annual conference chancellor. The terms and conditions, including the effective date of disaffiliation, shall be memorialized in a binding Disaffiliation Agreement between the annual conference and the

trustees of the local church, acting on behalf of the members. That agreement must be consistent with the following provisions:

a) Standard Terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.

The General Council on Finance and Administration shall develop a standard form for Disaffiliation Agreements under this paragraph to protect The United Methodist Church as set forth in ¶ 807.9. The agreement shall include a recognition of the validity and applicability of ¶ 2501, notwithstanding the release of property therefrom. Annual conferences may develop additional standard terms that are not inconsistent with the standard form of this paragraph.

b) Apportionments.

The local church shall pay any unpaid apportionments for the 12 months prior to disaffiliation, as well as an additional 12 months of apportionments.

c) Property.

A disaffiliating local church shall have the right to retain its real and personal, tangible and intangible property. All transfers of property shall be made prior to disaffiliation. All costs for transfer of title or other legal work shall be borne by the disaffiliating local church.

d) Pension Liabilities.

The local church shall contribute withdrawal liability in an amount equal to its pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations to the annual conference. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual conference will determine the local church's share.

e) Other Liabilities.

The local church shall satisfy all other debts, loans, and liabilities, or assign and transfer them to its new entity, prior to disaffiliation.

f) Payment Terms.

Payment shall occur prior to the effective date of departure.

g) Disaffiliating Churches Continuing as Plan Sponsors of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits Plans.

The United Methodist Church believes that a local church disaffiliating under ¶2553 shall continue to share common religious bonds and convictions with The United Methodist Church based on shared Wesleyan theology and tradition and Methodist roots, unless the local church expressly resolves to the contrary. As such, a local church disaffiliating under ¶ 2553 shall continue to be eligible to sponsor voluntary employee benefit plans through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2, subject to the applicable terms and conditions of the plans.

h) Once the disaffiliating local church has reimbursed the applicable annual conference for all funds due under the agreement, and provided that there are no other outstanding liabilities or claims against The United Methodist Church as a result of the disaffiliation, in consideration of the provisions of this paragraph, the applicable annual conference shall release any claims that it may have under ¶ 2501 and other paragraphs of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church commonly referred to as the trust clause, or under the agreement.

From The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2019 Addendum. © 2019 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.



<p align="center">Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee</p> <p align="center">Decision</p>
--

Student's Name: Emmanuel SINZOHAGERA

Student's ID #: R1805D5212653

Supervisor's Name: Dr Attridge Mwelwa

Program of Study: UUZ: PhD Doctor of Philosophy

Offer ID /Group ID: O43516G44318

Dissertation Stage: 3

Research Project Title: Evangelical Church leadership and its role in Church conflicts:
A Case study of the United Methodist Church in Burundi

Comments: No comments.

Decision*: A. Approved without revision or comments

Date: 10-Feb-2023

*Provisional approval provided at the Dissertation Stage 1, whereas the final approval is provided at the Dissertation stage 3. The student is allowed to proceed to data collection following the final approval.

Appendix 4 Informed Consent Form



Informed Consent Form

Debriefing of Participants

Student's Name: Emmanuel Sinzohagera

Student's E-mail Address: delfemma@gmail.com

Student ID #: R1805D5212653

Supervisor's Name: Dr Attridge Mwelwa Mwape

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: UUZ: PhD Doctor of Philosophy

Research Project Title: Evangelical Church Leadership and its Role in Church Conflicts: A case of the United Methodist Church in Burundi

Date: 30-Aug-2022

Provide a short description (purpose, aim and significance) of the research project, and explain why and how you have chosen this person to participate in this research (maximum 150 words).

The purpose of this research is to analyse the role played by church leadership in situation of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow to detect possible sources or roots of church conflicts. It is very important to determine whether church leadership might also be a source of church conflict or crisis. The main aim of this research is to investigate the role of church leaders in church conflicts and other possible roots of church conflicts.

This person has been selected because he/she is a member (clergy or laity) of the United Methodist Church, and he/she has been selected based on the rich information she/he has that will assist the researcher on the in-depth

The above-named Student is committed in ensuring participant's voluntarily participation in the research project and guaranteeing there are no potential risks and/or harms to the participants.

Participants have the right to withdraw at any stage (prior or post the completion) of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In these cases, data collected will be deleted.

All data and information collected will be coded and will not be accessible to anyone outside this research. Data described and included in dissemination activities will only refer to coded information ensuring beyond the bounds of possibility participant identification.

I, Emmanuel Sinzohagera, ensure that all information stated above is true and that all conditions have been met.

Student's Signature:



Informed Consent Form

Certificate of Consent

This section is mandatory and should be signed by the participant(s)

Student's Name: Emmanuel Sinzohagera

Student's E-mail Address: delfemma@gmail.com

Student ID #: R1805D5212653

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Attridge Mwelwa Mwape

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: UUZ: PhD Doctor of Philosophy

Research Project Title: Evangelical Church Leadership and its Role in Church Conflicts: A case of the United Methodist Church in Burundi

I have read the foregoing information about this study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss about it. I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions, and I have received enough information about this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason for withdrawing and without negative consequences. I consent to the use of multimedia (e.g. audio recordings, video recordings) for the purposes of my participation to this study. I understand that my data will remain anonymous and confidential, unless stated otherwise. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Participant's Print name:

Participant's Signature:

Date:

If the Participant is illiterate:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had an opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the aforementioned individual has given consent freely.

Witness's Print name:

Witness's Signature:

Date:



UU GL - Version 2.0

Gatekeeper letter

Address: Kampala, Uganda

Date: 30-Aug-2022

Subject: Request for access to participants

Dear Bishop Daniel WANDABULA, East Africa Episcopal Area, United Methodist Church

I am a doctoral student at Unicaf University-Zambia. As part of my degree, I am carrying out a study on "Evangelical Church leadership and its role in Church conflicts: A Case study of the United Methodist Church in Burundi".

I am writing to request for the permission to conduct the study in UMC and recruit participants from the thirteen districts of the United Methodist Church- Burundi Annual Conference, which is under your leadership.

Subject to approval by Unicaf Research Ethics Committee (UREC), this study will analyze the evangelical church leadership and its role in church conflicts. A case of the United Methodist Church has been selected. Church organizations are not spared from conflicts. The purpose of this research is to examine church leadership, and the role played by church leadership in situation of conflicts. Church conflicts are being observed in some evangelical churches and these have led to the formation of new denominations. Other consequences include internal fighting among church members and legal actions.

This research is under the supervision of Dr Attridge Mwelwa Mwape.

In that perspective, I would highly appreciate it if you send an e-mail to the Conference Secretary allowing me to recruit participants in this research and this work will be done in close collaboration with District Superintendents. Informed consent forms will be issued to participants as well. The collection of data is estimated to take a maximum of three months.

Thank you in advance for your time and for your consideration of this project. Please let me know if you require any further information or need any further clarifications.

Yours Sincerely,

Student's Name: SINZOHAGERA Emmanuel

Student's E-mail: delfemma@gmail.com

Student's Address and Telephone: 40, AV. SIGUVYAYE, SOROREZO. BUJUMBURA, +25769992280

Supervisor's Title and Name: Dr Attridge Mwelwa Mwape

Supervisor's Position: Lecturer

Supervisor's E-mail: a.mwelwa@unicaf.zambia.org


UNICAF UNIVERSITY

UREC USE ONLY:

RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

Application No:

DOCTORAL STUDIES

Date Received:

Student's Name: SINZOHAGERA Emmanuel

Student's E-mail Address: delfemma@gmail.com

Student's ID #: R1805D5212653

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Attridge Mwelwa Mwape

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: UUZ: PhD Doctor of Philosophy

Research Project Title: Evangelical Church Leadership and Its Role in Church Conflicts: A Case of the United Methodist Church in Burundi.

1. Please state the timelines involved in the proposed research project:

Estimated Start Date: 08-Sep-2022 Estimated End Date: 31-Mar-2023

2. External Research Funding (if applicable):
2.a Do you have any external funding for your research?
☐ YES ☒ NO

If YES, please answer questions **2b** and **2c**.

2.b List any external (third party) sources of funding you plan to utilize for your project. You need to include full details on the source of funds (e.g. state, private or individual sponsor), any prior / existing or future relationships between the funding body / sponsor and any of the principal investigator(s) or co-investigator(s) or student researcher(s), status and timeline of the application and any conditions attached.

2.c If there are any perceived ethical issues or potential conflicts of interest arising from applying or and receiving external funding for the proposed research then these need to be fully disclosed below and also further elaborated on, in the relevant sections on ethical considerations later on in this form.

3. The research project

3.a Project Summary:

In this section fully describe the purpose and underlying rationale for the proposed research project. Ensure that you pose the research questions to be examined, state the hypotheses, and discuss the expected results of your research and their potential.

It is important in your description to use plain language so it can be understood by all members of the UREC, especially those who are not necessarily experts in the particular discipline. To that effect ensure that you fully explain / define any technical terms or discipline-specific terminology (use the space provided in the box).

Church organizations are not free from conflicts. Like in any other organization, the role of leaders in conflict resolution or management is very crucial.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the role played by church leadership in situations of church conflicts. In addition to that, the investigation should also allow to detect other possible sources or roots of church conflicts. It is very important to determine whether church leadership might also be a source of church conflict or crisis.

In order to carry out this research, the following questions have been formulated from the above purpose statement:

1. How do church members view the importance of training sessions for clergy and lay leaders?
2. What kind of trainings have the church leaders received?
3. How do church leaders get involved in conflicts?
4. What are the possible roots of church crises?

From the above questions, the following research hypotheses have been formulated:

- The concept of church leadership is not well understood by the congregations
- The leaders of those churches are not trained in church leadership
- Church leaders have no leadership skills to enable them to handle issues related to church organization
- Crises may be motivated by monetary gains of church leaders or power appetites

The expected results from this research would include the possible roots of church conflicts, the training sessions received by church leaders, the role of church leaders in church conflicts.

3.b Significance of the Proposed Research Study and Potential Benefits:

Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research (use the space provided in the box).

There are many reasons why this research is worth of being conducted. The research will give light on possible roots of conflicts related to church leadership and particularly the role played by the church leadership in those times of chaos. Consequently, the understanding of those causes will enable the researcher and other church leaders to avoid conflicts but also it will give some guidance on how to deal with crises because problem solving starts with detecting the causes. Furthermore, if the findings prove that crises and church leadership are interrelated, training sessions may be organized in various denominations in order to equip church leaders with the necessary leadership skills. Other leaders from various domains such as private business, public organizations, and political organizations may also use the findings of the research. The application of the findings will not be limited only to church organizations. The Ministry of Home Affairs that deals with church organizations may also use the findings of this research in updating law and regulations governing religious organizations.

4. Project execution:

4.a The following study is an:

- ☒ experimental study (primary research)
- ☐ desktop study (secondary research)
- ☐ desktop study using existing databases involving information of human/animal subjects
- ☐ Other

If you have chosen 'Other' please Explain:

4.b Methods. The following study will involve the use of:

Method

Materials / Tools

Qualitative:

- ☒ Face to Face Interviews
- ☐ Phone Interviews
- ☒ Face to Face Focus Groups
- ☐ Online Focus Groups
- ☒ Other *

Quantitative:

- ☐ Face to Face Questionnaires
- ☐ Online Questionnaires
- ☐ Experiments Tests
- ☐ Other *

*If you have chosen 'Other' please Explain:

Questionnaire

5. Participants:

5 a. Does the Project involve the recruitment and participation of additional persons other than the researcher(s) themselves?

- ☒ YES If YES, please complete all following sections.
- ☐ NO If NO, please directly proceed to Question [7](#).

5 b. Relevant Details of the Participants of the Proposed Research

State the number of participants you plan to recruit and explain in the box below how the total number was calculated.

Number of participants

This number was calculated from the total population of 1000 participants from 13 districts of the United Methodist Church in Burundi. Using the Slovin $n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$ formula and for the confidence level of 95 percent, the sample size is 286 participants. $n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} = \frac{1000}{1 + 1000 \times 0.05 \times 0.05}$ where n = Number of samples, N = Total population and e = Error tolerance.

Describe important characteristics such as: demographics (e.g. age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc). It is also important that you specify any inclusion and exclusion criteria that will be applied (e.g. eligibility criteria for participants).

Age range From To

Gender ☒ Male
☒ Female

Eligibility Criteria:

☐ Inclusion criteria

Church members of the United Methodist Church in Burundi, both clergy and laity.

☐ Exclusion criteria

Members of other church denominations
Children below 20 years

Disabilities

Participants to this research are those who can provide informed consent for themselves. Individuals who have a mental disability and are not in a position to provide their own consent should not participate in the study.

Other relevant information (use the space provided in the box):

5 c. Participation & Research setting:

Clearly describe which group of participants is completing/participating in the material(s)/ tool(s) described in 5b above (use the space provided in the box).

The total number of participants is 286. This sample will be made of 143 ordained pastors and 143 laity members. The sample should take into consideration gender and age of participants. At least 40% of the participants should be female and at least 30% be selected among youth.

5 d. Recruitment Process for Human Research Participants:

Clearly describe how the potential participants will be identified, approached and recruited (use the space provided in the box).

After getting the permission from the Gatekeeper to get in touch with the District Superintendents or participants, I will organise meetings with them and explain to them the purpose of this study, the participants (pastors and lay leaders) required for each district. Superintendents will help in the identification process of participants and respondents will be selected purposively. Once selected, I will organize a meeting in each district with participants so that they get the information related to the study, the ethical considerations involved and get their consent to participate to the study.

5 e. Research Participants Informed Consent.

Select below which categories of participants will participate in the study. Complete the relevant Informed Consent form and submit it along with the REAF form.

Yes	No	Categories of participants	Form to be completed
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Typically Developing population(s) above the maturity age *	Informed Consent Form
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Typically Developing population(s) under the maturity age *	Guardian Informed Consent Form

* Maturity age is defined by national regulations in laws of the country in which the research is being conducted.

5 f. Relationship between the principal investigator and participants.

Is there any relationship between the principal investigator (student), co- investigators(s), (supervisor) and participant(s)? For example, if you are conducting research in a school environment on students in your classroom (e.g. instructor-student).

☐ YES ☒ NO

If YES, specify (use the space provided in the box).

6. Potential Risks of the Proposed Research Study.

6 a. i Are there any potential risks, psychological harm and/or ethical issues associated with the proposed research study, other than risks pertaining to everyday life events (such as the risk of an accident when travelling to a remote location for data collection)?

☐ YES ☒ NO

If YES, specify below and answer the question 6 a.ii.

6 a. ii Provide information on what measures will be taken in order to exclude or minimize risks described in 6.a.i.

6 b. Choose the appropriate option

		Yes	No
i.	Will you obtain a written informed consent form from all participants?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ii.	Does the research involve as participants, people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
iii.	Does this research involve participants who are children under maturity age? If you answered YES to question iii, complete all following questions. If you answered NO to question iii, do not answer Questions iv, v, vi and proceed to Questions vii, viii, ix and x.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
iv	Will the research tools be implemented in a professional educational setting in the presence of other adults (i.e. classroom in the presence of a teacher)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
v.	Will informed consent be obtained from the legal guardians (i.e. parents) of children?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vi.	Will verbal assent be obtained from children?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vii.	Will all data be treated as confidential? If NO, explain why confidentiality of the data collected is not appropriate for this proposed research project, providing details of how all participants will be informed of the fact that any data which they will provide will not be confidential.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
viii.	Will all participants /data collected be anonymous? If NO, explain why and describe the procedures to be used to ensure the anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of the collected data both during the conduct of the research and in the subsequent release of its findings.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Yes	No
ix	Have you ensured that personal data and research data collected from participants will be securely stored for five years?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
x	Does this research involve the deception of participants? If YES, describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Explain how and when the deception will be revealed, and who will administer this debrief to the participants:	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

6 c. i. Are there any other ethical issues associated with the proposed research study that are not already adequately covered in the preceding sections?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, specify (maximum 150 words).

6.c.ii Provide information on what measures will be taken in order to exclude or minimise ethical issues described in 6.c.i.

6 d. Indicate the Risk Rating.

☐ High ☒ Low

7. Further Approvals

Are there any other approvals required (in addition to ethics clearance from UREC) in order to carry out the proposed research study?

☐

YES NO

☐

If YES, specify (maximum 100 words).

8. Application Checklist

Mark ✓ if the study involves any of the following:

- ☐ Children and young people under 18 years of age, vulnerable population such as children with special educational needs (SEN), racial or ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged, pregnant women, elderly, malnourished people, and ill people.
- ☐ Research that foresees risks and disadvantages that would affect any participant of the study such as anxiety, stress, pain or physical discomfort, harm risk (which is more than is expected from everyday life) or any other act that participants might believe is detrimental to their wellbeing and / or has the potential to / will infringe on their human rights / fundamental rights.
- ☐ Risk to the well-being and personal safety of the researcher.
- ☐ Administration of any substance (food / drink / chemicals / pharmaceuticals / supplements / chemical agent or vaccines or other substances (including vitamins or food substances) to human participants.
- ☐ Results that may have an adverse impact on the natural or built environment.

9. Further documents

Check that the following documents are attached to your application:

	ATTACHED	NOT APPLICABLE
Recruitment advertisement (if any)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Informed Consent Form / Guardian Informed Consent Form	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Tool(s)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gatekeeper Letter	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other approvals required in order to carry out the proposed research study, e.g., institutional permission (e.g. school principal or company director) or approval from a local ethics or professional regulatory body.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Final Declaration by Applicants:

- a) I declare that this application is submitted on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will only be used by Unicaf University for the explicit purpose of ethical review and monitoring of the conduct of the research proposed project as described in the preceding pages.
- b) I understand that this information will not be used for any other purpose without my prior consent, excluding use intended to satisfy reporting requirements to relevant regulatory bodies.
- c) The information in this form, together with any accompanying information, is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.
- d) I undertake to abide by the highest possible international ethical standards governing the Code of Practice for Research Involving Human Participants, as published by the UN WHO Research Ethics Review Committee (ERC) on <http://www.who.int/ethics/research/en/> and to which Unicaf University aspires to.
- e) In addition to respect any and all relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines, where applicable, while in pursuit of this research project.

☐

✓ I agree with all points listed under Question 10

Student's Name:

SINZOHAGERA Emmanuel

Supervisor's Name:

Dr. Attridge Mwelwa Mwape

Date of Application: 30-Aug-2022

Important Note:

Save your completed form (we suggest you also print a copy for your records) and then submit it to your UU Dissertation/project supervisor (tutor). **In the case of student projects, the responsibility lies with the Faculty Dissertation/Project Supervisor.** If this is a student application, then it should be submitted via the relevant link in the VLE. Please submit only electronically filled in copies; **do not** hand fill and submit scanned paper copies of this application.