



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND GOVERNANCE

**EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF PEACEFUL LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS AND
CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CASE STUDY OF AFM IN ZIMBABWE.**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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ABSTRACT

This research explored the dynamics of peaceful leadership transitions and conflict resolution within the context of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe (AFM). The study investigated the nuances that led to leadership spat within AFM in Zimbabwe. It also identified the factors that contributed to leadership conflicts and also assessed the impact of leadership wrangles on the congregants. The research drew insights from Fisher & Ury Interest-based Negotiation theory which emphasizes the importance of understanding the underlying interests and needs of all parties involved in leadership conflicts. The study employed a qualitative research approach, with focus group discussion and interviews as research instruments. A purposive sampling research technique was used and a total of 21 respondents were selected for interview and focus group discussion. The key findings of this study underscores the importance of inclusive decision-making processes, open communication channels and structured conflict resolution mechanisms in fostering peace and resolving disputes within the organization. The study recommends that AFM in Zimbabwe should foster a culture of inclusive decision-making process, this will ensure transparency, ownership and cooperation among the leadership team, the church should encourage active participation and engagement of congregational members in the leadership and conflict resolution processes. By offering insights and solutions tailored to the unique challenges of religious institutions, this research serves as a valuable resource for promoting harmony, unity and effective leadership transitions within AFM and beyond.

Key words: Peace, Religion, Leadership, Conflict

DECLARATION FORM

I, Lean, hereby declare that the work submitted here is the result of my own independent investigation and that all sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

Student`s Signature

.....

Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother Stelah Upenyu Bukuta and all those who strive for peaceful leadership transitions, conflict resolution, and the promotion of harmony in organizations and communities. May this work contribute to the advancement of knowledge and serve as a stepping stone towards a more peaceful and inclusive society.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFM Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe

CC Catholic Church

CCGHP..... Code of Conduct and Grievance Handling Procedure

LGBTQ+..... Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer

SBCSouthern Baptist Convention

UMC.....United Methodist Church

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Sex.....	22
Table 4.2 Roles, Age and Years of involvement.....	23
Table 4.3 Themes.....	24
Table 4.4 Statistics of the theme table.....	27

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Length of responses by participants.....	29
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
DECLARATION FORM.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.0. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of the Study	1
1.2. Aim	2
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.4. Research Objectives.....	3
1.5. Research questions.....	3
1.6. Assumptions for the study	4
1.7. Significance of the study.....	4
1.8. Delimitations of the study	5
1.9. Limitations of the study	5
1.10. Definition of Key Terms	5
1.11. Chapter Outline.....	6
CHAPTER TWO	8

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1. Introduction.....	8
2.2. Theoretical framework.....	9
2.3. Factors that have contributed to leadership conflicts	10
2.4. Effects of leadership wrangles on the congregants	12
2.5. Strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions	14
2.6. Chapter Summary	15
CHAPTER THREE	16
3.0. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	16
3.1. Introduction.....	16
3.2. Research design	17
3.3. Methodology	17
3.4. Research Population.....	17
3.4.1. AFM in Zimbabwe Church Members	17
3.4.2. Current AFM Leadership	18
3.4.3. Past AFM Leaders.....	18
3.4.4. Stakeholders within the AFM	18
3.5. Sample and Sampling techniques	18
3.6. Data collection methods.....	19
3.6.1. Validity of research instruments	19
3.6.2. Reliability of research instruments	19

3.7. Data Presentation and Analysis Procedures.....	20
3.7.1. Data Analysis	20
3.7.2. Data Presentation	20
3.7.3. Descriptive Narratives	20
3.7.4. Tables.....	21
3.7.5. Visual Representation through Info Graphics.....	21
3.8. Ethical Considerations	21
3.9. Chapter Summary	21
CHAPTER FOUR.....	22
4.0. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	22
4.1. Introduction.....	22
4.2. Demographic Presentation of participants	23
4.2.1. Sex	23
4.2.2. Roles, Age range and Years of involvement.....	23
4.2.3. Themes.....	24
4.2.4. Statistics of the theme table	28
4.2.5. Length of responses by participation	29
4.3. Factors contributing to leadership conflicts within the AFM in Zimbabwe.	30
4.3.1. Theological Differences and Interpretations.....	30
4.3.2. Personal Ambitions and Power Dynamics.....	30
4.3.3. Legal Battles and Constitutional Amendments.....	31

4.3.4. Lack of Clear Succession Plan.....	32
4.4. The effects of leadership wrangles on AFM in Zimbabwe congregants.....	33
4.4.1. Emotional Distress and Alienation.	33
4.4.2. Loss of Trust and Confidence	33
4.5. Strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions and mitigate conflicts within the organization	34
4.5.1. Transparency and Accountability Measures	34
4.5.2. Open Communication Channels	35
4.5.3. Conflict Resolution Mechanisms	35
4.5.4. Leadership Training.....	36
4.6. Implications of the findings	36
4.7. Chapter Summary	37
CHAPTER FIVE	38
5.0. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	38
5.1. Introduction.....	38
5.2. Research Summary	38
5.3. Conclusions.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.3.1. Factors that have contributed to leadership conflicts within AFM	40
5.3.2. Effects of leadership wrangles on AFM congregants	41
5.3.3. Strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions within AFM in Zimbabwe	41
5. 4. Recommendations.....	42

5. 5. Areas for Further Research 43

5.6. Chapter Summary 43

REFERENCES 43

ANNEXURES 48

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Throughout history, leadership transitions and conflicts have been top stories of public news worldwide. From the rise and fall of empires to the transformation of religious systems, these transitions and conflicts have shaped our world profoundly. It has been acknowledged how crucial it is for smooth leadership transitions and effective conflict resolution to maintain stability, promote growth and ensure the well-being of communities. However, religious organizations on the other hand has faced complex leadership dynamics and conflict problems in printing unsolved trails from the past. In this section, global, regional and national perspectives on the study of AFM in Zimbabwe are briefly explained.

In United States, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the United Methodist Church (UMC) have a history of leadership transitions disputes. The SBC struggled with issues such as biblical inerrancy and women's roles in the ministry. Historical studies by Fortin (2018) has reviewed an increase in the adoption of conflict resolution strategies like mediation and facilitation techniques by various religious groups (Brassel, 2019). These strategies aimed to promote open dialogue and reconciliation between opposing factions within the convention. The UMC grew out of the Methodist movement of 18th century America. The UMC has experienced internal disputes over biblical interpretation, human sexuality and the ordination of LGBTQ+ clergy (Biggs, 2017). On the issues of LGBTQ+ inclusion and same-sex marriage, the UMC is divided between conservatives and progressives. The turning point in this conflict came in February 2019, when the UMC General Conference in a special session introduced stricter restrictions on same-sex marriage and LGBTQ clergy. This decision deepened the division within the sector.

Also, in Africa, religious organizations have great influence over the communities and political perception. In the past several religious wars and conflicts erupted in Africa for example the Boko Haram in Nigeria documented by Pieri & Zenn (2017) and the jihadists in Northern Mozambique documented by Forquilha & Pereira (2022). It is clear that religion influence people's behavior significantly and it is the priority of African Nations to resolve conflicts within the continent so

that they contribute to the best of the societies. Documented studies in countries like Nigeria and South Africa further highlighted the problems of leadership transitions and conflict resolution in many religious organizations. A study conducted by Ngwoke & Ituma (2020), explored the dynamics of peaceful leadership transitions and conflicts resolution in Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. They highlighted the recurrence of challenges such as power struggle, disputes over succession and conflicts stemming from interpretation of theology.

Moreover, conflicts involving pastors have long been present in the church, especially in Zimbabwe, and AFM is one of those church`s. Since 1915, when AFM in Zimbabwe was established (formerly known as Rhodesian African Church), conflicts among clergy members have consistently occurred within the church, despite it being predominantly overseen by the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa. AFM's self-autonomy in Zimbabwe in 1989 led to numerous conflicts within the church, largely centered around pastors engaging in sexual immorality, drunkenness, misappropriation of funds, confiscation of church properties, leadership disputes, and personality clashes. Handling disputes within AFM in Zimbabwe pastors has always been difficult. In 2007, conflict escalation led to frequent suspension of pastors, case overloads, and court involvement in conflict resolution (Chivasa, 2018). The growing conflict cases prompted interesting considerations about conflict resolution mechanisms. Before 2007, the church mainly used church discipline to address conflicts, imposing censure on offenders for varying periods of three to 12 months based on the offense. The creation of the code of conduct and grievance handling procedure (CCGHP) was a direct response to the perceived threats posed by conflict situations, beginning in 2007 (Kgatile, 2019). AFM in Zimbabwe recognized that conflict can be seen as a challenge rather than inherently negative, and if managed properly, it can have positive effects on the church and society.

1.2. Aim

The main aim of this research is to explore strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions and mitigate conflicts within the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

The Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe has faced challenges of leadership conflicts, which have resulted in internal divisions and disruptions to its operations. These conflicts have

been reported and acknowledged within and outside the organization. (Kukutu, 2020), notes that the AFM in Zimbabwe operates within a broader socio-political context, which means these conflicts do not just affect the organization but might pose a significant threat to the social solidarity of communities across Zimbabwe. According to (Makamure, 2020), one of the key challenges faced by the AFM in Zimbabwe is, the successful transition of leadership from one generation to the next, while maintaining peace and unity within the church. However, as the church faces the need for leadership succession, conflicts arise. (Mzondi, 2021), alludes that these conflicts are rooted in different opinions regarding the interpretation of doctrine and the desired direction of the church. Such conflicts threaten the unity and stability of the church, potentially leading to schisms and divisions. According to (Mudzamiri, 2021), the leadership conflicts within the AFM in Zimbabwe poses several significant consequences. Firstly, the internal divisions hinder the organization's ability to fulfill its religious and social responsibilities, impacting its reputation and influence within society. Secondly, the conflicts create a sense of disunity among the congregation, leading to a decline in participation and involvement. Finally, the inability to effectively manage conflicts and ensure peaceful leadership transitions may hamper the organization's long-term stability and growth. Therefore, it is critically essential to explore the dynamics of peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution in the AFM in Zimbabwe.

1.4. Research Objectives

1. To identify the underlying factors that have contributed to the leadership conflicts within the AFM in Zimbabwe.
2. To examine the effect of leadership wrangles on AFM in Zimbabwe congregants.
3. To explore the strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions and mitigate conflicts within the organization.

1.5. Research questions

1. What are the key factors that have contributed to the leadership conflicts within the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe?
2. What impact do leadership wrangles have on the congregants of AFM in Zimbabwe?

3. What strategies can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions and mitigate conflicts within the organization?

1.6. Assumptions for the study

Due to its population, Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe is a great example and an inference point to examine leadership transitions and conflicts in religious organizations. The organization reflects the experiences and challenges faced by other similar organizations in similar contexts. For clear understanding of past events, people involved and overall context, the study assumes historical records available about leadership transitions and conflicts within AFM are accurate. Again, leaders, members and stakeholders of AFM are expected to willingly share their experiences and insights honestly. For a wide range of perspectives, the study will incorporate representative of different generations, gender and location within AFM in Zimbabwe. The study will be ethic oriented, that is respecting cultural nuances and sensitivity, honor of values and beliefs of participants and all the approaches will be respectful.

1.7. Significance of the study

The study holds significance to the existing body of knowledge. Primary goal of any researcher, policymaker, or organizational governance is to ensure peaceful leadership transitions and conflict resolution within the existing body of knowledge (Deitch, 2022). This study will greatly contribute to the successful leadership practices and effective conflict management of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe by exploring leadership transitions and conflict resolution dynamics, providing valuable insights. The study's findings will enhance knowledge and contribute to future research, academic discourse, and practical applications in the field.

To the government, the study is of utmost significance. It is the social objective of the government to maintain peace and community solidarity (Sandal, 2022). Religious organizations like the Apostolic faith Mission in Zimbabwe plays a crucial role in maintaining peace by mediating between political dialogues , conflict resolution and control of public perception. In Zimbabwe, political leaders and top government officials are supporters of the religious sector, they provide donations and other material necessities. It well known to the government and others political parties that without religious beliefs system, the society is uncontrollable.

The influence of religion to the community can be very significant and in some special cases, intractable. The transition of leadership and conflict can profoundly affect the community members, shaping their spiritual experiences, social cohesion and overall well-being (Sandal, 2022). The community needs stability, sense of trust and continuity in its functioning. Moreover, by addressing challenges in leadership transitions and conflicts resolution, the study will help indirectly on other community problems like crimes and drug abuse through positive influence by peaceful religious organizations.

1.8. Delimitations of the study

The study focused specifically on the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other religious organizations or context. By delimiting the research to this specific case, it allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the dynamics of peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution within the organization. Also, the study acknowledged the cultural context of Zimbabwe and its influence on leadership dynamics and conflict resolution within the Apostolic Faith Mission. By delimiting the research to this specific cultural context, it provides a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play.

1.9. Limitations of the study

The study specifically focused on the Apostolic Faith Mission, which inherently limits the generalizability of the findings to other religious organizations or contexts. However, this delimitation allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the dynamics surrounding peaceful leadership transitions and conflict resolution within AFM in Zimbabwe. The research was conducted within a limited timeframe, which restricted the depth and breadth of data collection. The study relied primarily on self-reported information obtained through interviews, which may be subject to recall bias or participants' interpretation of events. Also despite the efforts to access relevant documents and information, the information was inaccessible and unavailable due to the organizational constraints. This have impacted the comprehensiveness of the study's findings. The study considered the limitations and drew conclusions respectively.

1.10. Definition of Key Terms

Peace

Peace can be seen as a state of harmony and cooperation between individuals, communities or nations. It involves fostering positive relationships, resolving conflicts peacefully and working together towards common goals (Wahlisch, 2020).

Religion

Religion is a set of organized beliefs, practices, and systems that often relate to the belief and worship of a controlling force, such as a personal god or another supernatural being. (Bilgri, 2021)

Leadership

According to Barney & Pratt (2023), leadership can be defined as the act of guiding and influencing others towards a common vision or goal.

Conflict

Conflict refers to a state of disagreement, discord or tension that arises when there are conflicting ideas, goals, interests, or values between individuals or groups (Andrew, 2021).

1.11. Chapter Outline

Chapter One: Introduction

It is the introduction to the Research "Dynamics of Leadership Transitions and Conflict Resolution in AFM in Zimbabwe." it covers the background of the study clearly by tracing how the problem evolved over time. It also covers the statement of the problem by defining the research problem and emphasizes the need for the study. It covers the research objectives which are the intended outcomes and contributions to the field. Research questions are covered and will guide the investigations. It covers again significance of the study, limitations and lastly a chapter summary, summarizing the key points and sets the stage for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter covers the theoretical framework through an in-depth exploration of the models relevant to leadership transitions and conflict resolution in religious organizations. It will review empirical studies with specific emphasis on findings relevant to religious organizations. Conceptual framework will be outlined, integrating the theoretical and empirical perspectives on

understanding the dynamics of leadership transitions and conflict resolution in AFM in Zimbabwe. Gaps and opportunities will be identified. Lastly the chapter will summarize and synthesizes the key concepts and insights from the literature review to inform the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter describes the overall research design and rationale for the chosen design. Details on the methods and techniques for data collection, such as surveys, interviews or observations, will be uncovered. This chapter will outline the planned data analysis methods, including qualitative analysis, statistical techniques or other analytical approaches, and justifies their relevance to exploring the research questions. Ethical considerations, limitations and delimitations will be covered. Lastly a chapter summary will end chapter three.

Chapter Four: Empirical Findings

This chapter constitutes the large section of data analysis and presentation. Empirical findings from the data are collected, organized based on the research questions and objectives. It will cover the interpretation part whereby connections are drawn to the theoretical and conceptual framework. It will cover substantiated evidence, including quotes and statistics. It also involves comparative analysis and lastly a chapter summary will end chapter four.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter five summarizes the key findings and insights derived from the empirical analysis. It draws conclusions based on the research outcomes, addressing the research questions and offering a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of leadership transitions and conflict resolution in AFM in Zimbabwe. It will cover the recommendations part by addressing the challenges and opportunities related to leadership transitions and conflict resolution within AFM in Zimbabwe. It will provide suggestions for future research directions and final remark.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive literature review focusing on the topic of peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution within religious organizations. The significance of this chapter lies in its ability to shed light on the existing knowledge, research, and theories surrounding these dynamics, thus providing a strong foundation for further exploration in the current study. By examining relevant literature, this chapter aims to identify gaps, patterns, and key themes in the field, while also informing the subsequent chapters of this research.

2.2. Theoretical framework

Interest-Based Negotiation theory

This study is based on Interest-Based Negotiation theory. Interest-Based Negotiation theory is one of the widely recognized and effective conflict resolution theory, it is also known as Principled Negotiation or Integrative Negotiation theory. This theory, is popularized by Fisher & Ury (1981) in their book "Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In," The book focuses on reaching mutual and beneficial solutions by understanding the interests, needs, and values of all parties involved in a conflict. It is the approach of this theory that makes it a phenomenon.

Firstly Interest-Based Negotiation theory emphasizes collaboration and joint problem-solving rather than a win-lose approach. For example, in Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe, collaboration and unity are often valued. By encouraging open communication and shared decision-making, this theory promotes a sense of collective ownership in conflict resolution (Goldie, 2021). Secondly, within a religious organization, maintaining positive relationships among members is crucial. Interest-Based Negotiation recognizes the importance of preserving relationships and promotes a cooperative mindset. Ury (2019) states that, interest-based negotiation theory encourages parties to separate individuals from the problem, creating a more respectful and constructive atmosphere for resolving conflicts without damaging long-term relationships. Thirdly, this theory emphasizes the importance of identifying and addressing the underlying interest and needs of all parties involved (Lax, 2019). By actively listening and understanding the motivations and concerns of stakeholders in a leadership transition and conflict resolution, one can identify a common ground and creative solutions that cater for everyone's interests. This approach ensures that the resolutions reached are comprehensive and they satisfy multiple needs, leading to more sustainable outcomes. Fourthly, Interest-Based Negotiation aims to create win-win solutions by expanding the search for options and possibilities (Ury, 2019). In the context of leadership transitions and conflict resolution within a religious organization, this theory will help to find out innovative solutions that align with the organization's values and principles. This focus on win-win outcomes will contribute to the overall harmony, stability, and growth of AFM in Zimbabwe.

This study considered Interest-Based Negotiation theory as an ideal conflict resolution theory for leadership transitions and conflict resolution within Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe. Its collaborative nature, focus on preserving relationships, emphasis on underlying interests, creation of win-win solutions, utilization of objective criteria, and respect for collective ownership align well with the values and dynamics of a religious organization, making it an effective and appropriate approach. Several studies have been conducted and successfully applied Interest-Based Negotiation for example, Coll & Walsh (2018) the study titled "Applying Interest Based Negotiation Principles in the Catholic Church: Resolving Conflicts within the Diocese". The study highlighted how the collaborative approach of Interest-Based Negotiation helped Catholic Church leaders address contentious issues such as church closures and pastoral appointments. By focusing on shared interests and utilizing objective criteria, conflicts were resolved with a higher degree of satisfaction among stakeholders, preserving relationships and fostering unity.

In summary, Interest-Based Theory is developed during different periods and offer distinct perspectives on conflict and change. The theory brings unique insights and practical approaches that are relevant to the study on peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution within religious organizations. Interest-Based Theory promotes collaborative problem-solving and communication. By incorporating this theory, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the problem and provide practical recommendations for promoting peaceful leadership transitions and effective conflict resolution within religious organizations.

2.3. Factors that have contributed to leadership conflicts

The dynamic of leadership transitions and conflicts resolution has been well documented in literature. In religious organizations, particularly AFM in Zimbabwe, leadership conflicts have been attributed to various factors in the existing literature. One of the key factors is power struggles among the church leadership. A number of studies have shown how different factions within AFM struggle for control, resulting in clashes and divisions (Chivasa, 2021). According to Nhumburudzi (2016), discord among church leaders can result from conflicting visions and interpretations of the mission and values of the church. This competition for authority and influence can contribute to ongoing conflict. Another contributing factor is theological differences. In many religious organizations, like AFM according to reports, theological perspectives vary among stakeholders

making unity a challenging objective to pursue. (Makamure (2023), notes that different interpretations of scripture and theological doctrines lead to conflicts over religious practices, rituals, and doctrinal stances. Leaders clash over these theological disputes, further exacerbating divisions within AFM. A significant part of leadership conflict is ego. Individual egos also play a significant role among stakeholders. Some church leaders pursue power at the expense of unity and harmony due to personal ambitions, pride, and conflicts of interest. Makamure (2017), argues that unchecked egos and individual agendas can devastate trust and fuel internal strife. Several scholars have documented various factors that contribute to leadership conflicts, as evidenced by the empirical literature above.

Poor communication has consistently been identified as a factor in leadership conflicts. A research conducted by (Akinloye, 2019) emphasized that misunderstandings, misinterpretations and inadequate information sharing can lead to conflict friction between leaders and followers. Effective communication strategies such as active listening and clear articulation of expectations are essential to mitigate conflicts. Trust is crucial for maintaining healthy leadership relationships, while mistrust can lead to conflicts. Makamure (2020), explored the significance of trust, highlighting that leaders who are perceived as untrustworthy or unreliable can experience conflicts with their followers. Makamure (2020), emphasized that building trust through transparent communication, consistency and fulfilling commitments is vital for conflict prevention.

Different organizational cultures and value systems contribute to conflicts between leaders and followers. Chivasa (2018), suggests that conflicts may arise when leaders' values are not aligned with the organization's culture or when there is a clash between various subcultures within the organization. Understanding and adapting to the prevailing culture can help mitigate conflicts. Role ambiguity refers to situations where there is a lack of clarity about job responsibilities or expectations. Mckinnon & Brittain (2020), argue that conflicts emerge when leaders and followers have different understandings of their roles within the organization. Establishing clear role definitions and effective communication channels minimize role-related conflicts.

Individual differences in personalities and interpersonal dynamics can contribute to leadership conflicts. Research by Mckinnon & Brittain (2020), suggests that conflicts arise when leaders and followers have incompatible personalities, differing communication styles, or difficulties in

resolving interpersonal issues. Developing emotional intelligence and enhancing interpersonal skills are key strategies in managing conflicts of this nature. Leadership conflicts often occur during times of organizational change or uncertainty. Researchers like Balthazard (2018), highlight that conflicts arise due to resistance to change, fear of the unknown, or incompatible visions for the future. Effective change management practices, such as involving stakeholders and providing support during transitions, can help mitigate conflicts. When leaders and followers have differing visions or goals, conflicts arise. The work of Senge (2019), emphasizes the importance of shared vision and goals for organizational success. Conflicts emerge when there is a lack of alignment between leaders and followers, this can be addressed through effective communication, collaboration, and clarifying shared objectives.

Despite researches conducted on the factors contributing to leadership conflicts, lack of research specifically focusing on the underlying factors contributing to leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe is concerning. According to Ndlovu (2018), by not adequately exploring and comprehending the unique factors associated with leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe, there is a risk of perpetuating the tensions and divisions that disrupt the church's unity and impact its overall mission and values. Understanding these factors through empirical research will provide the church leadership with insights into the root causes of conflicts, enabling the development of targeted interventions and preventative measures (Shoko, 2022). Now that the dynamics of leadership transitions and conflict resolution have been notably documented, the factors that have contributed to leadership conflicts remain a subjective gap. This will be a crucial area of focus in future studies.

2.4. Effects of leadership wrangles on the congregants

In the literature, leadership conflicts have been discussed as a major concern for AFM congregants. One major effect is a decrease in trust and confidence in church leadership. As a result of ongoing leadership conflicts, congregants may question the church's legitimacy and effectiveness (Chivasa, 2021). When leaders engage in public disputes and power struggles, congregants may feel disillusioned, leading to decreased participation in church activities. According to Chivasa (2021). AFM in Zimbabwe congregants also experienced emotional and psychological repercussions from leadership conflicts. It has been shown in many studies that constant internal strife cause stress,

anxiety, and emotional distress in church members. Munemo & Moyo (2020), alludes that leadership struggles lead to uncertainty and instability that adversely affect the well-being of congregations. From the literature, results of several studies show that there are probable effects of leadership wrangles on congregations and therefore understanding these effects in AFM will be a major concern and part of the research objectives.

More so, leadership wrangles often contribute to increased congregants' turnover rates. Scholars such as Matisi (2022), asserts that conflicts between leaders create an unstable organizational culture that affects congregant's retention. High levels of turnover lead to disruption, loss of skills and knowledge, and increased recruitment and training costs. Leadership wrangles tarnish an organization's reputation. Research by Deephouse (2018), suggests that conflicts among leaders negatively impact public perception and stakeholder confidence. This can result in financial losses, difficulties in attracting talent and strained relationships with congregants.

Conflicts between leaders impede effective decision making within the organization. Iteyo & Simiyu (2019), highlighted that leadership wrangles lead to biases, power struggles and a lack of consensus which negatively affect the quality and timeliness of decisions. This hinders organizational progress. Leadership wrangles have harmful effects on congregant's well-being. Research by Kramer & Cook (2018) suggests that conflicts between leaders contribute to increased stress levels, anxiety and job dissatisfaction among congregants. This not only impacts individual health but also affects overall organizational climate. Leadership wrangles often lead to division and fragmentation within the organization. Scholars like Sanchez (2023), highlighted that conflicts between leaders create factions and coalition formations, leading to a fragmented organizational culture and decreased cooperation among congregants.

However, research studies reviewed in the context of the effects of leadership wrangles on the congregants left uncovered gaps. According to Shoko (2022), the lack of empirical investigation into the effects of leadership wrangles on AFM congregants in Zimbabwe undermines the ability to address the emotional and spiritual well-being of the church members. Congregants may experience confusion, disillusionment, and a decline in engagement due to the unresolved conflicts. By conducting a research that examines the specific effects on congregants within this context, the

study will shed light on the true impact and enable the development of support systems that address their needs.

2.5. Strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions

In Zimbabwe, several scholars suggested the use of transparent and democratic election processes as a strategic approach to promote peaceful leadership transitions within AFM. According Matisi (2022), setting clear guidelines and criteria for leadership selection can minimize conflicts arising from perceived biases or unfair practices in churches. Also, involving members in the election process and ensuring open communication, foster a sense of ownership. Matshobane & Masango, (2018) in their research script, posit that a conflict resolution mechanism that is effective is also crucial. Conflicts can be prevented from escalating if formal processes for resolving them are implemented. In order to resolve conflicts and reconcile warring factions within a church, mediation, arbitration and the inclusion of trusted neutral parties can be beneficial. Furthermore, effective communication and shared decision-making processes contribute to peaceful leadership transitions. This research suggests that transparent communication channels, active listening and involving congregants in decision-making processes can foster a sense of inclusivity and cooperation (Bukasa, 2018). By valuing the input and perspectives of the church members and leaders this promotes unity and collective ownership of the AFM's future.

A well-established succession plan can be a very good strategy in the process for promoting peaceful leadership transitions. Rothwell & Kazanas (2018), conducted a research on leadership transitions and conflict mitigation. They highlighted that organizations that have a clear plan to identifying and develop potential successors, experience smooth transitions with minimal disruptions. Inclusive decision-making processes is another strategy contributing to peaceful leadership transitions. Hogg & Terry (2020), argued in a study that involving key stakeholders in decision making fosters a sense of ownership and commitment, hence reducing conflicts and ensuring a smoother handover of leadership responsibilities.

More so, a positive organizational culture is another strategy contributing to peaceful leadership transitions. Pfang (2017), noted in a research that organizations that foster a supportive and adaptable culture create an environment conducive to smooth transitions. He wrote as individuals feel supported and comfortable during the change process the culture is favorable. Mentoring and

coaching programs can support peaceful leadership transitions. (Lentz & Kaminski (2018), suggested another strategy of mentoring and coaching programs as a significant contributor to peaceful leadership transition. They highlighted that pairing incoming leaders with experienced mentors or coaches provides guidance, facilitates knowledge transfer and promotes successful transitions.

Moreover, while general strategies for promoting peaceful leadership transitions and conflict resolution exist, their applicability and effectiveness within the AFM in Zimbabwe remain uncertain due to the lack of empirical evidence. This research gap hampers the church's ability to implement targeted and context-specific strategies that effectively address conflicts and facilitate smooth leadership transitions. By undertaking empirical research, the study will fill this gap and provide the church leadership with evidence-based insights and practical strategies to promote unity and harmony within the organization.

2.6. Chapter Summary

The above literature review highlights key factors contributing to leadership conflicts within the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe. Power struggles, theological differences and individual egos have been identified as underlying causes. The effects of leadership wrangles on congregants include decreased trust, reduced participation and emotional distress. Strategies such as transparent elections, conflict resolution mechanisms, effective communication and shared decision making promote peaceful leadership transitions and foster unity within AFM in Zimbabwe. However, there were gaps identified in the literature review. Addressing these research gaps through empirical investigation will not only contribute to the academic understanding of leadership conflicts and conflict resolution but also provide practical insights and guidance for pastors, leaders and stakeholders within the AFM in Zimbabwe. This study aims to be a thrust for positive change, fostering peaceful transitions and nurturing a harmonious and resilient religious community within the AFM in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explained the research approaches to leadership conflicts and strategies for peaceful transitions. It discussed various methodology sections of the research such as, research design, data collection, sampling techniques and data analysis. The study employed a systematic approach to gain insights into the complexities of leadership dynamics and it discovered effective strategies for promoting peaceful transitions. The chapter outlined specific methods used to study peaceful leadership transitions that is the research design and how it guides the investigation under study. The chapter also discussed data collection methods such as case studies, questionnaires and interviews. In addition, sampling techniques were explained to ensure a very good representative sample for the study and methods of data analysis and presentation were also explained.

3.2. Research design

Generally, research design refers to the plan that guides the research process. It outlines the methods and techniques used in collecting and analyzing data. According to (Kish, 2017), the purpose of research design is to ensure that the study effectively address the research objectives and generates valid and reliable results. This research study employed a single case design as an explorative approach. A single case design was used to focus on AFM in Zimbabwe as a unit of analysis and to examine the specific and unique features respectively. The research followed an explanatory logic to explain how and why a phenomenon occurs through testing or generating a theoretical framework. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the dynamics of peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution within the context of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe.

3.3. Research approach

Methodology refers to the systematic approach used in a research study. It covers the entire strategy, tools and techniques employed to conduct the research (Weber 2017). In this research study, a qualitative case study approach was adopted to explore the dynamics of peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution within the AFM in Zimbabwe. It was considered as a suitable method for investigating a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context. This study hence employed a case study as an ideal qualitative approach and methodologically appropriate.

3.4. Target population

Target population refers to the specific group of individuals that researchers aim to study or analyze in a particular research. The population for this study included current and former church leaders, congregants and individuals with expertise in conflict resolution within the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe. It is important to involve diverse perspectives and individuals with direct involvement in leadership transitions and conflict resolution. The following were the targeted people by the research study,

3.4.1. AFM in Zimbabwe Church Members

The researcher gathered information from people who are active members of the AFM in Zimbabwe including pastors, church leaders and congregation members.

3.4.2. Current AFM Leadership

The researcher focused on understanding the experiences and perspectives of the current leaders within the AFM including members of the Apostolic Council, administrative leaders and pastors in different congregations.

3.4.3. Past AFM Leaders

The researcher considered people who have previously held leadership positions within the AFM and encountered challenges or participated in conflict resolution processes.

3.4.4. Stakeholders within the AFM

The target population extended to other relevant individuals who have a vested interest in the AFM, such as members of affiliated organizations, regional representatives and individuals with interests in religious organizations

3.5. Sample and Sampling techniques

Sampling techniques refer to the methods used to select a subset of individuals or elements from a larger population for research purposes. Sampling is done when it is impractical or impossible to study the entire population. The purpose of sampling is to ensure that the selected sample accurately represents the population and provides reliable results (Sharma, 2017). The sample of this study was made up of 21 participants, 11 responded to interviews, and 10 responded to a focus group discussion. This Study employed Purposive Sampling. By selecting participants who have experienced or are knowledgeable about peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution within AFM, the sample will have a very good representation on the population. This included leaders who have undergone successful leadership transitions, individuals involved in managing conflicts, and members affected by these processes. The sample incorporated diversity in terms of age, gender and roles within the organization. Therefore, the research study used purposive sampling as a sampling technique and a sample with entities characterized with experienced leaders and members affected.

3.6. Data collection methods

Data collection is the process of gathering information from various sources for analysis. It involves collecting relevant data based on the research objectives and research questions. The purpose of data collection is to obtain evidence that provides insights and supports the research findings (Couper, 2017). This study used both primary and secondary data to gather information for analysis. Primary Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including AFM members, interested individuals, current and former leaders involved in peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution. These interviews provided firsthand insights into the dynamics of the topic. Also focus groups were organized for discussions with selected AFM congregants to capture their experiences, perceptions and insights regarding peaceful leadership transitions (Sharma, 2017). Secondary Data and other additional data were gathered from existing organizational documents and reports related to leadership transitions within AFM.

3.6.1. Validity of research instruments

To achieve internal validity, the researcher implemented rigorous research methods, selecting an appropriate sample size and controlled extraneous variables that could potentially influence the results (Ahmed & Ishtiaq, 2021). For a broader generalization of the population, the researcher considered the representativeness of the sample, that is ensuring participants adequately represent the larger population affected by leadership transitions conflicts within religious organizations in Zimbabwe. In this case reliable measurement tools were employed and precise conceptual definitions were clearly defined. By doing so, the study effectively captured the essential dimensions of AFM leadership transitions and conflicts resolution and its impact within the Zimbabwean context. To comprehend the degree to which the research findings reflect real-world conditions and behaviors, the researcher conducted the research within authentic settings where AFM leadership conflicts are more prevalent (Lier & Postel, 2020). In summary, research methods, data collection procedures and the overall rigor of the study design are the key pillars of laying a validity research.

3.6.2. Reliability of research instruments

Reliability is another important factor to consider when evaluating the research materials used in a study. In this study, the researcher considered all procedures to ensure the credibility of the study. For the sake of consistency, the researcher ensured that the items measuring leadership transition

and conflict resolution in the AFM context were internally consistent (Singh, 2017). Responses were obtained from different participants on different items with the same related construct. Participants completed the instructions on two separate occasions with a reasonable time interval in between. This was introduced to improve the test-retest reliability of the measure. The researcher examined the correlation between the responses provided at the two measurement points (Javad, 2019). This reliability measure is particularly relevant when examining constructs that are relatively stable or that are not expected to change significantly in a short period of time. To assess the reliability of the research instruments used in the study, the researcher provided information on the statistical methods employed and the sample used for reliability assessment.

3.7. Data Presentation and Analysis Procedures

3.7.1. Data Analysis

For data analysis, the study considered thematic analysis. This approach identifies key themes, patterns and categories within the data related to peaceful leadership transition and conflict resolution (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Constant comparison techniques will be used to compare and contrast the emerging themes across participants and groups, allowing for the identification of similarities, differences and unique perspectives. The data analysis used a software program such as NVIVO to assist the coding, organizing, and visualizing of the data. It analyzes secondary data to supplement the findings from interviews. It is the data analysis results that determines recommendations after the research study.

3.7.2. Data Presentation

The data was presented in tables and graphical formats. Tables and graphical presentations are preferred for the sake of simplicity and easy interpretation. The following are data presentation methods used in this research study.

3.7.3. Descriptive Narratives

The research study used descriptive Narratives to present the gathered data and its analysis. This involves presenting quotes or excerpts from interviews, field notes or other qualitative data sources that capture the essence of the themes and sub-themes. By using vivid and illustrative language, researchers can bring the participants' experiences to life, providing a rich and engaging presentation of the data.

3.7.4. Tables

The research study used tables to summarize and present key information obtained from the thematic analysis. In this study tables were used to list the identified themes and sub-themes, along with the number of references or instances where they occur in the data. This provides a clear overview of the prevalence and distribution of the themes, allowing readers to quickly grasp the major findings.

3.7.5. Visual Representation through Info Graphics

The research also employed Info graphics to visually represent the main findings of the thematic analysis. Using charts, graphs, icons, or other visual elements enables presentation of key insights in a visually appealing and easily understandable format. Info graphics effectively convey complex information and make it more accessible to a wider audience.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they are fully aware of the study's purpose, their rights and the confidentiality of their responses (Dooly & Moore, 2017). The study sought ethics approval from the relevant institutional review board adhering to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Ethical considerations involved the following steps: For the sake of Privacy and Confidentiality, the researcher protected the privacy and kept participants' identities and information confidential. For the sake of Respect for Cultural Sensitivities, the researcher respected the diverse cultures in Zimbabwe and ensure that the research methods and interpretations are appropriate and sensitive to different cultural contexts. For the sake of Transparency and Accountability, the researcher maintained transparent during research process, ensuring that it was conducted ethically and in line with the principles outlined in the Constitution. The researcher reported the findings accurately and disclosed any conflicts of interest.

3.9. Chapter Summary

In this chapter the researcher discussed the importance of assessing available resources such as funds, time, equipment, and materials to ensure their adequacy for the research endeavor. Additionally, ethical considerations were emphasized, highlighting the need to conduct research in a manner that respects participants' rights and well-being. The chapter also touched upon

evaluating the practicality of the chosen research design, ensuring that methods and procedures are suitable for answering the research questions effectively. The researcher also delved into the significance of sample size and access to participants, data analysis capabilities, and the consideration of a reasonable time frame for completing the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter covers presentation of the research findings that the researcher obtained during research. The researcher delved into a comprehensive analysis of the dynamics surrounding leadership transitions and conflict resolution within the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe. The researcher explored the intricate nuances of leadership conflicts and their impacts on congregants and the organization as a whole. The researcher did thematic analysis of the rich qualitative data gathered from interviews with key stakeholders and focus group discussions. Through this analysis, the researcher aimed to uncover the underlying patterns, themes, and insights that offer valuable perspectives on the challenges and opportunities within AFM. By conducting a rigorous thematic analysis, the researcher seek to illuminate the complexities of leadership transitions, power dynamics, and conflict resolution mechanisms within AFM in Zimbabwe

4.2. Demographic Presentation of participants

The participants consisted of 21 individuals who were selected based on their relevance to AFM in Zimbabwe.

4.2.1. Sex

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	43%
Female	12	57%
Total	21	100%

Table 4.1

The table shows the distribution of participants by sex. Out of 21 participants, 9 were male (43%) and 12 were female (57%). The participation of both male and female participants ensures a diverse range of perspectives in the study.

4.2.2. Roles, Age range and Years of involvement

Roles	Frequency	Age range	frequency	Years of involvement in AFM	Frequency
Elders	5	20-25 years	None	10-12years	4
Pastors	2	30-35 years	6	15-20years	10
Church members	7	40-45 years	9	21-27 years	3
Other roles	7	Others	6	30-36 years	4
Total	21	Total	21	Total	21

Table 4.2

The table illustrates the distribution of Participants by their roles, age range and years of involvement within AFM in Zimbabwe. The researcher looked into the roles and responsibilities of participants as shown in the first column of the table, out of 21 participants, there are 5 elders (24%), 2 pastors (10%), 7 church members (33%) and 7 others (33%) who held different roles in the organization. Into the third column the researcher looked into the participants age ranges, 6 fell into the range of 30-35 years (29%), 9 participants were between 40-45 years (42%) and the remaining 6 participants reserved their age groups (29%). The researcher also explored the duration of their involvement in the Apostolic Faith Mission into the fifth column, 4 fell into the range of 10-12 years (19%), 10 participants were between 15-20 years (48%), 3 were in the range of 21-27 years (14%) and the other 4 were in the range of 30-36 years (19%). With this demographic information the researcher created a sample with people who have different roles, ages and experiences within the organization so that the sample will have a good representation on the population.

4.2.3. Themes

Main Theme	Sub theme 1	Description	Sub theme 2	Description
1. Theological Disputes	Varied interpretations of sacred texts	This subtheme encapsulates the diverse perspectives on scripture among AFM leaders, reflecting the nuanced differences in understanding biblical teachings.	Conflicts over theological doctrines	This subtheme explores the competition for leadership authority and influence, revealing the tensions arising from efforts to assert control within the church.

2. Power Dynamics	Centralized authority structures	This subtheme elucidates the hierarchical power distribution within the AFM, shedding light on the imbalances that contribute to struggles for dominance.	Struggles for leadership control	This subtheme uncovers the individual agendas and self-serving objectives that intersect with leadership conflicts, emphasizing the impact of personal ambitions on organizational dynamics.
3. Personal Ambitions	Ambitions for hierarchical positions:	This subtheme examines the aspirations of individuals for elevated leadership roles, illustrating the personal motivations driving their pursuit of power.	Pursuit of personal interests and goals	This subtheme uncovers the individual agendas and self-serving objectives that intersect with leadership conflicts, emphasizing the impact of personal ambitions on

				organizational dynamics.
4. Financial Mismanagement	Misuse of church funds	This subtheme examines instances of financial impropriety and misallocation of resources within the AFM, highlighting how such practices exacerbate tensions and erode trust among leaders.	Lack of transparency in financial dealings	This subtheme focuses on the absence of accountability and transparency in financial transactions, revealing how opacity fosters suspicion and discord among leadership members.
5. Legal Battles	Disputes over property ownership	This subtheme explores legal conflicts arising from disputes over ownership and control of church properties, reflecting underlying power struggles and divergent	Litigation over governance and leadership legitimacy	This subtheme delves into legal battles regarding leadership elections, governance structures, and the legitimacy of leadership bodies, underscoring the intersection of legal and

		visions for the organization.		institutional challenges within the AFM.
6. Division and Polarization	Factionalism and factional disputes	This subtheme examines the emergence of factions within the AFM, driven by ideological differences, personal rivalries, and competing visions for the church's direction.	Polarization among congregants	This subtheme addresses the polarization and division among church members, fueled by allegiance to different leadership factions, exacerbating tensions and undermining unity within the congregants.

Table 4.3

In this step, the researcher scrutinizes the refined themes to ensure coherence, relevance, and comprehensiveness. These themes represent common threads or topics that are present across multiple interviews or within focus group discussion. These include factors contributing to leadership conflicts, impacts of conflicts on congregants and strategies for promoting peaceful leadership transitions within AFM in Zimbabwe. The researcher assigned descriptive codes to each segment of text based on its content or meaning. The finalization process involved reviewing each theme and its subthemes to confirm their alignment with the research objectives and the data collected. The researcher evaluated whether each theme directly addresses the research objectives

and accurately reflects the underlying factors contributing to leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe.

4.2.4. Statistics of the theme table

Theme	Frequency of Mentions	Percentage mentions	Consistency of mention	Participant overall sentiment
Theological Disputes	16	76%	High	Neutral
Power Dynamics	21	100%	Very high	Neutral
Personal Ambitions	14	66%	High	Neutral
Financial Mismanagement	12	57%	Moderate	Neutral
Legal Battles	8	38%	Low	Neutral
Division and Polarization	18	85%	Very high	Neutral

Table 4.4

The table above shows statistics on the themes provided based on the interviews. As shown above, Theological Disputes was mentioned by 16 out of 21 participants that is approximately 76% of participants highlighted theological disputes as a significant factor contributing to leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe. All participants mentioned power dynamics as a key element influencing leadership conflicts in the church. Around 66% of participants pointed to personal ambitions as a contributing factor to leadership conflicts. Approximately 57% of participants mentioned financial mismanagement as a factor leading to leadership conflicts. About 38% of participants referenced legal battles as a consequence of leadership conflicts. Approximately 85%

of participants highlighted division and polarization as outcomes of leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe.

On the consistency of mention, the researcher used a scale ranging from 0-25%, 26-49%, 50%, 51-75%, 76-100% representing very low, low, moderate, high, and very high respectively. According to table above overall, all participants seemed to agree on the factors contributing to conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe. This means that there are sharing common understanding on the dynamics of leadership transition and conflict resolution in this organization. On overall sentiment, the researcher analyzed the tone of the responses provided by the participants. However this is a very subjective concept. According to the researcher's judgment, all participants were neutral and focused on different aspects across the study.

4.2.5. Length of responses by participation

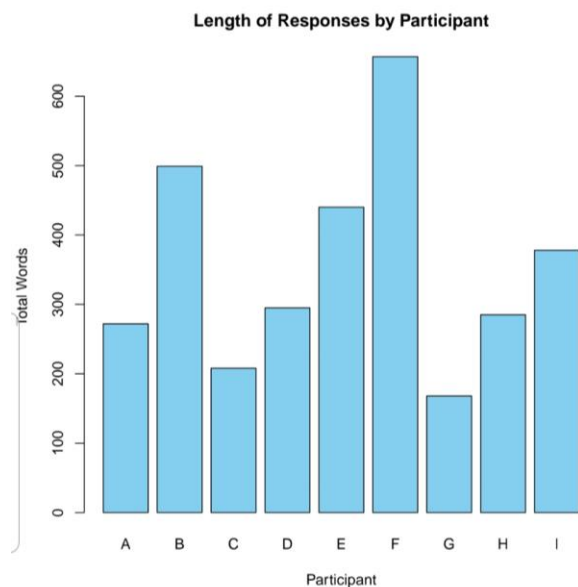


Fig 4.1

The bar chart above portrays statistics on the length of responses calculated by counting the number of responses for each participant. For easy computation, the alphabetical letter represent the participant. D (300), B (500), C (205), H (295), E (440), F (657), G (168), A (285), I(378) represented by letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I respectively. This graph clearly shows the amount of information provided by each and every participants in responding to the interview.

4.3. Factors contributing to leadership conflicts within the AFM in Zimbabwe.

4.3.1. Theological Differences and Interpretations

The theological landscape within the AFM in Zimbabwe is diverse, encompassing various interpretations of scripture and doctrinal beliefs. These theological differences have emerged as a significant factor contributing to leadership conflicts within the church community. One participant highlighted the different interpretations of scripture and theological doctrines as sources of disagreement among church leaders, leading to conflicts. The participant opined that,

Diverse theological and doctrinal interpretations within AFM in Zimbabwe have resulted in disagreements and divisions. The disagreements over theological interpretations created tensions among church leaders and the congregants, and this has resulted in factionalism and discord.

From the literature review, (Makamure, 2023), notes that different interpretations of scripture and theological doctrines lead to conflicts over religious practices, rituals, and doctrinal stances. Leaders clash over these theological disputes, further exacerbating divisions within AFM. This align with the perspectives shared by participants in the interviews and focus group discussion, underscoring the significant role of theological differences in fueling leadership conflicts within the AFM in Zimbabwe.

4.3.2. Personal Ambitions and Power Dynamics

Personal ambitions and power dynamics within the AFM in Zimbabwe have emerged as significant drivers of leadership conflicts. Issues to do with money are causing leadership conflicts in the church as those at the top no longer want to resign due to the benefits they get from such positions. The research noted from responses by participants that a look at the lifestyle of the church leader's one would see that the love of money, power and fame has taken over their hearts. Respondents highlighted this to be a clear cause of leadership conflicts in the church. In an interview response, one respondent who is a pastor pointed that,

Power dynamics, personal ambitions, including a strong affinity for power, status and financial gains are the main factors that have contributed to these leadership conflicts. Power dynamics create power imbalances, leading to struggle for dominance among the leaders. Some of my fellow pastors are prioritizing their own interest over the well-being of their congregants.

These power dynamics often result in struggles for dominance among leaders, as they vie for authority, influence, and control over resources. The quest for power lead to rivalries, factionalism, and discord, further destabilizing the church's leadership structure and impeding its ability to effectively address conflicts. Commenting on the origin of appreciation in the AFMZ, Ndlovu (2018) elaborates that, appreciations were introduced in 1996-1999 by Rev. Mutemererwa as a way of enhancing the welfare of rural pastors. Ndlovu (2018), laments that appreciations are causing unprecedented damage to peace in the AFMZ. He further argues that appreciations went on to be high jacked and commercialized by the urban pastors, overseers, and the church president. The scramble for appreciations ultimately led to the destruction of the church. Ndlovu (2018), concludes by saying appreciations ought to be reviewed to see if there are still good for the church or they need to be discarded.

In light of what has been alluded above, Fisher & Ury (1981) Interested-Based Negotiation theory points out that conflicts emanates from different interests between leaders. Also the theory emphasizes the importance of identifying and addressing the underlying interest and needs of all parties involved. This is evidenced by the affinity for power, status and financial gains from the above findings from the participant. Leadership conflicts in AFM in Zimbabwe are breaking out because Leaders love positions owing to possessions. Expressions of gratitude and monetary contributions are among the resources that top leaders such as Overseers and the President benefit from. When these leaders come into position they start to prioritize their own interest over the well-being of their congregants.

4.3.3. Legal Battles and Constitutional Amendments

Legal battles and constitutional amendments within our church AFM in Zimbabwe have been pivotal points of contention, stirring up turmoil and divisions among church members. When leaders engage in legal battles over control and authority, it's not merely a matter of legal wrangling but a reflection of underlying tensions and ambitions within the leadership hierarchy. According to respondents interviewed, the amendment of the constitution led to legal battles and divisions within the church. In addition, data obtained from focus group revealed that, the former President Reverend Madziyire drafted the church constitution, this draft gave the executive Committee the power to elect the President, the church viewed this as a violation of democratic principles,

resulting in allegations that Reverend Madziyire aimed to centralize authority and assume a "dictatorial" role because the old constitution stated that the President was elected by the general Assembly comprising all the church leaders.

It demands a concerted effort to foster transparency, accountability, and genuine dialogue between the leadership and congregation. Only through open communication and a commitment to shared values can the AFM hope to heal the wounds caused by these divisive conflicts and chart a path toward reconciliation and renewal. According to Nhumburudzi , Kurebwa & Ndlovu (2018), the current constitution of the AFM in Zimbabwe contains some loopholes that trigger unrest and therefore warrant reform. Consequently, constitutional reform or amendment is also suggested as the solution to the dynamics of power in the AFM in Zimbabwe as reported by Nhumburudzi (2016) & Ndlovu, (2018). This study however maintains that the loopholes in the constitution were there from the inception of the AFM in Zimbabwe but in its wisdom, the church followed a traditional model of transferring power that over the years enabled the AFMZ to experience relative peace.

4.3.4. Lack of Clear Succession Plan

The lack of a clear succession plan emerges as a key factor contributing to leadership conflicts within the AFM. One respondent alluded that,

The absence of well-defined protocols, the selection of new leaders becomes vulnerable to manipulation and internal power conflicts, intensifying tensions within the church. AFM in Zimbabwe faces the challenge of not having a distinct succession strategy that delineates a peaceful framework for leadership transitions.

By implementing clear succession plans and ensuring that these processes are guided by principles of fairness and accountability, AFM can mitigate the risk of conflicts arising from uncertainty and ambiguity surrounding leadership transitions. Transparent procedures not only promote trust and confidence among church members but also serve as a safeguard against allegations of impropriety or bias in leadership appointments. Nhumburudzi (2016) & Kurebwa, (2018), correctly observed that whenever the spiritual son-ship model is implemented it triggers discord. It appears the situation is further complicated by the fact that the incumbent's choice of successor is not the church members' choice. Moreover, in all the cases, the handpicking of successors has gone

contrary to the traditional model of leadership transfer. It is therefore apparent that the dynamics of power have transformed the leadership succession practice of the AFM in Zimbabwe. While, Nhumburudzi (2016) & Kurebwa (2018), immaculately observed that from the time of Rev. Kupara to Rev. Manyika, the AFM in Zimbabwe leadership succession process followed a trend that saw the president being succeeded by his deputy president, they conclude that the AFM in Zimbabwe does not have a clear leadership succession planning in place and this intensifies power struggles every election year. Similar sentiments are echoed by (Ndlovu, 2018).

4.4. The effects of leadership wrangles on AFM in Zimbabwe congregants

4.4.1. Emotional Distress and Alienation.

Regular church attendees have suffered anxiety attacks and feelings of estrangement after observing the disagreements and hurtful fights of church leaders. During a focus group discussion, one participant pointed out that,

Leadership Conflicts have direct impact on the congregants, leading to personal distress and disengagement from the community. For instance, here at Shammah the congregants were deeply affected by the division of the church and they felt alienated from the community. Witnessing disagreements and power struggles within the church caused emotional distress on the congregants.

More so, respondents from the focus group discussion indicated that, Leadership Conflicts within the church AFM in Zimbabwe has had significant impact on the overall sense of unity and belonging among the congregants because these conflicts has led to divisions within the congregation, causing animosities and factionalism among the conflicted Leadership. One notable example which was mentioned by the respondents is the church split which was attributed by power struggles. This conflict led to a significant change in the membership of the church and it further deepened divisions within the church.

4.4.2. Loss of Trust and Confidence

The inherent mistrust between leaders and congregants, fueled by conflicts over power and money, has eroded trust and confidence within the church community. According to one respondent during the focus group discussion pointed out that,

The church has been experiencing a state of spiritual stagnation caused by conflicts within our leadership. Even the esteemed Rufaro conferences, which were once known for their fervent Apostolic Faith worship, no longer carry the same zeal and passion. These internal conflicts have deteriorated the trust and confidence of the congregants.

Several respondents highlighted that congregants now doubt the spirituality of the church leaders. This underlines the negative effect that leadership disagreements have in the church inflicting a loss of trust and confidence among congregants, thus a sense of separation and disunity. Loss of confidence as a result fuel in hesitations, which in turns risk the affected church (congregation) from efficiently achieving its mission and role.

4.5. Strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions and mitigate conflicts within the organization

4.5.1. Transparency and Accountability Measures

To have credible leaders, clear leadership succession and transition processes, which are transparent must be in place for legitimacy. Under this aspect among others, the prioritization of what is hidden and what is shown is involved. For instance, it involves criteria for leadership roles, running elections openness and observing term limits. One of the interviewed articulated that,

Measures that can be implemented include establishing a clear and transparent process for leadership selection, nomination, and transition to ensure fairness and accountability. This helps to mitigate suspicions of favoritism or manipulation. Also leaders should cultivate a culture of dialogue to promote open communication and constructive dialogue among church leaders and the congregants.

Respondents from the focus group discussion pointed that, there should be open consultation process which provides information not only to the decision makers but also to the public sphere, and this reduces suspicions and promotes a sense of fairness. Governance mechanisms such as accountability and transparency are needed to ensure that the leaders are responsible and they can be queried by the congregation.

4.5.2. Open Communication Channels

Fostering active listening, constructive feedback, and an open dialogue of different opinions among the leaders peacefully solve grievances and conflicts. One participant during a focus group discussion pointed out that,

There should be establishment of strong communication channels within our church, this helps to ensure transparency and foster a sense of trust and unity among church leaders and the congregants.

Some informants highlighted that, open communication fosters trust and transparency, enables decision making, prevent misinterpretations and resolve conflicts. Organizations that prioritize open and inclusive communication during leadership transition tend to experience smoother transitions.

4.5.3. Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Establishing structured conflict resolution mechanisms, such as mediation committees or church tribunals, to address disputes and grievances helps to mitigate conflicts within the organization. Providing training to leaders and members on conflict resolution techniques, encourages peaceful dialogues to resolve conflicts amicably. Respondents that formed a focus group discussions indicated that, AFM in Zimbabwe is a part of larger networks and support systems that provide support and guidance during times of conflict. This include international networks such as AFM International which is the mother body and World Evangelical Alliance. These networks provide advice and support systems that help resolve conflicts and ensure a smooth leadership transition. Also, having clear conflict resolution procedures in place is essential for managing disputes within the church. By providing structured processes for addressing conflicts, such as mediation or arbitration, leaders can ensure that issues are addressed promptly and fairly, this promotes unity and harmony among congregants.

These insights underscore the significance of establishing formal conflict resolution mechanisms within the church. By implementing structured processes for addressing disputes and involving neutral parties in mediation or arbitration, leaders can effectively manage conflicts and promote unity among congregants. In support of the need for dialogue, Ndlovu (2018), alludes to the need for honest dialogue in trying to address the contemporary issues affecting the AFMZ.As

highlighted above some participants alluded to the need for third-party intervention while others pointed out that the two antagonistic parties, the pro-reform and the anti-reform ought to come and reason together (Chivasa & Machingura, 2018).

4.5.4. Leadership Training

There should be leadership development programs and seminars to equip church leaders with the skills necessary for effective leadership, conflict management, and decision-making. Leaders should focus on promoting ethical conduct, servant leadership, and offer commitment to the well-being of congregants. According to a participant who is a church elder noted that,

Pastors must be trained on issues to do with the church and the community where they know that outside the spiritual elements, the community needs to be respected. The church must also change continuously to adopt to the changing people and environment. So the church systems need to be revised again and again." The importance of leadership training cannot be overstated in addressing conflicts within the church. By investing in programs that enhance leaders' skills in conflict resolution, communication, and decision-making, churches can empower their leaders to effectively manage conflicts and foster unity among congregants.

Interest-Based Negotiation theory by Fisher & Ury (1981), this theory emphasizes collaboration and joint problem solving. For example, AFM in Zimbabwe, collaboration and unity are often valued. By encouraging open communication and shared decision-making, this theory promotes a sense of collective ownership in conflict resolution (Goldie, 2021). This is evidenced from the findings of participants which states that establishing communication channels within AFM in Zimbabwe ensure transparency and foster a sense of unity and collaboration among church leaders and congregant. Also organizations that prioritize open and inclusive communication during leadership transition tend to experience smoother transitions.

4.6. Implications of the findings

The implications of the findings underscore the importance of evidence-based interventions to address leadership conflicts within the AFM. Strategies which are built on the fundamental principles of transparency, accountability, and open communication that are meant to re-establish the trust and unity within an organization are pivotal. Secondly, the findings manifest that leadership strife's have catastrophically impacted the organizational constabulary of the AFM.

Judicial impasses, constitutional reforms, and power-struggles formed the fringes of the church, which contributed to the church being more divided and disjointed than ever before. Lastly, the findings place emphasis on the intricacies of leadership succession in AFM. The absence of clear succession plans and disregard for term limits contribute to conflicts over leadership transitions, with accusations of favoritism and manipulation. This problem threatens the successful leadership succession plan and creates an obstacle for new leaders as they are not provided with enough room for developing their unique style of leadership.

4.7. Chapter Summary

The fourth chapter goes into the details of the problems in the AFM in Zimbabwe involving the leaders based on the results of the surveys and interviews. The chapter commenced by identifying the factors that raise such conflicts among people taken as the cause of theological rivalry, personal ambitions, mishandling of funds, and lack of leadership. Leadership disputes and their effects on church followers according to thematic analysis represented in the results of research are causing confusion and a sense of disillusionment, decreased engagement and general depressed mood. However, the study also pointed out the need for transparency, accountability, and the right of everyone to know more about the conflicting issues as one of the ways of overcoming the tensions and promoting the unity among members of such organizations. The chapter stressed out the challenges involved to improve such knowledge, directing the research to focus on the unclear areas which need an informed intervention. Also, the chapter illustrated the fact that conflicts among leadership in AFM in Zimbabwe are complex they require context responsive strategies for rectifying them. By identifying the multifaceted nature of these conflicts and adopting evidence-based policies, the Church will undertake to attain unity and harmony uninterrupted.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This research provides a comprehensive set of recommendations and conclusions drawn from an in-depth exploration of leadership transitions and conflict resolution dynamics within the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe. Building upon a foundation of literature reviews, case studies, and empirical research, this chapter aims to offer practical strategies for mitigating and resolving leadership conflicts within AFM and similar religious organizations. It not only contributes to theoretical advancements in understanding conflict management within religious contexts but also offers actionable insights for practitioners seeking to navigate such challenges effectively. The chapter is structured into several sections, including Recommendations, Conclusion, and Areas of future research, each delving into specific aspects of the study's findings and their implications for both theory and practice within AFM and beyond.

5.2. Research Summary

The introductory chapter of the research, "Exploring the peaceful leadership transitions and Conflict Resolution. A case study of AFM in Zimbabwe," sets the stage by discussing the historical importance of leadership changes and conflicts within religious organizations worldwide, focusing on examples from various countries including the US and Africa specifically Zimbabwe. Emphasizing the critical role of smooth leadership transitions and effective conflict resolution in sustaining stability and nurturing growth in religious communities, the chapter explored case studies from different religious bodies like the Church of England, Southern Baptist Convention, and the United Methodist Church, alongside organizations in Australia and Africa. The chapter outlined the study's aims, objectives, and research inquiries, also, it underlined the importance of identifying causes of leadership disputes, evaluated their effects on church members, and proposed methods for fostering peace and stability within AFM in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the chapter addressed the assumptions, significance, restrictions, and limitations of the study, recognizing its focus on AFM in Zimbabwe and the potential biases and obstacles associated with the research approach.

Literature review was presented in chapter two, and it focused on conflict resolutions and smooth leadership successions within religiously dominated institutions, with particular emphasis being Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe. The concept of Interest-Based Negotiation as the theoretical framework of negotiation in this chapter was introduced first by highlighting its emphasize on collaborative approach in addition to addressing deeper interests and needs of participants. In addition, the chapter explored the effects of leadership wrangles on the congregants and the findings were such as loss of trust and confidence in the leaders, emotional strain, engagement of church members in church activities decreased and the organization's productivity was negatively affected. Strategies which were implemented in this chapter to mitigate leadership conflicts within the organizations were, establishment of open communication channels, conflict resolution mechanisms, leadership training programs and accountability and transparent measures. On one hand, plentiful literature is available but it poses stumbling blocks in pinpointing the factors that contributed to leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe and understanding the effectiveness of the measures taken in this context. By considering and bridging the mentioned gaps through empirical research, a very solid evidence-based approach was done and as a result, useful and practical advices that were valuable to establish unity and cohesion in the organization were provided.

More so, chapter three examined the leadership clashes, exploring strategies of peaceful transition using the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe as the context. The chapter began with the description of the research design, which is a single case design for the study of issues like leadership succession and conflict management within the church AFM in Zimbabwe. The approach involved qualitative case study methods for investigating the issue in detail, including the target group, sampling techniques, and collection of data. The sample population included current and former church officials, congregation members, and conflict mediation experts from AFM selected based on their experience and knowledge of leadership transition and conflict resolution within the organization. Data collection methods of this study were interviews, focus group discussions, and analysis of organizational documents. Ethical considerations were centered on the research with layers of the elements such as informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and cultural respect as the priority. Theme extraction such as a technique called thematic analysis was employed to gather topics from peaceful leadership transitions and conflict resolution. The chapter

focused on data presentation process, specifically mentioning factors such as rigor, validity, reliability and ethical considerations.

Furthermore, chapter four explored the complexity of leadership fights within AFM in Zimbabwe, based on the research findings, to determine the causes, effects of leadership wrangles on the congregation, and strategies that were implemented to mitigate conflicts and promote peaceful leadership transitions within the organization. The chapter explained the causes of conflicts and these are theological disputes, personal ambition, and lack of clear succession plans. Through thematic analysis, the chapter illustrated the extent to which these tensions had an effect on members of the church community, including emotional strains, lack of trust and decreased participation and attendance in church activities. In addition, the chapter also revealed important tactics to guarantee for peaceful leadership transitions and avoid conflicts within the church such as transparency and accountability measures, conflict resolutions mechanisms and leadership training programs.

5.3. Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the research objectives.

5.3.1. Factors that have contributed to leadership conflicts within AFM

This research has found that leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe were caused by a mixture of theological divergences, personal aspirations and power plays, legality issues and revised constitutions, and lack of clear succession lines. Amongst the most significant factors that caused leadership disputes in AFM are contradictions on theological expositions of the scripture and doctrinal beliefs. This situation caused tensions between and within the rank of church leaders and members, which in turn produced sectarianism and disunity. The pins for power, title, and financial reform among church leaders tended to aggravate the conflict within AFM in Zimbabwe. Power and material interest became the main driving forces for disunity and turmoil amongst the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Legal disputes and amendments of the church constitution were the reasons of turbulence and dissension among AFM in Zimbabwe leaders. Such conflicts implied the existence of certain tensions and aims within the pyramid of leadership, hence necessitating initiatives to foster frankness and discussion. The lack of a clear succession plan led to leadership conflicts. With an unclear process plan for leadership transition, the church became destabilized

making tensions to arise. These results corresponded with previous studies done by various researchers on organizational conflicts within religious institutions. Researchers like Makamure (2023), Ndlovu (2018), Nhumburudzi, (2016), & Kurebwa (2018), have echoed the same elements that brought conflicts in AFM in Zimbabwe. They ranged from theological disputes, power conflicts, constitutional matters, and difficulty settling issues about succession plans. The theory that has the same resonance with the findings is Fisher & Ury (1981), Interested-Based Negotiation theory, which strongly believes that surfacing the underlying interests and needs is the fundamental way to overcome conflicts effectively.

5.3.2. Effects of leadership wrangles on AFM congregants

Research by Kramer and Cook (2018) suggests that conflicts between leaders contribute to increased stress levels, anxiety and job dissatisfaction among congregants. This not only impacts individual health but also affects overall organizational climate. Leadership wrangles often lead to division and fragmentation within the organization. Scholars like Sanchez (2023), highlighted that conflicts between leaders create factions and coalition formations, leading to a fragmented organizational culture and decreased cooperation among congregants. The study revealed the detrimental effects of leadership wrangles on AFM congregants. Congregants experienced confusion, division and loss of trust in the leadership. Leadership wrangles have harmful effects on congregant's well-being. These conflicts affected the spiritual well-being of congregants, hindered the church growth, and this resulted in a decline in congregational engagement and participation. It is crucial to prioritize the welfare of the congregants and create an environment that fosters unity and harmony.

5.3.3. Strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions within AFM in Zimbabwe

The research highlighted several strategies that could be implemented to foster peaceful leadership transitions with AFM in Zimbabwe. These included promoting inclusive decision-making processes, enhancing communication channels, establishing conflict resolution mechanisms and fostering transparency and accountability. The strategies identified in this study conform to existing literature on conflict resolution and leadership development on the religious organizations.

Scholars like Fisher & Ury (1981), point out the importance of collaboration and joint problem solving, closely resembling the practice of open communication, and shared decision making.

In conclusion, the implications of these results emphasize the urgency of the adoption of evidence-based directives to tackle the issue of leadership conflicts in AFM. These remedies should be based on transparency, accountability, and open communication in order to restore trust and oneness in the entity. Besides, the research demonstrates the damaging effect of the leadership crisis with regard to the organizational unity, pointing out the need for the solution to the judicial insolvencies, constitutional reforms, and the dispute within power. Lastly, the research highlights the nuances of leadership succession in AFM which underscore the need for defined succession plans and abiding by the term limits so as to reduce corrupt perceptions and manipulation thus paving way for new leaders and organizational renewal and transition.

5. 4. Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the study recommends that:

- AFM in Zimbabwe should foster a culture of inclusive decision-making process by involving various stakeholders such as pastors, elders and congregational representatives, in leadership processes. This will ensure transparency, ownership and cooperation among the leadership team.
- AFM in Zimbabwe should develop a communication team responsible for establishing effective channels of communication within the church. This team will include communication professionals such as advisors, elders and representatives from different congregations. Their role will be to ensure clear and timely dissemination of information during leadership transitions and conflict resolution processes.
- The church should encourage active participation and engagement of congregational members in the leadership transition and conflict resolution processes. This can be achieved through regular meetings, feedback sessions, and open forums where church members express their concerns, provide input, and contribute to the decision-making processes.

5. 5. Areas for Further Research

While the study addresses leadership conflicts in AFM in Zimbabwe, it opens up future research to several directions that are worth exploring. Longitudinal studies can evaluate the efficiency of recommended interventions by following the timeline for implementing these interventions, aiming to assess their long-term sustainability. Exploring the effects of outlying factors, such as political instability or economic pressures, on intensifying leadership disputes within AFM might give more extensive insights into the intricate mechanisms in play. With this, the researcher will be inclusive of representing a variety of people from various backgrounds in order to get a full picture of how conflicts influence different group of church members. This type of research will help to compliment the measures that are being undertaken to promote peace, unity and leadership effectiveness within AFM in Zimbabwe and other religious organizations around the world.

5.6. Chapter Summary

In summary, chapter five portrays a complete set of recommendations and conclusions after a long voyage through leadership transitions and conflict resolution dynamics within the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in Zimbabwe. The chapter began with a summary of the key findings and contributions of the research with a particular focus on the practical strategies proposed for managing and resolving leadership conflicts within AFM and other similar religious organizations. Also, the chapter shows the necessity of theoretical growth in the area of conflict management within religious settings and the practical steps for practitioners who ought to tackle the problem. Organized into sections such as Recommendations, Conclusion, and Areas for future research this chapter, further incorporates the detailed findings of both theory and practice in AFM and beyond. The chapter concluded by highlighting areas for further research.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is LEAN CHIKEREMA, a Bachelor Honors Degree in Peace and Governance final year student in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Bindura University of Science Education. I am doing a research entitled **EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF PEACEFUL LEADERSHIP TRANSITION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. A CASE STUDY OF APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION IN ZIMBABWE**. The research is purely for scholarly purposes and all the information you provide will be treated with outmost confidentiality. Your sincere views and contributions to this research will be greatly appreciated.

Please fill in the blank spaces provided below.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Age Group

20-25years ☐ 25-30years ☐ 30-35 years ☐ 40-45 years ☐ Others ☐

2. Gender: male ☐ female ☐

3. Years of involvement in AFM:

4. Leadership role within AFM (if applicable):

Section B: Understanding Leadership Conflicts

5. Have you observed or been directly involved in leadership conflicts within AFM? (Yes/No)

6. If yes, please describe the nature of the conflicts you have witnessed or experienced.

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Section C: Interview Guide Questions

Section 1: Identifying factors that have contributed to the leadership conflicts within AFM in Zimbabwe.

Questions

1. What do you believe are the main factors or reasons that have contributed to these leadership conflicts?
2. How do you perceive the role of power dynamics, personal interests, or ideologies in these conflicts?

Section 2: Examining the effect of leadership wrangles on AFM congregants in Zimbabwe.

Questions

3. In your opinion, how have the leadership conflicts impacted the overall well-being and spiritual growth of the AFM congregants?
4. Have you observed any changes in congregants' participation or attendance at AFM activities as a result of these conflicts?

Section 3: Exploring strategies that can be implemented to promote peaceful leadership transitions and mitigate conflicts within AFM.

Questions

5. What measures or strategies do you believe can be implemented to foster peaceful leadership transitions within AFM?
6. Are there any successful examples of conflict resolution or peaceful transitions that you have observed or experienced within AFM or other similar organizations?

Thank you for your time and participation in this study. Your insights are valuable and will contribute to a better understanding of peaceful leadership dynamics within AFM.

ANNEXURE 2: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

My name is LEAN CHIKEREMA, a Bachelor Honors Degree in Peace and Governance final year student in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Bindura University of Science Education. I am doing a research entitled **EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF PEACEFUL LEADERSHIP TRANSITION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. A CASE STUDY OF APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION IN ZIMBABWE**. You are kindly asked to participate in a group discussion on the above topic. This group discussion is voluntary and you have the right not to answer any question.

QUESTIONS

Section 1: Exploring Leadership Conflicts

Questions

1. Can you describe a specific instance of a leadership conflict within AFM that had a significant impact on the congregation or the organization? What were the key factors contributing to this conflict?

Section 2: Impact of Leadership wrangles on Congregants

Questions

2. Have you observed any changes in the engagement or participation of congregants in the church's activities as a result of leadership conflicts? How have these changes impacted the vibrancy and spiritual growth of the congregation?

Section 3: Strategies for Promoting Peaceful Leadership Transitions

Questions

3. What key governance and decision-making mechanisms do you believe could be implemented within AFM to prevent leadership conflicts and ensure smooth transitions? How can transparency and accountability be enhanced within the organization?

4. What support systems or resources do you believe could be beneficial for addressing leadership conflicts and promoting peace within AFM? How can the congregation and leadership work collaboratively to navigate conflict and transition challenges?

Thank you for your time and participation, and be assured that your responses remain confidential and anonymous.

Lean Chikerema

DECLARATION FORM

I, (B200268B), hereby declare that the work submitted here is the result of my own independent investigation and that all sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Chikerema

Student's Signature

18/09/2024

Date

[Signature]

Supervisor's signature

18/09/2024

Date

[Signature]

Chairperson's Signature

18/09/2024

Date

