

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**LEADERSHIP TREND AND ITS IMPACT ON GROWTH OF THE CHURCH:
“A CASE STUDY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH
INTERNATIONAL”**

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DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JULY, 2017

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BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE
STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN
MINISTRY WITH MANAGEMENT**

JULY, 2017

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation has been prepared by myself, that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a degree, that the work of which it is a record has been done by myself, that all quotations have been distinguished by either quotation marks or indentation and all the sources of information specifically acknowledged by means of footnotes.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for the grace and strength He gave to me to go through this course successfully. Also, to my wonderful wife Mary Obeng Pinkrah who has been my backbone for all these years, to Apostle S.V. Ansah, former Director of Finance and Administration (GCCCI) who encouraged me when I decided to continue with the Masters Degree, to my able associate minister Pastor Eben. Oteng Marfo and the church board who saw to the running of the church whilst I was schooling and finally to my children Francisca, Jude and Lois who challenged and inspired me with the way they study at home.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GCCI= Great Commission Church International

ANPA =All Nations Prevailing Assembly

ABSTRACT

In a number of studies conducted, individual researchers have over the years been able to established the fact that efficient leadership and good management systems has implication for the successful and smooth running of every organization. On the other hand, inefficiency and bad management systems also has its own implication. As a result of this, scholars in the area of church growth studies have also tried to establish a link between leadership and church growth. Most church growth scholars have argued that good church leadership and efficiency can bring about church growth. In this study, the researcher, with a similar assumption takes the task further by trying to establish how leadership succession in the Great Commission Church International has over the years impacted the growth of the Church. Employing a qualitative and a historical approach as a method in dealing with the situation as stake, the study draws a lot of data through interviews with past executive councils chairmen of the Great Commission Church International and how they went about their leadership strategies during their tenure in office as council chairmen. The study also gives a brief historical background of the church. Taking into consideration the number of challenges that has confronted the church with regards to changes in leadership, this study has analyzed the impact each leadership regime has had on the church in terms of it growth and also, their failures. The study also, offers various critique on the leadership style of each regime. In looking at the challenges that has ensued over the years, this study also makes a number of recommendations based on the findings made for a possible amendment in the church. The researcher argues strongly and in support with scholars that, good church leadership has implication for church growth.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The importance of leadership to any organization cannot be over emphasized. One might not be wrong to say that good leadership has consequence on the growth and expansion of any church. In the world today, it has become clear that many churches and organizations have gone into extinction as a result of ineffective and bad leadership. Scholars emphasize the importance of leadership in different ways. George Barna after spending 15 years in researching all facets of American life concludes, “Nothing is more important than leadership”.¹ John Maxwell also postulates that, “everything rises and falls on leadership.”² These statements mean that no church, ministry, organization, or group can be successful without effective leadership. George Barna defines a Christian leader as follows: A Christian leader is someone who is called by God to lead; leads with and through Christ-like character; demonstrates the functional competencies that permit effective leadership to take place.³ In this definition George Barna emphasizes that every Christian leader possesses three distinct but related qualities. These qualities together combine to make somebody a leader. That is, the leader is called by God, possess Christ-like character, and also functional competencies or skills. The Bible also takes cognizance of the importance of leadership. For example, in the book of Isaiah 9:16, the bible says that “For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and those who are led by them are destroyed”. Every segment of human society be it social, political, economic, educational, religious, etc, is run by leadership. Whether the segment would be run efficiently and effectively depends on the leadership. Whether it will be successful or fail in the attainment of its vision, mission and goals also depends on its leadership.

¹ George Barna, “Nothing is More Important than Leadership”, In George Barna (ed.) *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1997), 17 – 18.

² John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1993), viii.

³Barna, “Nothing is More Important than Leadership”, 25.

The Lord Jesus also recognized the crucial role of leaders when he said that if a blind man leads another blind man both will fall into a pit (Mt 15:14). Both Isaiah and Jesus recognized that within a societal unit of any type and kind people may err and get destroyed because of their leaders. This also implies that both Isaiah and Jesus believed that good leadership may lead a social unit in the right direction and help it to achieve its *raison d'être* (reason for living).

The key role of leadership is buttressed by an episode in the journey of the Israelites to Canaan. Under the leadership of Moses they never worshipped idols all the way from Egypt to Mount Sinai. When Moses left them under the leadership of Aaron for just forty days they manufactured idols and served and worshipped them (Ex 32). The capacity to destroy or build a group might have been the reason Paul warned the elders of the church of Ephesus when he was bidding them his final farewell. He said,

Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Also from among you men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears (Acts 20:28-31)

Paul knew that the purity of the Gospel may be compromised by leaders. What may ensue in his absence would be divisions and conflicts because perverse leaders may arise. It is with the same understanding that he wrote to Timothy counselling him thus;

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Tim 4:12-16 NIV).

According to Paul the Gospel is going to achieve its objective of saving man if Timothy the leader lives the right kind of lifestyle.

In the view of John Haggai, "Leadership is the discipline of deliberately exerting special influence within a group to move it toward goals of beneficial permanence that fulfill the group's real needs."⁴ It means that leadership demands some discipline which has to do with self-control which should be part of the leader's character, deliberate, which speaks of the commitment that the leader must show on his calling to lead; special influence, which would earn him respect through which people will follow him wholeheartedly; group, which indicates the need to instill unity of purpose and also goals, which is the ultimate vision the leader wants to achieve with the group he or she is leading.

According to John Ntsiful, "there are three requirements needed to run a good church. The first is Leadership, the second is Leadership and the third is Leadership". In his view, lack of good leadership may be part of the reasons why there is no growth but decline in many churches today.⁵

Additional reasons why leadership is important includes the following;

Good leadership can create a better work world. Setting an example as a great leader helps others see what skills they need to be successful. You should be working with your employees to recognize and refine their talents. Their success equals success for you and for the company!

Leadership builds the platform of values in the organization. The leadership team must be in sync with the values of the organization and make sure those are being implemented. Your team members are going to model their attitude after yours! Example is Jesus and the disciples, Paul and Timothy. From this background the

⁴ John Haggai, *Lead On*, www.monitor.co.ug/Magazines/Life, accessed on 5th September, 2015.

⁵ John K Ntsiful, *Christian Leadership*, Study 3, 8. 1996.

researcher undertakes this study within the Great Commission Church International to ascertain how leadership trend or succession has in the previous years affected the growth of the church.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Within the last two decades there have been three successive leadership trends in Great Commission Church International. Following these trends it has been realised that there are diverse changes in the church growth both internal and external. This makes one wonder whether the leadership trend in the church has influenced its growth or not.

This is because, there seem to be a realization that the church has experienced some sort of decline for the last decade and the researcher wants to investigate to know if this situation is as a result of the leadership style adopted by the church. Therefore, the work seeks to examine the growth of Great Commission Church International and investigate the influence of leadership trend of various Executive Council Leaders on the growth of the church.

1.3 Research Questions

From the above problem stated, the researcher asks the following questions;

- i. What specific principles govern the operation of the Leadership trend?
- ii. What systems and structures have been put in place to ensure leadership succession?
- iii. Has the Great Commission Church International laid down principles that evaluate its church growth?

- iv. How has the various leaders' impacted the church?

1.4 Aim and Objectives

From the above research question(s), the general objective (aim) of this study is

- i. To find out the specific principles that governs the operation of the church's leadership trend.

Other specific objectives are:

- ii. To investigate the impact of leadership succession from the inception of the Great Commission Church International.
- iii. To examine the leadership trend and their influence on church Growth.

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

The study focuses on the leadership trends in Great Commission Church International of the three successive executive council leaders.

In context, the work is looking at the leaders and their contribution to church growth both internal and external.

1.6 Research Methodology

On research methodology Stringer writes, research is a process of trying to gain a better understanding of the complexities of human experience and in some genres of research.⁶ To take action based on such understanding both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this research. The researcher also employed the descriptive method. This method is employed in the work because it helped in describing the various processes the church has gone through in various years in

⁶ www.amazon.com/Action-Research-Ernest-T-Stringer/dp1452205086, accessed April 4, 2016.

electing its leaders and how leadership succession in the church has contributed to the growth of the church.

Qualitative method was used because it is effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. Quantitative approach makes statistical analysis and generalizations possible; the method produces rich, descriptive data that need to be interpreted through the identification and coding of themes and categories leading to findings that can contribute to theoretical knowledge and practical use. Quantitative approach also makes statistical analysis and generalizations possible.⁷

Burke Johnson and Larry Christensen state that, descriptive research helps in obtaining information concerning the present status of the phenomena to describe with respect to variable or conditions in a situation.⁸ Description enables us to identify the relationship between behaviours, individuals or event as they occur and this gives us an understanding of the relationship between variables. A common method of obtaining information through the descriptive method is by the use of interviews or questionnaire.

The researcher employs these approaches in this work because they fit the context of the study.

⁷ Burke Johnson and Larry Christensen, *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Approaches* (Los Angeles, NY: Sage Publications, 2008), 45.

⁸ Johnson and Christensen, *Educational Research*, 38.

1.6.1 Method of Data Collection

This research work cannot be done without necessary elements. The researcher therefore collected information from both primary and secondary sources. The writer in gathering the data from primary source employed personal interviews and purposive sampling technique.

1.6.1.1 Primary Sources

In this study, the researcher used interviews and questionnaires as primary source of data collection. According to Madill an interview is an interaction between an interviewer and respondent in which the interview establish a general direction for the conversation and pursues on specific topics raised by respondent.⁹

Through this means, the researcher establishes rapport with participants and therefore helps to gain cooperation with interviewees. Interview was considered helpful towards great interaction to sustain the interests of the research and interviewer as well as encouraging more discussion and understanding. In summary, interview is seen as likely to generate more insight and understanding of the work, and thus contribute to the quality of data. Although when large samples are involved it is time consuming and expensive. They also allow the researcher to clarify ambiguous answers when appropriate and seek follow-up information. In all, the researcher interviewed five (5) people including the three successive chairmen and some pastors in executive leadership of the church.

A quantitative research design was used for this study. A questionnaire survey method was used so that the researcher could collect much information. According to Cantrell and Lupinacci questionnaire allows the researcher to collect large amounts of data in a

⁹ Anna Madill, "Interaction in the semi-structured interview: A comparative analysis of the use of and response to indirect complaints" http://www.academia.edu/2325145/Madill_A._2011 (accessed April 4, 2016).

relatively short period of time, over a wide geographical area. Questionnaires were used to maximize the proportion of subjects answering the questionnaire that is, the response rate. Again to obtain accurate relevant information for the study. The questionnaires were administered to pastors and leaders during an annual conference of the Great Commission Church International in Accra. The conference grounds served as a useful point of contact because the researcher was able to get all the pastors and leaders who were expected to provide answers to the questions that confronted the researcher in this study.

1.6.1.2 Secondary Source

The researcher also employed secondary sources which include books, articles, and church documents comprising minutes of meetings and annual reports.

1.6.1.3 Samples and Sampling

Population is a collective term used to describe the total number of cases of the type which are the subject of study. The total number of apostolic council in the Great Commission Church International is seven (7), and these are the ministers who established the church according to the church's history.

The target population for the study comprises 3 leaders, with each reigning for 1 or 2 terms with each term being 5 years. All the 3 leaders were appointed from the apostolic council in the church. There are 42 pastors in the country with over 100 Assemblies. There are 7 elders in each church with over 100 branches in Ghana making 700 in all.

A purposive sample is a non-representative subset of some larger population, and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose. A researcher may have a specific

group in mind. Purposive sampling was used to select Executive Council members because they have specific need to the research.¹⁰

1.6.3 Data Analysis

The researcher examined the growth of Great Commission Church International objectively. The researcher studied all the yearly report of the church including memos and journals, official letters to ascertain moral, financial, personnel and numerical growth of the church under each of the three successive leaders in the church.

The researcher also investigated the impact of leadership trend on church growth. In doing this the researcher interviewed both the present and past leaders, on their impact on the growth of the church.

1.7 Literature Review

In carrying out any study or research, it is important to observe the opinions of other scholars who have carried out similar works or studies. This is vital in order to give a sense of direction to the work on hand.

1.7.1 Definition of leadership

Anthony D'Souza professes in his book "being a leader" that; 'When discussing leadership and managerial skills, we need to remind ourselves that Christian leadership essentially involves service. When we consider the church and/or church related institutions, we grasp the concept of service. Yet, when we mention corporations and business, the work "service" sounds out of place. Part of the confusion may come from not understanding the true concept of leadership. For

¹⁰ Johnson and Christensen, *Educational Research*, 57.

many, leadership connotes power, authority, honour, prestige or personal advantage. That is not Christian leadership'.¹¹

J.W. McLean and William Weitzel in their book, *Leadership: Magic, Myth or Method* defines leadership as: "A person involved in a process of influencing and developing a group of people in order to accomplish a purpose by means of supernatural power"¹².

Leadership always begins with a person. Howard Hendricks said that "A leader is a person with a magnet in his heart and a compass in his head."¹³ Many of us have the skills to lead, but when one is called on to marshal those abilities in a leadership setting, it is imperative that we respond affirmatively to God's call. The more leaders understand themselves, the better off the group and the mission being served.¹⁴

1.7.2 What is Christian Leadership?

Jesus personified Christian leadership. He directed thinking, guided people, aimed them toward truth, and showed the way to love, forgiveness, and eternal life. The best place to start in defining Christian leadership is with Jesus.

When his disciples asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus called a little child and had him stand among them (Matt 18:1-2) Jesus said to them: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like a little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt.18:3-4) Jesus turned the disciples misplaced concern with greatness to a focus on childlike humility. Jesus

¹¹Anthony D'Souza, *Being A. Leader* (England: NU Print Limited, 1990), 12-13.

¹²J.W. Mclean and William Weitzel, *Leadership: Magic, Myth or Method?* (NY: Amacom, 1992), 11.

¹³<http://www.christianitytoday.com/Christian-leadership.html>, (accessed April 4, 2016).

¹⁴<http://www.christianitytoday.com/Christian-leadership.html>, (accessed April 4, 2016).

calls us into servanthood, pure and simple.¹⁵ Jesus set an example for them to emulate by washing the feet of his disciples (John 13:1-17)

1.8 Significance of the Study

- The work will help church leaders to know the type of leadership skill to employ for church growth.
- The study will help individuals who aspire to be church leaders to develop an appropriate leadership qualities which will help the growth of the church.
- The study will strengthen the professional relationship between the pastors and leaders in churches.

1.10 Organization of Chapters

This research work is grouped under five main chapters. Chapter one deals with the introductory issues, including the background, the statement of problem, research questions, aim and objectives, scope and focus of study and the methodology adopted. Literature on the subject is dealt with. This is followed by organization of chapters and significance of the study.

Chapter two looks at the Leadership and Church Growth.

Chapter three dealt with the leadership trend focusing on the three successive Executive Council Leaders.

Chapter four focuses on the analysis of the information gathered from the interviews and questionnaire.

Chapter five is the summary of the study, recommendations and conclusion.

¹⁵Siang-Vang Tan, *Full Service* (Baker Publishing Group, 2006), 23.

CHAPTER TWO

LEADERSHIP AND CHURCH GROWTH

2.1 Introduction

In today's church there seems to be a problem with church growth issues. For several decades, membership has declined in some churches. This decline in church membership has led to an intensive discussion about the leadership role of the pastor. The question is, what kind of leader is best able to lead a church toward growth and to return stagnating churches to vibrancy? From a theoretical standpoint church growth practitioners and theorists have shown repeatedly that there is a close relationship between church growth and leadership.¹⁶ This present study pays a closer attention on relationship between leadership and church growth within the Great Commission International Church, Ghana.

In this chapter, a reflection is made on the concept of pastoral leadership. Attention is also placed on the general studies about the effectiveness of pastors and how such effectiveness correlates and/or translates into church growth. Though not all the issues regarding church growth is raised in this chapter, some of the issues raised are of particular interest to this study.

2.2 Pastoral Leadership

The precise definition of the term "pastoral" is open to considerable debate. Some, for example, claim simply that Pastoral care is that aspect of the ministry of the Church

¹⁶ Peter C. Wagner, *Your Church Can Crow: Seven Vital Signs of a Healthy Church* (Rev. ed.) (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1984a); see also, Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 41-45.

which is concerned with the well-being of individuals and communities.”¹⁷ Another definition which has been widely adopted by contemporary writers on the subject is that of Clebsch and Jaekle in *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective*. According to them pastoral care is directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling of troubled persons whose troubles arise in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns.¹⁸

Wesley Carr observes that the word pastoral is a word against which little can be said and which should sound warning bells because of its often pejorative use.¹⁹ All of the leadership activities of the Christian shepherd occur within a given organizational framework: the visible church of the Lord Jesus Christ. While there is plenty of room for individualization by congregations, and for the use of personal gifts among the members of those congregations, nevertheless all such variety occurs within a basic, given structure ordained, built and maintained by Christ Himself. That church is an organic entity that manifests itself in this world through a visible structure that, for its maintenance, requires planning, organization and rule.²⁰

There is no gainsaying in the fact that even though the concept of leadership has received a staggering attention from various scholars in many disciplines, the subject still remains very complex. In many organizations not excluding the church, people are still discussing and finding out how best they employ different concept of leadership relative to their context to achieve maximum growth and benefit. No

¹⁷See Alastair V. Campbell, *Paid to Care, The Limits of Professionalism in Pastoral Care* (London: SPCK, 1985), 8.

¹⁸A. William Clebsch, and R. Charles Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in a Historical Perspective* (New York: Aronson, 1975), 13.

¹⁹Wesley Carr, *Handbook of Pastoral Studies* (London: SPCK, 1997), 9.

²⁰Jay E. Adams, *Pastoral Leadership* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1978), 12.

wonder today's leaders are unsure how they measure up. There are too many standards to meet! Each definition offered seeks to contribute a new insight to the understanding of leadership, and many of them do. The following is a small sampling of the diversity of helpful definitions that have been offered:

Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by a leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers.²¹

Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers. Leadership is influence, the ability of one person to influence others.²²

Commenting on Christian leadership, George Barna argues that a Christian leader is someone who is called by God to lead; leads with Christlike character; and demonstrates the functional competencies that permit effective leadership to take place.²³ This view is similar to that Robert Clinton who also says that the central task of leadership is influencing God's people toward God's purposes.²⁴

Each of these definitions help bring focus upon the role of leaders. Robert Clinton's definition encompasses the spiritual nature of leadership in that God's people are led toward God's purposes. Clinton wisely observes that God's purposes are the key to spiritual leadership the dreams and visions of leaders are not the key. While we find this to be a helpful definition, we would like to add at least two dimensions to it. First, spiritual leaders can lead those who are not God's people as well as those who are.

²¹John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 1.

²²Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 31.

²³George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Venture: Venture Books, 1997), 25.

²⁴Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: Nav Press, 1988), 203.

Christian leadership is not restricted within church walls but is equally effective in the marketplace. Second, Clinton notes that leaders lead their people toward God's purposes. However, simply leading people toward an objective may not be adequate for a spiritual leader. Many pastors have left their churches after serving less than two years. They may argue that they moved their church forward, yet nothing of lasting significance was accomplished.²⁵

They are like the pastor whose church was continually losing members. Every time someone asked him how his church was doing he would reply grimly, I think we have turned a corner. The pastor said this so often people wondered if he was the pastor of a maze or a church! Just as Moses was not released from his followers when they disobeyed God and began a forty year hiatus in the wilderness, so true leaders stay with their people until they have successfully achieved God's purposes.

Moses himself had remained faithful to God, yet God would not release him from his rebellious people. To abandon followers because they refuse to follow is to forsake the sacred calling of a leader. Spiritual leaders know they must give an account of their leadership to God; therefore, they are not satisfied merely moving toward the destination God has for them; they want to see God actually achieve his purposes through them for their generation.²⁶

In the New Testament, several words connote the meaning of "govern", "guide", and "lead". A predominant word for leadership is the word *hegeomai* which means "to

²⁵ Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 19.

²⁶Blackaby and Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, 19.

lead”, “to think”, “to regard as”.²⁷ In Hebrews 13:24, the word *hegoumenous* was translated as “the leaders”. The author of Hebrews greets the “leaders” before he greets “all God’s people” which may be an indication that “the community is ... divided into those who lead and those who are led.”²⁸ In other words, it is a recognition of the existence of leadership in the early church.

2.3 Leadership and Church Growth

Research indicates that in each area of ministry, leadership skills are needed and that effectiveness in each function requires a set of specific traits.²⁹ Pastors focusing on growth are found to be possibility thinkers, who can motivate their members to participate in mission and evangelism.³⁰ They are passionate about reaching the lost and lead by example and with intention; in other words, they are task- and goal-oriented.³¹ They thrive as team-leaders and team-builders who are able to delegate responsibility and multiply membership.

Stephen R. Covey writes in his book “principle centered leadership” that in organizations, people usually perform one of the three essential roles: producer, manager, or leader. Each role is vital to the success of the organization. For Example, if there is no producer, great ideas and high resolves are not carried out. The work simply doesn’t get done. Where there is no manager, there is role conflict and ambiguity; everyone attempts to be a producer, working independently, with few

²⁷Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament Vol1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 907.

²⁸Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament Vol*, 907.

²⁹A. Nauss, “Ministerial effectiveness in ten functions” *Review of Religious Research*, 36(1) (1994), 58-69.

³⁰ Peter C. Wagner, *Leading your church to growth: The secret of pastors/people partnership in dynamic church growth* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1984), 35.

³¹ T. Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and proven ways to reach them* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 12.

established systems or procedures. And if there is no leader, there is lack of vision and direction. People begin to lose sight of their mission. Although each role is important to the organization, the role of a leader is most important. Without strategic leadership, people may dutifully climb the “ladder of success” but discover, upon reaching the top rank that it is leaning against the wrong wall.³²

Leadership trend influence on church growth - Jane Overstreet in her article on leadership wrote that by nearly everyone’s definition, leadership in one way or another equates to influence.³³ It is a subject of great debate and concern throughout the secular world as well as throughout global church today.

God’s example seems to confirm the importance of leadership to the wellbeing of his people on earth as throughout the bible accounts we see him call forth leaders to bless the nations. Moses led his people out of captivity and Joshua led them into the promised land, established an earthly kingdom for his people which brought King David into the scene and throughout to the calling of Saul (Paul) to proclaim his name.³⁴

According to John C. Maxwell, when it comes to identifying a real leader, the task can be much easier. Don’t listen to the claims of the person professing to be the leader. Don’t examine his credentials. Don’t check his title. Check his influence. The proof of leadership is found in the followers.³⁵

Arguably, church leadership has a strong implication for church growth. A leadership style of a church leader or a pastor may affect the growth of the church positively or negatively. E. K. Gbordzoe defines church growth as, “The bringing of people, into a

³² Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and proven ways to reach them*, 12.

³³ Jane Overstreet, “Leadership and Church Growth” www.faithandleadership.com, (accessed 4 April, 2016).

³⁴ Overstreet, “Leadership and Church Growth”

³⁵ C. Maxwell John, *21st Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (United States of America: Nashville, Tennessee, 2007), 16.

personal relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit and into responsible church membership, such that the membership of the local congregation will increase in faith, holiness and other spiritual and material qualities while at the same time increasing in number, and also opening and multiplying other branches.”³⁶ According to Gbordzoe, the church grows when its activities are in line with the purpose for which it is established. This purpose, he explains is to fulfill the biblical mandate of the Great Commission.³⁷ The emphasis on church growth from the perspective of the Great Commission constricts Gbordzoe’s benchmark in measuring church growth largely to quantitative and qualitative growths. He expounds that among the activities stated in the Great Commission, the primary factor is to make disciples.³⁸ Again, Gbordzoe further indicates that growth in holiness, human relations, and physical wealth are other crucial perspectives from which the growth of the church can be viewed. For Gbordzoe, since all other instruction such as ‘go’, ‘baptize’ and ‘teach’ in the Great Commission are but helping verbs to the imperative verb ‘make disciples’, it infers that ‘going, baptizing and teaching are helping verbs and are the means to the end of making disciples.’³⁹

In addition, Gbordzoe identifies what he describes as five dimensions of church growth. These dimensions include holiness, human relations, numbers, power of the Holy Spirit and physical wealth. He explained that a growing church must have its members ready to live a holy life and have good relationship with God and with one another. The growing church must also be increasing in number of membership and in the physical wealth of the church. Gbordzoe explains church growth in the power of

³⁶ E. K Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth: A Practical Model* (Accra: GEC Press, 2010), 61.

³⁷Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 63.

³⁸Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 64.

³⁹Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 64.

the Holy Spirit as believers' ability to identify and utilize the gifts of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰ He stresses that a growing church must demonstrate an appreciable level of these elements to be described as such. In the light of these dimensions, this research investigates how Christian leadership affects these dimensions of church growth at the Great Commission Church International.

In addition, Roy Pointer discusses four dimensions of church growth.⁴¹ These include numerical growth, organic growth, conceptual growth and incarnational growth. Pointer describes numerical growth, as the recruitment of individuals to active membership of the church. They are incorporated into the fellowship of believers and share its corporate life of worship and witness. Under the numerical growth, Pointer further identifies ways through which members are recruited for its realization. The four ways of recruitment are biological, transfer restoration and conversion growth.⁴² Pointer identifies another dimension of church growth known as conceptual growth. This dimension of growth he describes as the personal and corporate development of Christian understanding of his faith.⁴³ According to Gbordzoe, Costa defines conceptual growth as the degree of consciousness that a community of faith has with regard to its nature and mission to the world. This idea is similar to Gbordzoe's proposition that the church grows only when its activities are aimed at fulfilling the Great Commission which is making disciples for Christ.⁴⁴

Organic growth is yet another dimension identified and discussed by Pointer. He affirms that while becoming and being a Christian are entirely dependent upon an intimate and personal relationship to Christ, the Christian faith can only be lived in a

⁴⁰Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 81-90.

⁴¹ R. Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* (Great Britain: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1984), 25.

⁴² Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?*, 26-27.

⁴³ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?*, 27.

⁴⁴Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 63.

relationship with and in service to others. Commitment to Christ includes commitment to a community and organic growth describes the formation and functioning of this communal life of the local church. This perspective is similar to Gbordzoe's dimension of church growth, which he referred to as growth in human relationship.⁴⁵ Pointer refers to Costa's, definition of organic growth as: the internal development of a local community of faith (that is, the system of relationships among its members), its form of government, financial structures, leadership and types of activities in which its time and resources are invested. Organic growth is concerned with such issues as depth of fellowship: quality of worship; training of new members; discovery of gifts and the exercise of ministry; appointment and role of leaders; practice of corporate prayer; celebration of the ordinance or sacraments-all that relate to the corporate organization and activity of the local church.

The church, according to Pointer also has another dimension of growth referred to as incarnational growth.⁴⁶ According to Pointer, Costa defines this as the degree of involvement of a community of faith in the life and problems of her social environment. That is her participation in the afflictions of her world; her prophetic, intercessory and liberating action on behalf of the weak and destitute; the intensity of her preaching to the poor; the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind and the oppressed.⁴⁷ This exposition has thrown more light on the subject matter of church growth and the extent to which the practice of healing and deliverance can be explained to have a role to play in the growth of the church.

It is significant to point out that the above discussion is crucial to the subject matter under study. This is because it serves as secondary source of information and further provides the framework for this study.

⁴⁵Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 85-87.

⁴⁶ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 28.

⁴⁷ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 28.

2.4 General Church Growth Studies

The term “general” refers to literature that is based on published research, but its documentation is not organized specifically for the scientific world. Some of the data are available only on a limited basis, therefore, sometimes difficult to evaluate. But since they contributed intensively to the church growth discussion, they need to be considered. In the beginning of the church growth movement, the importance of a pastor’s leadership was recognized as one among other factors that contribute to church growth, based on research such as observation and field studies. McGavran founder of the church growth movement identified the role of the pastor as trainer or educator. The main task of the pastor is to train other Christians in evangelism.⁴⁸

Wagner, his successor, became more specific on leadership. Based on observation, his “Vital Sign Number One of a healthy, growing church is a pastor who is a possibility thinker and whose dynamic leadership has been used to catalyze the entire church into action for growth”.⁴⁹ Pastors of growing churches earned their authority or the right to lead through relationships. They are able to motivate members and to create structures that foster their spiritual and practical development. The “key function” of the pastor is to help members to find, use, and develop their spiritual gifts⁵⁰, hence, to work as an equipper, “who actively sets goals for a congregation according to the will of God, obtains goals ownership from the people, and sees that each church member is properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the goals.”⁵¹

⁴⁸ Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), 83.

⁴⁹ Wagner, *Your Church Can Crow: Seven Vital Signs of a Healthy Church*, 63.

⁵⁰ Wagner, *Your Church Can Crow*, 91.

⁵¹ Wagner, *Leading Your Church to Growth*, 79.

The right leadership is servanthood and needs to be distinguished from administration. While administration is dealing with the status quo and efficiency, leadership is visionary and cares about a better future.⁵² “Apostolic churches,” such as the Great Commission Church International, which can be defined as an independent, very fast growing and mainly evangelistic church, is especially in a “transition from bureaucratic authority to personal authority, from legal structure to relational structure, from control to coordination and from rational leadership to charismatic leadership.”⁵³ Unlike traditional churches and ministry, apostolic leaders are vision casting and vision driven, focusing on leadership and less in management, concentrating on major decisions and delegating the rest, organizing an effective management team around them, deciding to stay in their church for the rest of their lives and choosing their successor themselves.⁵⁴ The last point is important in so far as it describes the goal to cultivate the charismatic leadership style instead of routinizing it. The new kind of leadership is so radical that Wagner talks about a “reformation of practice.”⁵⁵ The right leadership can help to turn a plateaued church or denomination into a growing one.

The most comprehensive research was done by Rainer and Barna. While Rainer studied only Baptist churches, Barna referred to growing churches in all kinds of denominations. Rainer, in his first study about effective evangelism, was not able to find a singular significant difference of pastors based on demographics.⁵⁶ The pastors of the 576 successful evangelistic churches he studied, were not automatically the

⁵² C.F. George, *How to Break Growth Barriers: Capturing overlooked opportunities for church growth* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993), 93-94.

⁵³ Peter C. Wagner, *The New Apostolic Churches: Rediscovering the New Testament model of leadership and Why it is God's desire for the Church Today* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1998), 20.

⁵⁴ Peter C. Wagner, *Churchquake: How the Apostolic Reformation is Shaking up the Church as we know it* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1999), 86-96.

⁵⁵ Wagner, *Churchquake*, 36.

⁵⁶ T. Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches: Successful churches reveal what works and what doesn't* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 119.

most gifted leaders, but mainly had a distinct passion for mission and evangelism.⁵⁷ It was their attitude that made a difference. They were not just willing to get in contact with people themselves, but helped members to experience evangelistic outreach. In addition, they valued prayer highly as the foundation to effective evangelism, did not neglect social ministries, and trained their members continuously. The most effective ministry to reach people was preaching. According to Rainer's responds he had from his interview, over 90% of the respondents indicated preaching as the most effective factor.⁵⁸

In his later research with 350 newly baptized members, 100 pastors of effective evangelistic churches and 350 longer-term Christians, Rainer confirmed the former results and was able to deepen the issue of leadership. He profiled the successful pastor as passionate to reach the lost, and more likely to improve their leadership skills through reading, continuing education, and supervision. Their leadership style could be described as "intentional"⁵⁹, meaning task- and goal-oriented, and included several practical and spiritual characteristics as rated by pastors themselves on a scale from 1-5 to lead a church successfully.⁶⁰

Surprisingly, the majority of leaders indicated that a difficult situation has significantly shaped their leadership development. Rainer notes, that the passion to reach the lost went along with the willingness to risk something and to make mistakes.⁶¹ While effective leaders were identified first of all as team players who were task, goal, and finally relationship oriented, the comparison group included team players who were mainly relationship, and then organization oriented.⁶² Effective

⁵⁷Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, 119.

⁵⁸Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, 50.

⁵⁹Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, 152.

⁶⁰Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, 153.

⁶¹Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, 178-179.

⁶²Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, 183.

pastors are highly motivated to make a difference. They focus on leadership, evangelism, and preaching and spend less time in pastoral care. “The effective church leaders spent ten hours each week in pastoral care compared to thirty-three hours for the comparison group leaders.”⁶³ They identified their pastoral competency as their number one weakness; and they recognized the tension, without trying to solve the problem or to change the priorities.⁶⁴

Barna, founder and President of Barna Research Group, can contribute similar results. Comparing user-friendly churches, Barna portrayed an effective pastor as gifted in areas of teaching, communication, and leadership. They feel free to delegate responsibility as a way to empower their members, but also are determined to make the right decision if needed. “By nature, strong pastors are agreeable, but confrontational.”⁶⁵ They spend meaningful time with their leaders, and are visible enough to stay in contact with what is going on. They also have the gift of practicality, accountability, and discernment.⁶⁶

One study of special interest is Barna’s research of 30 churches, that were one time thriving congregations, experienced steep decline, and became revitalized.⁶⁷ Though the number of churches was quite small, the insights are valuable. One reason for the churches’ decline and the key for growth was leadership. Besides the general characteristics of effective pastors as visionary and strategic thinkers, team building, encouraging, taking risks, and leading spiritually, they were especially young pastors

⁶³ Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, 185.

⁶⁴ Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, 199.

⁶⁵ G. Barna, *User friendly Churches: What Christians need to know about the churches people love to go to* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1991), 150.

⁶⁶ Barna, *User friendly Churches*, 143 – 151.

⁶⁷ G. Barna, *Turnaround churches: How to overcome barriers to growth and bring new life to an established church* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1993a).

younger than 45 years of age with a self-assured and self-confident personality. They lived a committed spiritual life and were extremely hard workers, working up to 80 hours per week. Barna even called it workaholism, though none maintained that for them “anything less than total effort and energy would have enabled the comeback.”⁶⁸ Interestingly, they were generally not noted as visionary prior to their experience. The turnaround pastor, though, is more likely to be the type of leader who has slowly refined his innate visionary skills and sees the dying church as the ideal place to put these faculties into practice. While many of these people might also be drawn to initiating a new church, a significant proportion may be drawn to restoring the heartbeat to a fading congregation.⁶⁹ But this kind of leader is rare. Another study documented that only 6% of over 1,000 American pastors saw themselves as gifted in the area of leadership.⁷⁰ Only 4% of all senior pastors were able to state a clear vision for their ministry.⁷¹ But those who were leaders were more satisfied and more fulfilled with the role of the pastor, had the lowest stress level, and tended to wind up leading the larger churches.⁷² Barna therefore questioned seminary training as preparing academics or administrators and not leaders.

In Barna’s more recent research, the numbers have slightly changed. Only 5% of pastors see themselves gifted in leadership.⁷³ But he also discovered that effective leaders are mainly team-builders, so he redefined leadership as team work. Effective churches involve around 8 to 12% of its members as leaders, compared to 3 to 4% in traditional churches. Even leaders are not excellent in each area, indicating that team

⁶⁸Barna, *Turnaround Churches*, 68.

⁶⁹Barna, *Turnaround Churches*, 71.

⁷⁰G. Barna, *Today’s pastors: A revealing look at what pastors are saying about themselves, their peers and the pressures they face* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1993), 21, 121.

⁷¹Barna, *Today’s Pastors*, 118.

⁷²Barna, *Today’s Pastors*, 127.

⁷³G. Barna, *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1999), 32.

building is highly effective. Barna proposed ideally a team of four different kinds of leaders representing four aptitudes.⁷⁴ The “directing leader is mainly motivating people through being a visionary, the “strategic leader” loves planning and working on the details of a vision without being that much up front, the “team-building leader” is focusing on people through his or her ability to bring people together, and, finally, the “operational leader” creates new opportunities for ministry to accomplish the vision. Barna recognized that because effective leaders usually possess just one of the four aptitudes, highly effective churches must have leaders who are effective team players.

2.5 Conclusion

The studies examined in this chapter reflect the basic insights of church growth proponents. It gives a general idea that indeed, leadership style of church pastors has a great influence on church growth. The studies examined here are very important to the researcher, because it would go a long way to help examine the issues that confront the researcher in this study. It would also help throw more light on the issue of leadership and church growth as found in the Great Commission International.

⁷⁴ G. Barna, *The Power of Team Leadership: Finding strength in shared responsibility* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2001), 99- 113.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND LEADERSHIP PATTERN IN GCCI

3.1 Introduction

This study particularly concerns the leadership trends in GCCI and how that has helped towards the growth of the church. From the previous chapter, there is no gainsaying in the fact that church leadership has a substantial influence on church growth. Discussing the three successive leadership that have taken place since the inception or the establishment of GCCI the researcher through an in-depth interview with the personalities that have occupied the chairmanship position in the church present their style of leadership and how they attempted to grow the church from where they met it. To begin with the discussion, the researcher present a brief history of the GCCI and later discusses the various leadership trends from the view of the individuals who themselves have occupied the position.

3.2 History of Great Commission Church International (GCCI)

The Great Commission Church International hereafter referred to as GCCI was established on 1st April 1991. It broke away from an existing neo-Pentecostal church, the Gospel Revivals Ministry (GRM). The schism or the breakaway has been attributed to three reasons. One; that the head pastor, who also was the founder, controlled all the resources of the denomination. He handled resources as he alone deemed fit. There was no qualified accountant and no official auditing of the church's accounts. Two; there was no well-defined administration and there was nothing like job description for both ministerial and non-ministerial staff. Three; there was moral degeneration at the topmost leadership level.

The inability on the part of the founder to hand over the leadership of the church or step aside for a new head to be in his place to run the affairs of the church, resulted in seven members of the highest council known as the Central Deacons Board to break off and after waiting on the Lord God for a while came up with a new denomination, the Great Commission Church International. Later on, the new denomination came up with a constitution. Administratively, the constitution set up an organizational structure with the following organogram in order of importance, Apostolic Council, General Council, Executive Council, Zonal and Regional Boards, District Boards, and finally, local Church Board.

The Apostolic Council by the constitution is the highest decision making body for the denomination. Its major function is to ensure doctrinal purity and balance in the church. (Article 2) The Chairman of the Apostolic Council is the worldwide head of the church. He, together with the council superintends in a general way the work of the Executive Councils (Article 3) whose responsibility is to see to the day to day administration of the church in member countries under the headship of a chairman.

An annual general meeting or council meeting (Article 5) is held in member countries for the Executive Council of the country to account of its stewardship to it. The executive council is primarily responsible to the General Council and then to the Apostolic Council. Also, a country may be divided into zones or regions. A group of political or ecclesiastical regions which are not big enough to stand on their own may be put together to form a zone. Under zones and regions are districts formed by a set of local congregations. Each local congregation has a church board under a pastor to run its affairs.

3.2.1 Elections

All members of the Executive Council are elected. These are the chairman, the vice chairmen and directors. A convention is now in place to the effect that if the members of the ministerial class which qualify to be elected to the Executive Council for the position of director are short in number, the newly elected chairman and his vice chairmen plus the outgoing executive council members may appoint some ministers to the council. Whilst members of the Apostolic Council hold office for life, other things being equal, those of the executive council may serve for a maximum of two terms in one particular office. These two terms would not exceed ten years except that by the provisions of the constitution the first Executive Council had a twelve year two term office. Duration of office is five (5) years but one can be elected for another five (5) years.

3.2.2 Culture and GCCI Leadership Trends

The denomination is dominated by Ewes. Ewe culture in its ramifications has an overruling influence on the church. Ewe dances, lifestyle and language dominate. Since Akan culture predominates in Ghana, it is difficult to penetrate Akan society and that also has affected the spread of the church in Ghana as a whole. Furthermore, it is difficult to be elected to an office even if you don't have the approval of the Ewe majority. You may therefore have an unqualified person in office with its attendant inefficiency.

3.2.3 Poverty

The denomination has mainly been in rural areas. This has had adverse effect on its finances. The low finances have crippled the church's effort to attract qualified staff

for its ministerial work and other administrative offices. The glaring weaknesses of ministers is seen in the fact that most have low educational background and cannot handle correctly the English language which is the lingua franca of Ghana. Such could only work in their tribal areas for it is only their vernacular they are able to read, even sometimes with difficulty. It is also hard to transfer certain vital managerial skills to them. The general management of the rank and file of the congregations is therefore weak and mediocre.

3.3 Leadership Trends in GCCI

This section particularly discusses the various leadership roles exhibited by the three successive Council Chairmen of the church since its establishment.

3.3.1 First Chairman

The first person to ascend to the chairmanship position of the Apostolic Council was Apostle J.F.K. Mensah. He was a vigorous preacher. Long before the rift in GRM, he had established himself as a well-known preacher of the gospel. He was often invited and heard preaching on the platforms of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. As a result of his leadership style, GCCI started growing rapidly. However, this growth was not without difficulties. This growth was soon slow down because of the development of doctrinal rifts and factions. Many once active members could not bear with the conflict and left the church. There was a division right from the Executive Council down to the rank and file of the church which nearly marred the beauty and growth that was witnessed in the church at the time.

According to Apostle Mensah, there were five things that helped him to build the church. The first was that he was a founding member of the church and as a result, saw the need to bring the whole church under one vision and direction. This understanding was important because the church at the time needed a sense of unity for growth and sustainability.⁷⁵

The second was consensus building; he said the seven of them that started the church did not leave Gospel Revival Ministries alone but with other seventeen junior pastors. They also had in their camp sixty percent (60%) of the church's membership. Since these members and leaders had in their mind an already existing form of church structures and administrative style from the previous church, there was the need to build consensus on new leadership style to foster unity and growth.⁷⁶

The third issue that confronted him was vision setting. He was of the view that new people were entering into the church and that they need to make people understand the new vision and direction the church was taking. This is what he said, "on one hand we needed to face the old mentality challenge and deal with it. On the other hand, there were new and fresh people who did not know anything about the past who had to be built up, given the fresh vision in the way that they can also run with it."⁷⁷

In his view, restructuring of the church was the fourth thing that he dealt with. He said that, what was a big challenge to the church at the time was leadership. They came out with the leadership structure *primus inter pares* (the first among equals) that we are all equal and nobody is greater than the other. To him, after this leadership structure, everybody went his or her own way to do what he or she taught was beneficial to him

⁷⁵ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah, on 29th August, 2016, Accra.

⁷⁶ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

⁷⁷ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

or her relative to where one was practicing his ministry. However, this leadership structure somehow did not auger well for proper running of the church.⁷⁸

The fifth factor he had to battle and contended with was financial and material resources. He said the situation was like someone started bringing forth and gave birth to twenty children at a time. In recounting the situation at the time, he that; “we didn't know where help was coming from, there was no Head Quarters, the seventeen pastors who followed us had to be catered for, their medical bills, salaries and other basic things. My car was church car, we lost the old chapel buildings and we were using Rev. Assuming's house as our office.”⁷⁹ He said, they could not develop resources to push the church and that was a great challenge. It made it such that everybody was thinking about finance because it was not there. These issues crippled them. This is because, if they had started with few people, they could have taken their time to develop resources side by side but they had many people especially from the Volta Region and resources from there was very small. The only branch of the church that was serving as a backup was the Accra central assembly.⁸⁰

Arguably, the leadership of Apostle Mensah as Apostolic Council Chairman of the Great Commission Church International had some kind of positive impact on the growth of the church. For him, he had “a clear vision from God and that was accepted by the church.”⁸¹ For instance, the name of the church, the Great Commission Church International was part of such vision. The aim was to take literally, the Commission of the Lord Jesus upon themselves and to also, engage in disciple making. He said, a critical reflection of that intended mandate can be found in the church's logo.⁸²

According to him, they had a clear strategy that initially helped. He argues, “I

⁷⁸ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

⁷⁹ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

⁸⁰ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

⁸¹ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

⁸² Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

remember within the first or second month we had fivefold ministry conference for Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, Pastors and Teachers in the church and in those days we were producing Sunday school material for the whole church. When we go for convention we had a theme to follow. That was also another plus.”⁸³

Apostle Mensah intimated that the former church was only limited to Volta Region and pockets of few areas in other places, but there was the need to go to all the regions so they started national convention in Kumasi and we were trying to open branches in Tamale, Bolgatanga and all those places so that the church would not be inward looking and small. To him, this gave them fresh start. The commitment level was very high, those days before church service begins church members would meet to pray, when we go for conventions people would sleep under the tent at the convention grounds praying and crying to God to release His power and our souls were hungry for the word of God; because we felt that we had lost a lot of time in the previous church and it affected the spirit of church members so all of them said that we should go out with the word of God. So we opened a lot of small churches and on the way I went to Mauritania for missions and when I came back a lot of these small churches had been given away (ceded) because they wanted to deepen the existing assemblies rather than opening new ones.⁸⁴

3.3.2 Second Chairman

The Chairperson for the second Executive Council of the church was Apostle Joseph Kwabena Antwi. Apostle Antwi’s vision was to promote evangelism and discipleship because to him, even though the church’s vision was to embark on such an agenda, they have not been able to do so well in that area since its inception in 1991. In an interview, he argued that “we have seen and understood over the years that disciple

⁸³ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

⁸⁴ Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah.

making is the best so far for getting the Great Commission done. But it is a vision that the church has really struggled with, because on the face of the challenges and competition overt and covert in Christendom it has been very difficult to stick to that original idea of disciple making.”⁸⁵

Commenting on the previous administration before him, Apostle Antwi indicated that in the first term under Apostle J.F.K. Mensah, the church’s attention concerning its growth was in the area of church planting. This to him was seen in the expansion of the initial thirty-two (32) churches or assemblies to about one hundred and thirty (130) branches. In evaluating the progress of the church at the time, Apostle Antwi indicated that in his own view, this achievement was not bad in itself with an emphasis that it means they added 10 churches in each year of the twelve (12) years administration of Apostle J.F.K Mensah.⁸⁶

However, despite this remarkable improvement in the planting of churches by the previous administration, Apostle Antwi brought some changes into the approach that was adopted in planting of the churches because it overlooked other areas which to him, was very crucial to the growth of the churches planted. He said, “Apostle Mensah's time was the pioneering period of the church even though it had its own challenges.” This view of Apostle Antwi concerning the previous administration of the church gave him a different direction as to how to lead the church. This is because, during his two terms in office, he saw that they had over traded by planting most of the churches in the sense that the main idea behind the establishment of those churches seems not to have worked as expected by the previous administration. He said that, the idea of each local assembly planting a daughter assembly was not

⁸⁵ Interview with Apostle J.K. Antwi, on 30th August, 2016.

⁸⁶ Interview with Apostle J.K. Antwi.

properly embraced in the church. This happened because the leaders were thinking of establishing full grown churches with fully furnished chapel, instruments, and people. To Apostle Antwi, to get such church in place wasn't an easy thing to do.⁸⁷

He was of the opinion that, even though the first administration had done well in establishing those churches, they realized that most of the assemblies were weak. There were few supporting assemblies that had human, financial and material resources to support the church for sustainable growth. This made his administration to focus its attention on strengthening the local churches numerically, financially and logistically, so that the local church would be able to stand on its feet.

However, their inability to extensively reach and support all the planted churches made them to cede some branches of the church to some other churches. This decision came as a surprise to some leaders of the church. According to Apostle Antwi, "it came as a surprise that we ceded those congregations because it was becoming too expensive to run them in terms of human and other resources. so we gave them out to some other churches. We were not in the position to handle them so we left them and they could not survive. We had an assembly in Kibi but it doesn't exist as we speak. So that has been the trend under the second chairman."⁸⁸

Even though their decision to cede off some branches of the church did not go down well with some leadership and members of the church, there seem to be a positive achievement in their decision. This is because, at the end of their second term in office, the church was financially stronger than it was in the beginning. Many more

⁸⁷ Interview with Apostle J.K. Antwi.

⁸⁸ Interview with Apostle J.K. Antwi.

assemblies have built chapels and it was clear that some kind of growth had occurred. This, however, did not make them to sit unconcerned. According to Apostle Antwi, at the latter part of his term in office, the executive council toured the entire country. To him, this was a useful tour because it helped them to appreciate and know what was on the ground. It helped them to know that there had been significant increase in human, material, logistical and financial support with resources for GCCI as a whole. According to him, some of the policies from his two terms have given GCCI today a certain strength in terms of finances. Again, it has made many of the assemblies become stronger and still continues to make churches become stronger.

The Apostle is of the view that a look at the church's statistics over the years especially between 2003 and 2013 indicate that there has been a remarkable growth numerically. Even though it was not like that of Apostle Mensah's term in office, where there was a focus on church planting, a few churches have been planted during his tenure of office. However, in the main their objective was to strengthen the local churches so that they can support the church's expansion.⁸⁹

However, their main aim was to make the local assemblies become self-sufficient and self-propagating in terms of finances and numerical numbers. This has helped the church because it has made some local branches of the church become fully grown branches and also able to support the work of the head office.⁹⁰

In sum, one can argue that the second chairman did not have the charisma of the first, nor was he known well on the general Christian landscape of Ghana. Additionally, he was soon plunged into land litigation. A burden he had to bear until he finished his ten years term of office. The church was generally stagnant in the Great Commission effort though there were pockets of successes.

⁸⁹ Interview with Apostle J.K. Antwi.

⁹⁰ Interview with Apostle J.K. Antwi.

3.3.3 The Third and Current Chairman

The third and current Chairperson of the Great Commission Church International Apostolic Council is Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong. According to Apostle Brempong, his focus has been to seek God so that they would get instructions from him to do what he wants. To him, the focus was to mobilize the church to seek God, as a result of that they were trying to focus on the spiritual growth of pastors, deacons board members and members of all ministries or departments within the church so that there would be harmonization of collective effort to pursue the Great Commission. This made them to introduce Friday all night service in all branches of the church.⁹¹

In an attempt to grow different parts of the church spiritually, a Bible school was established under the leadership of Apostle Brempong. However, in order to ensure the effectiveness of the bible school, it has been aligned with Apostle Mensah's Christlike Disciple Making School (C.D.M) to train pastors, leaders, youth and anyone who wishes to be trained to purposely help with the growth and expansion of the church. This training approach has influenced a lot of people to apply to the C.D.M to be trained as ministers. However, an effort is made to assess people before accepting them for the training. This is because that is a specialized area which people who would be recruited can be trained to hold. It is the skill they bring that could be the foundation we will build on. The church has had problem with some of the executive council members because of the level of their training, and these steps have been taken to avoid such problems in the future.⁹²

In his view, there were a lot of divisions in the leadership front of the church that he needed to resolve. This is what he says, "when we started, there were so much love,

⁹¹ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong, on 29th August, 2016. Accra.

⁹² Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

we had all come together from Evangelist Siam (The leader of Gospel Revivals Ministries). Under him, he was the boss so we were all trying to work under him and that unity and coercion was very strong and that helped us from the initial stages when we all agreed to do certain things, but along the lines a lot of conflicts and misunderstandings made it such that the coercion began to suffer.”⁹³ He said that, he left in 1993 for further studies and came back in 1999. During the period when he was away Apostle Adanu was acted on his behalf as the vice chairman for missions.⁹⁴ Upon his return, even though he wouldn't be able to recount the incidence, he saw that the unity in the church has deteriorated and this made it difficult for the church to work together as a team or to pursue the things that they had planned to do. He realised that, when one person is thinking that we should go this way another would say we should go the other way. To him “that was not a good thing for us even though when that was happening they were right to do what they were doing”.⁹⁵

Apostle Brempong, one thing that did not auger well for the church was the seemingly disunity that erupted between the first chairman and the second chairman of the church. He was of the view that, Apostle Mensah, the first chairman of the church was somehow neglected by his successor.⁹⁶ He argued, “I think that there was some confusion, I had come back but I thought there was still a certain disjoint between J.F.K. Mensah and the rest who were here, because he was no more in the executive council and the cooperation that should have existed between him and Antwi was absent. There, J.F.K. felt isolated and that also didn't help us.”⁹⁷ To him, since a lot of the members in the church were favored by the leadership of Mensah. This created a kind of problem for the church. He argues that “since church members

⁹³ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

⁹⁴ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

⁹⁵ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

⁹⁶ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

⁹⁷ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

have their favorites, they always want to see their favorites so once you don't go with them, then you are not accepted, and that made things too difficult for us.”⁹⁸

To him, this coupled with financial challenges during the time of Antwi, the constraint in the church began to grow bigger so finally, the church decided that some of the Assemblies should be ceded which brought the number of assemblies from about one hundred and forty (140) to a little over hundred (100) assemblies. To Apostle Prof Assuming Brempong, that shouldn't have happened, however, they should have allowed the assemblies to run until help comes.⁹⁹

Apostle Brempong said that, since his assumption in office, four strategies have been put in place to help with the growth of the church. These are stated below;

1. First, to gather the people to know God.
2. Training the people for the future of the church. We want them to be effective.
3. To reorganize the financial structure of the church so that they will not be in need or want as in previous years. First, we said that all money should come to the Head Office so that we would also re-distribute as and when is needed.
4. Infrastructure development.¹⁰⁰

In sum, one can argue that Apostle Brempong has set out controls that had little human face and in some instances were inhumane. He is a man who has not been in the heat of the church's development but on the periphery has done something for the church, for through him the church has a branch at University of Ghana, Legon, Legon. He had also supported the church with vehicular assets and an office building. He donated the office officially to the denomination when he was elected as chairman. To some extent he is currently facing what was left of the land litigation in the second

⁹⁸ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

⁹⁹ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

¹⁰⁰ Interview Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong.

chairman's term of office. Because of his age he has two years to end his term of office though he took office in 2013.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the leadership trend of the GCCI from the perspective of the men who themselves have had a lead role in the running of the church. The researcher is of the view that, the issues presented in this chapter will go a long way to discuss in a fair manner whether or not the leadership style and strategies put in place by the various leaders since the establishment of the church has helped it growth or not.

CHAPTER FOUR

**ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION IN THE
GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH INTERNATIONAL**

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to examine the various regimes of leadership in the GCCI starting from the first chairman of the executive council of the GCCI to the current chairman. It will be quite obvious to the reader that most of the issues that the researcher attempts to discuss here in this chapter have already been raised in the previous chapter of the work. However, what the researcher does here is to examine in detail, the leadership strategies adopted by the various chairmen of the council and examine both their strength and weaknesses towards the growth of the GCCI. Again, the chapter also presents a brief response from the questionnaire that were distributed to elders of the church in all the various branches of the GCCI in Ghana. In analyzing the issues that emerge from the study, the researcher in some cases, discusses the issues or support the arguments made with views of other scholars in church growth studies.

4.2 Assessing the General View of the Elders towards the Growth of the Church

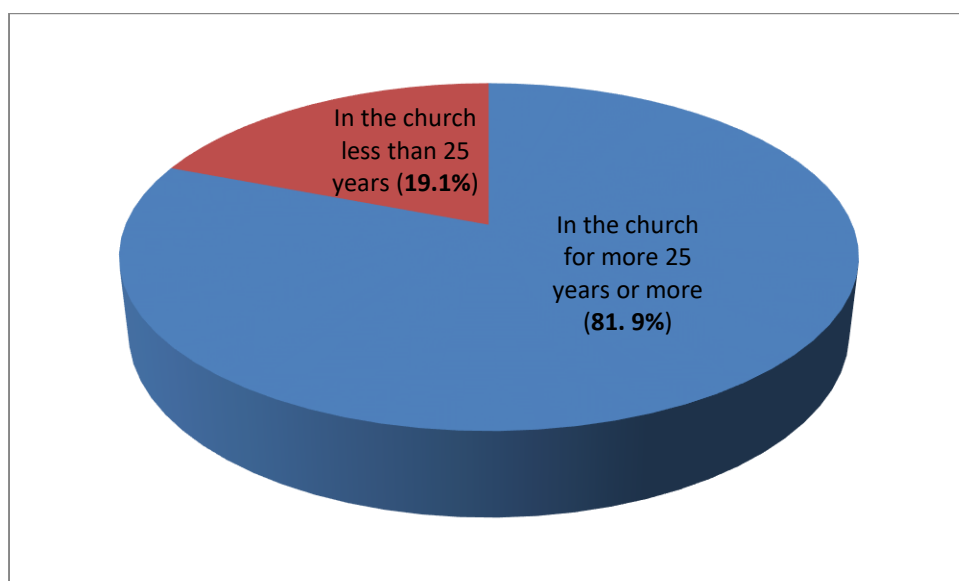
As part of the research process, the researcher sought to solicit the views of elders in the church on what they think the various leadership trends in the church has impacted it growth. As a result, a questionnaire was distributed at the national convention of the church in Accra on April, 2016 mainly to pastors and elders to find out what they think of the various executive council chairmen's impact on the growth of the church. The pastors and elders were selected as a target for the study because most of them

were present at the time the church began and hence, were in the best position to examine whether or not a particular leader has contributed to the growth of the church. In all, a number of 55 questionnaires were distributed during the national convention in Accra on April, 2016. Out of the 55 questionnaires distributed, 47 were received and analyzed for the study. Out of the 47 respondents, 38 of them, representing 80.9%, indicated that they have been members of the church for the past 25 years. Nine (9) respondent representing 19.1% also indicated that they had been members of the church for the past 20 years. This can be seen represented in the graph and table below.

Table of submitted questionnaire analysis

Total received Questionnaire numbers	Number of respondents in the church for less than or equal to 20 years	Number of respondents who have been in the church for more than 20 years
47	9	38
	19.1 %	80.9 %

Pie Chart showing Respondent's duration of Membership



Due to the focus of the research, the researcher sought to ask some relevant questions in order to ascertain from the various pastors and elders of the church from all branches in the country on their views of whether or not the leaders have contributed to the growth of the church. First and foremost, respondents were asked to access whether or not the leaders have been influential in the growth of the church. In response, almost all the respondents indicated that all the three leaders have helped in the growth of the church. However, majority of the respondents numbering 35 indicated that the first chairman of the executive council has contributed immensely to the growth of the church than all the other two. This response could be attributed to the fact the majority of the existing churches of the GCCI were churches planted under the leadership of Apostle Mensah.

Respondents were also asked to indicate if the vision of the leaders has brought any impact on the growth of the church. In response, majority of the respondents indicated that most of the visionary strategies of the leaders have brought some kind of growth in the church. Most importantly, the respondents indicated that the vision of the first chairman and second chairman have consequently affected the growth of the church in diverse ways. However, some also indicated that the vision of the current chairman of the church has also started yielding fruits.

It is very obvious that human resource development is very crucial for the growth and sustainability of any church. Hence, the study also sought to find out from the respondent whether or not the leaders have invested in people or members in the church. This question was very important because some writers on church growth emphasize the importance of the leader. They state that leaders who focus on the work rather than the person, the goal rather than relationship, and the authority rather than

teamwork created church growth. However, Schwarz's studies on church growth proved otherwise. According to Schwarz, church leaders growing healthy churches are more person-centered, relationship-centered, and teamwork-centered than the leaders of declining churches.¹⁰¹ Therefore, leaders of growing churches observe the lay believers carefully and discover their spiritual potential. Also they share the church's vision and empower suitable authority to the lay believers. In this way, they raise other leaders through a "natural growth system."¹⁰² As a result, the first principle of a healthy church is not that of a pastor who works alone as a self-satisfied person, but a leader empowering leadership and equipping ministers in the church. In responding to the question whether the leaders have invested in people, the respondents indicated that all the leaders have invested in the manpower base of the church. However, most respondents indicated that the first chairman of the church has done a lot in this area due to the fact that he has established a bible school which partners with the church to train leaders and pastors for the GCCI.

The researcher also agrees that the ability of the leaders of the church in dividing the word of God rightly as good teachers and/ or mentors have had good implications on the growth of the church. This is because, as Mark Dever, emphasizes, when people choose a church, they consider the pastor's preaching first of all. So it is very important to proclaim the Word of God rightly.¹⁰³ As a result, Dever presents the necessity and justification of expositional preaching to illuminate the authority of the Word of God.¹⁰⁴ The reason expositional preaching is important is because preaching is not the story of the preacher, but God's story to the hearers. The right proclamation of the Word of God is an important assignment for modern churches to pursue today.

¹⁰¹ Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development* (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2000), 22.

¹⁰² Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 23.

¹⁰³ Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004), 39.

¹⁰⁴ Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, 41.

Therefore, Dever emphasizes that expositional preaching, proclaiming the Word of God rightly, can be a factor for church growth. In responding to the question whether or not the leaders have been good teachers and mentors, the respondents indicated that all the leaders have been good teachers and mentors. However, in this case also, the first chairman of the executive council, according to the respondents has been very instrumental.

Again, the researcher also sought to find out from the respondents if the various leaders have been team players in their work. This question was influenced by the fact that each church has a lot of work to do and needs various people. The lay believers feel happy and joyful and bear fruit in ministry when they serve the ministry by using their gifts. Schwarz refers to Luther's "priesthood of all believers," all believers have responsibilities in helping non-Christians and serving the world. All believers have a different field of serving because they received different spiritual gifts from God.¹⁰⁵ Today, the problem is that many church members do not know what their spiritual gifts are. As a result, churches do not use their potential power, which leads to a dull state, and thus weaken the condition of the church's health. Therefore, church leaders must help to discover and develop the members' spiritual gifts and also entrust them with the ministry according to these gifts. According to the respondents, the various leaders of the church have been team players and very supportive in enhancing the vision and promoting the growth of the church. However, some of the respondents indicated that the tension that sometimes seems to ensue among the leaders of the church does not auger well for the growth of the church. Some of the respondents

¹⁰⁵ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 24.

were of the view that the leaders of the church must have a common goal and vision in order to reach a consensus in whatever they do.

4.3 Individual Impact Assessment: Prospects and Challenges

Even though the Great Commission Church International (GCCCI) has had challenges in the last three decades in terms of leadership succession, there is no gainsaying in the fact that leadership in the church has also, contributed to the growth of the church in various dimensions. The researcher can confidently say that despite the challenges faced by each leadership, every one of them has in a way contributed to the growth of the church either numerically, materially, or financially. In this section of the study, I will examine and critique all the three leadership regime to see how they have helped the growth of the GCCCI.

4.3.1 J.FK. Mensah 1st Executive Council Chairman

From the previous chapter, it was clear that the very aim of the first chairman of the executive council was centered on evangelism and church planting. This evangelism and church planting agenda of the first executive council chairman might have been influenced by two things. First, the fact that he himself is a missionary his missionary zeal moved him to plant more churches. Second, as a new church, he saw the need to evangelize and expand the church in terms of its membership and the number of branches. As discussed in the previous chapter, Apostle J. F. K. Mensah took the idea of the Great Commission as reflected in the church's name and logo and embarked on extensive evangelism and church planting.

Arguably, for many church growth scholars or even evangelists, one of the ways to see that a church is growing is how the church has become big in terms of numbers in membership or the number of branches the church has. This is usually referred to as numerical growth in church growth studies. In the researcher's own opinion, this might have influenced the first chairman. This is because, his vision was to increase the branches the church had from the beginning. His plan was to make sure that the presence of the church was felt in every part of the country.

This vigorous and continual church planting in almost all the ten regions of Ghana was seen as the most crucial strategy for the expansion and numerical growth of the GCCI in terms of its corporate renewal and revival of the church. They had broken away from Gospel Revival Ministry in order to sustain the enthusiasm of members to stay focus and promote the growth of the church. This vision reflects in the idea of Timothy Keller who has argued that “nothing else —not crusades, outreach programs, para church ministries, growing mega churches, congregational consulting, nor church renewal processes, will have the consistent impact of dynamic, extensive church planting”.¹⁰⁶ Keller argues that the success of new churches often challenges older congregations to evaluate themselves in substantial ways. Sometimes it is only in contrast with a new church that older churches can finally define their own vision, specialties, and identity. Often the growth of the new congregation gives the older churches hope that “it can be done,” and it may even bring about humility and repentance for defeatist and pessimistic attitudes.¹⁰⁷ Church planting clearly demonstrates that church growth is possible. When a new church is planted, there is now either a new church in a community where there had been none before; or a stronger and larger church community than before the church planting was started.

¹⁰⁶ Timothy Keller, *Why Plant Churches?* file:///C:/Users/jen/Desktop/Why_Plant_Churches-1%20(1).pdf (accessed on 20th April, 2015).

¹⁰⁷ Keller, *Why Plant Churches?*, 2.

However, this desire to expand the growth of the church was not without challenges. These challenges were as a result of the fact that in an attempt to concentrate on evangelizing and the planting of churches, other important areas of the churches such as human resource development, finance, logistics etc. were not given the adequate attention it deserved. In recounting some of the difficulties he encountered as the first chairman of the church, Apostle Mensah said he had to battle and contend with financial and material resources, which he thinks was self-impounded. This is because, there could have been enough strategies at the time for the church to raise funds or mobilize resources from their existing churches to foster growth and development other than to plant more churches without any support. This is, however, not to say that the planting of the churches at the time was a bad decision. However, planting churches that cannot be self-supporting can bring challenges and even in some cases the collapse of the church. In Apostle Mensah' view, the situation was like someone started bringing forth and gave birth to twenty children at a time without a support. The twenty children analogy he raises is to be understood in the number of work done or churches planted or the number of pastors working without any support. According to him, they could not develop resources to push the church and that was a great challenge. It made it such that everybody was thinking about finance because it was not there, and these issues crippled the church.¹⁰⁸

This seems to suggest that there was a bit of a gap in the planting of the churches as indicated by Apostle Paul in the book of 1 Corinthians. The Apostle Paul, more than any other, observed the need to not only evangelize distant areas, but also to plant local churches that live Christ and speak in His name. Paul uses the expressions to

¹⁰⁸Interview with Apostle J.F.K Mensah, 29th August, 2016, Accra.

plant (1 Cor. 3:6-9; 9:7, 10 e 11), lay foundations (Rom. 15:20, 1 Cor. 3:10) and give birth (1 Cor. 4:15) in referring to the planting of churches. According to Ronaldo Lidório, Bowers explains that Paul, in stating that he proclaimed the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 15:19), meant that churches have been planted in that entire region.¹⁰⁹ According to Lidorio, O'Brien agreeing with Bowers says that 'to proclaim the Gospel, for Paul, was not only the initial preaching or the harvest of some fruit. It included the whole series of activities linked to the maturing and strengthening of the converts with the intention of establishing them in new local churches.'¹¹⁰ So, one can argue or perceive that since the first century there has been a deep connection between the proclamation of the Gospel and church planting, however the proclamation, in itself, does not assure the planting of churches. Hasselgrave stress that some more elements need to be put together to make sure people will not only hear the Gospel but they will come together to follow Jesus.¹¹¹ According to Hesselgrave, to plant churches is the act of reproducing worshiping communities that reflect the Kingdom of God in the world through the proclamation of the living Gospel.¹¹² However, the inability of the leadership of the GCCI at the time to ensure a holistic growth by concentrating on other elements too as part of the planting process hitherto affected a holistic growth of the church some of which effect are felt till today.

It is quite obvious that the leadership strategy adopted by the first chairman in terms of evangelism and church planting has had a lasting effect on the expansion and the

¹⁰⁹ Ronaldo Lidório, "The Concept of Church Planting" <http://www.churchplanting.com>. (Accessed on 5th June, 2015).

¹¹⁰ Lidório, "The Concept of Church Planting", 2.

¹¹¹ David J. Hesselgrave, "Essential elements of church planting and growing in the 21st century." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 36 (January 2000), 27.

¹¹² Lidório, "The Concept of Church Planting", 2.

growth of the church, his inability to also give adequate attention to other important areas in the ministry of the church such as finance and human resources has to some extent affected the continuous expansion of the church after his tenure as executive council chairman of the church. This gap in the leadership strategy of the first chairman of the church nearly marred the growth of the church.

4.3.2 Apostle J. K. Antwi: Second Chairman

As discussed in the previous chapter of this study, Apostle Antwi took over from Apostle Mensah as the second chairman of the executive council of the GCCI. From the previous discussion, the researcher can assert the fact that Apostle Antwi in his years as the chairman of the council also contributed immensely to the growth of the church. However, in examining the situation critically, one can see clearly that there seem to be a sharp dichotomy in leadership strategy and/ or focus between the first chairman and second chairman of the church.

Whereas the first chairman (Apostle Mensah) engineered and supported massive evangelism and church planting agenda as well as strengthening other areas of the church such as leadership, finance etc. the second chairman (Apostle Antwi), even though supported evangelism and church planting, he was somehow not in total support of the approach adopted by the first chairman of the executive council. In my own opinion as a researcher, two reasons might account for this. First, it is possible that the two leaders did not have a common goal concerning how the GCCI should be run. Second, there is also a possibility that Apostle Antwi did not see the reason why churches should be planted without given any necessary support to grow but rather, be allowed to struggle.

According to Apostle Antwi, as much as evangelism and church planting are good in themselves, there isn't any need to plant more churches that cannot be self-supporting or vice versa. The goal of Apostle Antwi was to develop a better understanding and promote evangelism and discipleship. This is because, he was of the view that, even though the church's vision was to embark on such an agenda, they have not been able to do so well in that area since 1991. His argument is based on the fact that even though the church has embarked on extensive outreach programmes to plant churches, other human resources development have adequately not been given the necessary attention and hence, has also, affected the growth of the church. This is to be seen in the church's general council meeting report of the year 2013 when Apostle Antwi was then the chairman of the executive council. In the report, it was stated that "For the past decade, it has been a huge challenge for the denomination to attract and retain called and anointed young person's to serve as ministers. This was quite worrying because the ministerial population was fast aging. It was also difficult to attract professionals to handle our finances. The prime reason for our inability to get the personnel we needed was our weak remunerations. It was literally repugnant to even church members."¹¹³

The attempt by Apostle Antwi to solve the financial challenges of the church led him to introduce a series of strategies to enable him improve the financial position of the church and thereby support its growth. He was of the view that the existing old churches should be self-supporting and self-propagating to be able to thrive by itself and support new or the weaker ones. One of the strategies put in place by Apostle Antwi was for the local churches to send only a part of the tithes and the offering they

¹¹³ Great Commission Church International. A Report of the General Council Meeting held 2013, 22.

receive monthly to the head office. The idea for doing this was to empower the local churches to be financially viable and also, be able to acquire all the necessary resources and logistics needed for their growth. It was also to empower them to be self-sufficient.

As a result of this idea, many churches that were planted by the previous administration but lacked adequate resources for growth were ceded. The reason for ceding off the churches was because; they could not financially support themselves but were dependent on the headquarters for survival. However, the cessation of the churches by Apostle Antwi did not go down well with many of the leadership of the church as well as some members. According to those who were in disagreement, those churches should have been left alone to grow by themselves. In the interviews conducted by the researcher, it was quite obvious that Apostle Mensah and Apostle Assuming, the current chairman of the church's executive council did not support this idea. As a researcher and at the same time an insider of the church, I agree with the latter. This is because; church growth business is something that really needs prayers, time and patience.

There was the need for the leadership of GCCI at the time to understand that the basis of gospel communication should never be defined by what works, but rather by what is biblical (1 Thess 1:5). That is, in church planting, following what is biblical does not necessarily mean there will be greater results in terms of time-saving and numbers. Thus, mission and church planting with sound biblical theology may require investment of time, patience and theological reflection, alongside committed Christians. Murray explains that "All church planters operate within theological

frameworks, but often these are assumed rather than articulated and adopted uncritically rather than as the result of reflection”.¹¹⁴

Church planting is done in dependence on God’s power and desire to save. Although there is a great need for training we should not expect to fulfill our mission merely through carefully elaborated strategies and well trained human resources as anticipated by leadership of the church. Nothing but God’s power and activity can enable the Church spiritually to accomplish His plan in a relevant way in today’s world. Church planting is not merely a matter of marketing, methodology and strategy. It is first a spiritual matter, characterized by the power of God released through the unique and historical sacrifice of Christ and undertaken through the enabling of the Holy Spirit, who guides the church to pray, believe and work (John 14:15-18). Church planting requires a clear understanding of the nature of the Church and God’s purposes for it (ecclesiology), so that the long-term objectives guide the short-term strategy and vision. In particular, we hope to plant churches as communities:

... of redeemed people, birthed by God, and belonging to God (1 Co. 1:1-2); ... of human, vulnerable people: men and women, parents, children, farmers and fishermen who live and breathe the Gospel wherever they may be (Matt.10); ...in the world, holy but not apart from it, not isolated or alienated (1 Co. 6:12-20); ... without borders, and it is therefore missionary by its very nature (Rom 15:18-19); ... with a witness and a gospel that makes sense both in and out of the church building (Jo 14:26; 16: 13-15); ... with the primary mission to glorify God (1 Co. 6:20; Rom 16:25-27).¹¹⁵

Furthermore, Church planting is done through proclaiming the Gospel. The “praxis” of church planting begins by proclaiming the Gospel, because the church is born where the word of God is powerfully at work. So proclamation is the non-negotiable

¹¹⁴ Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 15.

¹¹⁵ Lidório, “The Concept of Church Planting”, 5.

foundation of church planting. For many in mission today church planting itself has become the overriding focus of mission. But for Van Engen and Van Gelder the primary aim is making the Gospel known and experienced for people in their own context, thereby creating disciples of Christ; rather than building a physical, ecclesiastical structure, which, although important, is for them a secondary matter. In any case in some contexts a visible church may not be possible or permissible, but that does not limit the growth of the Kingdom.¹¹⁶

Missionaries may have good leadership, satellite communication, and good pastoral care structures, but they may not be simply proclaiming the fullness of the Gospel as the living Word of God. Although proclamation involves both word and deed, social involvement, holistic ministry and cultural understanding can never substitute for clear verbal teaching, nor in themselves justify the presence of the Church. Church planting envisages the creation of a viable, living and growing community which can itself be a powerful witness as a sign and instrument of the Kingdom. A living Church with a fresh experience of the Lord will be able in its turn to share the dynamic and powerful Word of God through its life, words and witness (John 16:13-15). The most profound value of a ministry of church planting must be to proclaim the Gospel. This means that only a church alive and passionate for Jesus will witness the dynamic powerful Word of God (John 16:13-15).

In applying the above discussion, it is important to state that church growth need not to be only seen or understood in terms of numbers or being strong with finances but also, in terms of how the existing church is growing and maturing in the word of God.

¹¹⁶ See Charles Van Engen's study *The Growth of the True Church* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1981), 504.

This is what other church growth scholars refer to as the organic growth. A healthy church goes beyond such assumptions. It is quite clear that Apostle Antwi at the time saw church growth only in terms of being self-sufficient which also led to the cessation of the churches. This is somehow in contrast with Schwarz's research on church growth. Schwarz researched one thousand, growing churches in thirty-two countries in six continents by using a scientific method. In this research, he reached the conclusion that church growth first occurs naturally when a church has healthy, quality characters. His research is called "*Natural Church Development*," and it became his book title.¹¹⁷ His study began from the principle of farming in 1 Cor. 3:6-7: 6 "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth" (NASB). The Apostle Paul planted seeds, Apollos watered, and God grew the seed. He states that this is the principle of church growth. If one follows the method of the natural farming principle, God will surely grow the church healthily. Hence, there wasn't any need for Apostle Antwi to cede off all those churches. Even though the researcher can say that he has also contributed to the growth of the church in diverse ways, his decision to cede off some branches of the church during his tenure as chairman of the executive council of the church has in a way affected the growth of the church.

4.3.3 Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong

The current chairman of the executive council of the church is Apostle Assuming Brempong. Unlike his two predecessors who have finished their tenure of office successfully as chairmen of the executive council, Apostle Assuming is still in office

¹¹⁷ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 18.

and hence, makes it a bit difficult to measure his performance as against his predecessors. However, in the light of recent development in the church since his assumption into office as the executive council chairman, an attempt is made to examine his contribution to the growth of the church.

As a church growth and development strategy, one of the major decisions taken by Apostle Assuming on his assumption into the position of the executive council chairman was on finance. For a very long time, the GCCI's inability to raise enough fund to support its work has affected the growth of the church both locally and nationally. Hence, the decision taken by Apostle Assuming was that, all assemblies should send all their proceeds in the local assemblies to the headquarters after which a sum of 60 percent of the money would be returned to them for developmental works as and when necessary. This idea initially did not go down well with many leaders and members of the church since the decision began to stifle so many developmental activities of the church in the local assemblies. Upon further interrogation and complains, the decision was rescinded and local assemblies were made to keep 40 percent of their proceeds and 60 per cent, sent to the headquarters. In the researcher's own opinion, this decision has helped the church to embark on some developmental projects and also, help many local assemblies in enhancing their growth. Notwithstanding the above, the current chairman and his family have also contributed in cash and in kind for the training of ministers and other church workers, and he has also mobilized the church funds for infrastructural development. This is also another plus to his administration.

In the course of the interviews with Apostle Prof. Assuming Brempong, it also came to light that there were some unresolved conflicts among the leadership of the church which need to be looked at.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has examined the various leadership regime of the church since its inception and how it has contributed to the growth of the church. In particular, the chapter mainly focused on the issues that emerged in chapter three of the work. The chapter has revealed that even though all leadership regimes in one way or the other have contributed to the growth of the church, there are certain strengths and weaknesses that can be found in their style of leadership. Some of these strengths and weaknesses have been given the necessary critique and the researcher hopes that this would go a long way to help in the smooth running of the church. Some views of some pastors and elders regarding how the various leadership regime has contributed to the growth of the church were also given the necessary attention.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

This study has looked at the leadership trends in the Great Commission Church International and how that has affected the growth of the church. The study was motivated by the fact that the succession of leadership style as adopted by the church over last two decades seems to have greatly influenced the current state of the church in terms of its growth both positively and negatively. In order to examine the issue at stake, this study employed both a qualitative and descriptive approach. These methods were used to examine how the various decisions and strategies put in place by previous and current chairman of the church is affecting its output in terms of growth.

The work also looked at leadership and church growth. Since the objective of the study was to examine how church leadership affects church growth, the study examined the correlation of the two important subjects that underline the study. Most importantly, the study examined scholar's views on the subject of leadership and church growth and placed into perspective how that has affected the growth of the Great Commission Church International. This was very important because, in today's churches, there seem to be a problem with church growth issues and for several decades, membership has declined in some churches. This decline in church membership has somewhat been attributed to poor leadership and mismanagement.

Again, the study also brought into perspective the various activities as well as important decisions that were taken by the various executive council chairmen during their tenure in office. This was done by interviewing both the past and the current

chairmen to solicit their view on exactly what happened during their term in office. A detailed description of their interviews have been presented in the previous chapters of this work. The study has also examined the various strengths and weaknesses of the various leadership regimes and how that has contributed to the growth of the GCCI.

5.2 Conclusion

Arguably, this study has presented one of the various challenges that is encountered by many churches globally. The idea that effective and efficient church leadership has an impact on the growth of a church cannot be over emphasized. It is quite obvious in this research that church leadership has a direct consequence on church growth. In focusing on the Great Commission Church International, there are a number of significant findings that were made as part of the research.

It was found out that individual interest seems to have superseded corporate interest in the daily running of the church's activities. In the Great Commission Church International, too much power seems to have been placed in the executive council Chairmen which hitherto, is affecting the effective and smooth administration of the church's activities in a nationwide scale.

One other significant finding that was made as part of the research was the conflict and tension that seem to mount among the leadership of the church in term of one's goal and vision concerning how the church should be run. These tensions have led to the discontinuation of projects or unfinished agenda by previous administration.

One other factor that has also contributed to the slow growth of the church is finance and human resource or personnel. It was very obvious in the interviews with the previous chairmen and the current chairman that one of the major setbacks of the church is finance. The church's inability to raise the needed funding she needs for its growth has led to a number of challenges which has ultimately accounted for the slow growth.

5.3 Recommendations

Looking at the issues raised, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations;

- The church's constitution should be reviewed in order to restructure the governance system adopted for the running of the church. The review should be done in such a way that other executive council members will be given a parallel role to be played in the church thereby, enhancing effective growth and rapid expansion.
- The church leadership should come into consensus and remove all difference that seems to affect the smooth running of the church.
- The Great Commission Church International should put in place effective strategies or enter into some venture capital business that will from time to time generate enough revenue or income to support some aspect of the work of the church.
- The church should take upon itself to run leadership seminars and programmes to teach pastors and individuals in the church how different temperaments can affect the work of the church.

- Leaders in the church should also strive to abide by the constitution of the church and work to promote the growth of the church and better the lives of individuals who are in the church.
- The current chairman with the help of the Holy Spirit should try to bring under control any unresolved conflicts and misunderstanding within the top hierarchy of the Great Commission Church International.

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APPENDIX I

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY
FALCUTY OF, CSUC

TOPIC: LEADERSHIP TREND IN GREAT COMMISSION INTERNATIONAL;
ITS IMPACT ON THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PASTORS AND ELDERS

Please the questionnaire is strictly intended for research purposes and information will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please follow carefully the instructions given under each question.

Please ensure that you answer all questions.

Do not enter your name or the name of the church.

Please give frank and honest opinions.

1. Gender
a. Male () b. Female ()
2. Age
a. 30 () b. 40 () c. 50 () d. 60+ ()
3. How many years have you been a congregation member?
a. 5 () b. 10 () c. 15 () d. 20+ ()
4. How many years have you served in ministry?
a. 5 () b. 10 () c. 15 () d. 20+ ()

With (A) representing the first Executive Council Leader (B and C) for the subsequent regime respectively, answer the questions below.

How will you access the qualities of present and previous leaders?

5. Influential
A. Yes () No ()
B. Yes () No ()
C. Yes () No ()

6. Visionary
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()
7. Believes the best in people
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()
8. Teacher and Mentor
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()
9. Empower Others
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()
10. Team player
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()
11. Clear values
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()
12. Celebrate successes
- A. Yes () No ()
- B. Yes () No ()
- C. Yes () No ()

