



An organisational life cycle (OLC) perspective on church survival within the Reformed Baptist Movement of Zambia (RBmZ)

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Dissertation accepted in fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree *Doctor of Philosophy in Pastoral Studies* at
the North-West University

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Graduation Ceremony: May 2023

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Declaration

By submitting this Thesis, I declare that this is my own original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof and that I have not previously submitted it, in its entirety or in part, for obtaining any qualification.

Oswald Pearson Sichula

Date: August 2022

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to give thanks to the almighty God for enabling me to complete this research amid busy pastoral work responsibilities.

Second, I would like to most sincerely thank my church Crossway Baptist for their prayers for me as I worked on this research. Special thanks go to my fellow elders for the encouragement and support to ensure that I had the time to write this thesis whenever I needed it.

Third, my appreciation and thanks go to my supervisor Professor V. Magezi for his constructive and insightful criticisms in the writing of this research. He was the one who spurred me to undertake this research in the first place.

Fourth, I would like sincerely thank North-West University for the bursary financial assistance I received for this research.

Fifth, I thank God for my supportive and patient family whom I robbed the precious time to be with me: My dear wife Mwenya and the children Lumbanji, Mupelwe and Nsansa.

Sixth, I also would like to thank the brothers and church leaders within the Reformed Baptist movement of Zambia (RBmZ) fraternity who willingly accepted to participate in this research through interviews for their insightful contributions that has resulted in the findings contained in this research.

Finally, I will remain forever grateful to my brother Eric Sinyangwe for accepting to proof-read and edit this research. Thank you!

Abstract

For three decades, the Reformed Baptist movement in Zambia (RBmZ) has existed as a vibrant and united force in spreading the reformed faith in the country and beyond. Notably, thirty years ago there was no single Reformed Baptist church in Zambia and now there are over sixty (60) churches and church plants dotted across the country. In the year 2019 these Federal Baptists family of churches met to celebrate their thirty uninterrupted years of gospel proclamation in the country. The celebrations were set to take place during the movement's reformed national conference, which is an annual event that has served as a major unifying factor of this family of Baptists for three decades. The celebrations focused on RBmZ achievements, which are evident through numerical growth of Reformed Baptist churches planted in Zambia and other African countries. But not everybody was happy. Some stakeholder churches boycotted the celebrations by not attending the conference. Since then, there has been an increase in tension within the RBmZ with the dissatisfied group threatening to break away.

The dissatisfaction concerns the current leadership style and focus of the Movement being pursued. The tension, dissatisfaction and threat of a breakaway pose a threat to the movement's existence. The image, ministry and the successes achieved by the RBmZ thus far risk being disrupted and lost. There is rising instability within the movement, which is negatively impacting the church. If the bickering continues and the movement eventually splits, then the effectiveness of its mission will be weakened, and its image compromised. The cherished gospel ministry and the image of the church will be lost.

Notwithstanding the RBmZ being a church, the developments that have been experienced indicate that the church like any other organisation, requires sound leadership to keep steering it forward. Good and effective leadership is critical to steer organisations in times of difficulties like the one experienced in RBmZ. The success of the church has been a result of the united effort of all member churches and individual members in those churches. There is need to restore unity in the church and ensure members are united as one body of Christ. This research has developed a model of church leadership approach that fosters organisational survival through applying an organisational life cycle approach (OLC) to a church leadership praxis within the RBmZ contextual challenges.

Among some of its objectives, the research has explored the challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organisation has been growing and revealed them from a church

organisational life cycle perspective and leadership. The research has further highlighted Christian leadership principles from Scripture that could be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and organisational life changes. As a remedy, the research has in the final analysis proposed a model of Christian leadership that integrates biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change.

Key words of the study

Organisational life cycle, church survival, Reformed Baptist church, Reformed Baptist Movement of Zambia,

Acronyms

ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
ACU	African Christian University
APC	Africa Pastors Conferences
AFMZ	Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe
CACI	Christ Apostolic Church International
OLC	Organization life cycle
RBmZ	Reformed Baptist movement of Zambia
ReBCAZ	Reformed Baptist Churches Association of Zambia
NARBYC	National Reformed Baptist Youth Conference

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Orientation and background to the study

This thesis outlines the processes to arrive at a church leadership approach that can be applied in a context of a growing church whereupon the developments in the church require a new type of leadership to avoid stagnation and challenges associated with growth. The study employed the organisational life cycle approach (OLC) as a framework to analyse and develop insights that should form a relevant responsive leadership change approach. The thesis focuses on the case study of the Reformed Baptist movement of Zambia (RBmZ) church. It is an integrated practical theological study that draws from Leadership and Management theories to develop a responsive model of church leadership that inspires and sustains growth. The study utilises a qualitative methodological approach to answer the research questions.

1.1.1 Church organisations within an Organizational Life Cycle (OLC) and leadership

Churches like other organisations, experience challenges such as institutional and individual members' tensions. The Reformed Baptist movement of Zambia (RBmZ) church is experiencing membership and institutional challenges. The challenges have arisen after 30 years of considerable success within the country at various levels including theological, membership increase and transformation of societies. Inevitably, church organisational issues relate to leadership. Stated differently, the challenges experienced by churches and the way they are addressed relate to organisational leadership (Nkonge, 2020:166-168; Pearse, 2011:4). There is a direct link between an organization and its management (Larceda, 2019:192-193; Mahan, 2012:80). Therefore, before highlighting the challenges of the RBmZ, which is case study for this research, it's critical to have a conceptual understanding of organisational leadership.

From time to time, we note companies and organizations rise and fall. This indicates that organizations, just like living organisms, have life cycles (OLC). Jirásek and Bílek (2018:2) explained that "similar to living organisms, organizations have also life cycles that are determined by their founding and eventual demise". Rahimia and Fallah (2015:51) reiterated that, "according to the life-cycle theory, firms and businesses also have a life cycle in each step of which they adopt different policies. In other words, it indicates the growth and aging of businesses based on their controllability and flexibility". Ahmed (2013:450) defines organizational life cycle (OLC) as that which "specifies the structure, strategy, style and the critical conditions for development and environment according to the phases of the past and

experienced by an organization”. The phases of OLC vary from three to ten although most scholars in this field adopt five common phases. The phases are (1) the start-up, (2) the expansion, (3) the maturity, (4) the decline (Ahmed, 2013:450 and Jirásek and Bílek, 2018:15).

A link can be drawn between OLC and church life. A similar understanding of organizational life cycle and its varying characteristics as highlighted by the OLC processes above is observed in ecclesiological contexts too. Mbewe (2014:150-166) in his church planting discourse identifies three main phases that a new church plant goes through before it becomes independent (reaches maturity). These phases are (1) the paternalistic phase, (2) the shared leadership phase and (3) the final withdrawal phase. Mbewe (2014:66-72) argues that this pattern was established by the Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples on how to plant churches or establish church ministries. Mbewe maintains that if properly adhered to, these phases help to kill the paternalistic mentality, which though right and appropriate in the first phase during church establishment, should nevertheless be completely eradicated by the time the church reaches maturity. At maturity, the pioneers and the indigenous leaders must stand as equal labourers (Mbewe, 2014:152). The key to arriving at this equal status is mutual respect and admiration for each other, which is an element that must be cultivated and permeate the relationship right from the initial phase all through to the final stage of withdrawal of the church planting phases (Mbewe, 2014:154). Mbewe’s postulation is meant to highlight the need to understand and be sensitive to the exact phase an organizational life cycle is in. Thus, OLC literature and Mbewe’s argument above underscore the importance of understanding the growth and life stage that the organisation is at and the relevant leadership that should be deployed for organisational survival.

Having noted the importance and link of OLC and leadership, these elements should be understood within the context of organizational leadership. The invaluable role of an organisational leader is for one to conceive and understand where the organisation ‘stands’ and then manage the situation in a manner that enables it to ‘live/survive’ beyond now into the future. To understand OLC and deploying the relevant leadership skills, one has to be conversant with organizational management leadership theories. And to locate our discussion within church leadership context, one has to equally be conversant with ecclesiological leadership theories.

1.1.2 Leadership perspectives within organisations and ecclesiological spaces

As already established above, leadership plays an important role in organizations. White (2019:8) pointed out that “the key to the formation of missional communities is their leadership”. Failure to manage problems is usually blamed on the leadership (Gatut, 2013:2). Mbewe (2014:163) blames pioneers for their failure to handover the new church plants to the indigenous, resulting in tensions between them and their followers. Spiritual immaturity and vulnerability of congregations is associated with weak leadership (Nkonge, 2011:166; White, 2019:5). The above examples among others, indicate the important role that leadership plays in organisations, including the church. Therefore, for any organization to survive, it needs a combination of competent leadership with acumen for success. Even though church institutions have a spiritual dimension to their leadership, it is imperative to draw from management theories. This approach is an important interdisciplinary approach where leadership and management theories are brought to converse with theological content for practical and meaningful leadership application. This approach is a recommended practical theological approach (Elkington, 2015; Magezi, 2015; Kheng, 2015).

However, it is important to develop a conceptualisation of what is meant by leadership, though many scholars argue that there is no concise definition to what leadership is (Mesterova *et al.*, 2015:109). To avoid being bogged down to a single definition of leadership, it’s important to rather consider it in terms of its functions.

1.1.2.1 What does leadership entail?

Leadership entails role modelling, effecting positive change, guiding other people and building them up so they can effectively achieve their goals and dreams (Hao & Yarzdaniard, 2015:2; Yeboah-Assiamah *et al.*, 2016:326). Leaders are therefore seen as examples and as those who assist other people to achieve their life endeavours. They come in different forms, shapes and styles. These include charismatic, visionary, situational, laissez-faire, transactional, autocratic, democratic and transformational styles (Khajeh, 2018:2; Negandra, 2016:66; Mothoagae & Prior, 2010: 87-91; Öztürk *et al.*, 2017:457). Within Christian circles, the following models have been suggested: school of prophets, servant leadership, teacher-learner relationship, disciple-making, coaching, mentoring (Rasene, 2014:1).

Brevity has caused some scholars to conclude that there are fundamentally fewer forms of leadership than is usually presented (Avis, 2020:117; Huizing, 2011:59). This idea of the reduction in number of the forms of leadership can be traced back to Calloway and Awadzi (2008) whose work examined leadership theories from a historical and modern perspectives.

The results of that study showed three main stages of historical progression of understanding leadership forms. First, a born leader who possesses natural traits, second, a trained leader who acquires leadership skills, third a transformational leader who combines different leadership elements to bring about the required results (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008:13-18). This has not only helped to align modern perspectives' focus on one major form of leadership but has also popularized it (Öztürk *et al.*, 2017:458; Harms and Credé, 2010:6).

1.1.2.2 Transformational models of leadership – organisational management theories and ecclesiological theories

1.1.2.2.1 Management transformational leadership models

Recent studies in the field of organizational management and leadership agree that the success or the failure of an organization depends on its leadership. And transformational leadership can help an organization to succeed despite the varying and challenging circumstances. In one study, Nagendra (2016:66) wanted to know which leadership style is more suitable for the banking sector in Pune. The results led him to transformational and democratic styles as preferable due to their high follower-focus. Similar conclusions were arrived at by Saleh *et al.* (2018:54) in his search for a suitable leadership style for the manufacturing companies in Yemen. The other was Khajeh (2018:3) who too found that transformational leadership styles performed better and stimulated high turnover for organizations.

These findings prompted Hao and Yazdanifard (2015) to urge companies to adopt transformational leadership styles if their businesses were to remain viable and competitive in the face of an uncertain future and also decrease the feelings of insecurity in their employees which is caused by that uncertainty (Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015:1). Larceda's (2019) 'crisis leadership' model is one such example of how transformational leadership can be used to shield their companies and their businesses from the negative social impacts of a crisis (2019:192).

But transformational leadership also involves morals and ethics (Odeneye *et al.*, 2018:61). This came to light during the world economic crisis of 2008 when US investigators into the scandal unearthed unethical behaviours and gross unethical corporate practices of organizational leaders. It was discovered then that there was high focus of leaders on goal attainment without due consideration of the impact on relevant stakeholders and the organization (Odeneye *et al.*, 2018:62). The solution was to have ethical leadership in organizational governance (2018:68).

In the sub-Saharan region, Yeboah-Assiamah *et al.* (2016:326) are moved by the rampant corrupt practices in public sector institutions due to lack of ethics and accountability systems in place. They demand the infusion of ethics and morals in the public institutions. Having integrity leaders helps with leadership effectiveness and changes subordinates' perception and behaviour (Solomon and Steyn, 2017:1, 2). Gatut's (2013) 'unifier spirit' model, is one such example of ethical and moral leadership which strives to fairly manage the diversity found in organizations for it to function well. It has potential to overcome the chaos, turmoil, prevent disruption and disunity of the organization' (2013:28).

Another worker-focus leadership model is Krishnan's (2012), which aims at making employees happy. He contends that employees who are happy and see meaning in life contribute their best to the organization making it competitive. As such leaders must empower them by enhancing their fundamental wants, needs, aspirations, and values (2012:560). Strom (2014) adds the component of justice to worker empowerment. He contends that organizational justice is crucial to the wellbeing of the organization because when an employee views that the rewards distributed by the organization are fair and the processes by which the organization decides to distribute rewards are fair, he is likely to perform well (2014:72). Additionally, Harms and Credé (2010) who have studied Emotional Intelligence (EI) urge leaders to take care of workers' emotions by removing anything that affects them emotionally. EI helps both in comprehending and regulating workers' emotions, which in turn improves company performance (2010:7).

Having assessed the organizational management leadership models and observed that there is much wisdom and knowledge to be gleaned from them on transformational leadership, we now turn to consider church transformational models. Studying management leadership models together with church leadership models has the advantage of revealing the areas of mergence as well as those of divergence.

1.1.2.2.2 Theological transformational leadership models

According to Pearse (2011:3), effective leadership should be measured not on forms or styles but on observable balanced patterns of interactions between leaders and their followers over a period of time. For him, transformational leadership is 'situational-adaptation leadership' that ensures a balance is maintained in the three effective patterns (the *freewheeler*, the *focused-pioneer* and the *reflexive-accommodator*) whenever change is being effected in the church

(Pearse, 2011:3). This is important because it preserve the sense of community and health relationships of the church (Pearse, 2011:6).

A similar transformational leadership is Mbewe's (2014) relational leadership. He contends that the long-lived contentions around the handover process commonly observed in church planting cases are twofold: firstly, they arise from poor relationships of mistrust between the pioneers and the locals. Secondly, they arise from the pioneer's failure to respect and act according to the different stages that a church plant goes through, especially the last stage of handover. Mbewe (2014:21) argues that if these two parties maintain a spirit and attitude of mutual respect and admiration for each other, the handover process will be smooth, for as Avis (2020:115) reasons 'whenever the relationship lapses or fails, authority goes out of the window'.

The other ecclesiolgist on leadership is Magezi (2015). He sees transformational leadership as 'servant leadership' where authority is infused with servanthood and entails 'going beyond one's self-interest' as its core characteristic (Magezi, 2015:6). Magezi believes that when it comes to leadership in sub-Saharan Africa, the people there are influenced by African kingship concept as the permeating cultural idea of leadership (Magezi, 2015:1). Sadly, the ideology of African Kinship concept was founded on war and conquest; as such it bestows unlimited supreme power that is unchallenged and oppressive (Magezi, 2015:1). It is in this context where conception of African leadership is at the crossroads that Magezi urges the church in Africa 'to develop a constructive African church leadership approach that appropriately integrates African traditional kingship and biblical servant leadership approaches (Magezi, 2015:6). He suggests a servant leadership model of Jesus as Servant King, who portrays a paradoxical mix of king with power but vulnerable and serving (Magezi, 2015: 7) as the appropriate model because it emphasises the point that although Jesus was the king yet he was a servant at the same time.

Closely related to Magezi's servant-King transformational leadership is Resane's (2014) biblical shepherd motif model of leadership. Its functions are portrayed by a shepherd metaphor, where the identification and the biblical usage of the shepherd and the sheep is explored, with special focus on the role of the shepherd of caring, courage, and guidance (2014:5). Resane says that, "The shepherd and the sheep (leaders and followers) do live together for the benefit of each other, leading to ecclesia as a desirable incarnation of Christ in the world" (2014:6).

Niemandt (2019) advocates a church leadership approach that has immersed in the field of missional ecclesiology and popularised by the concept of a 'missional church' (Niemandt, 2019:9; Kwaramba, 2019; Leene & Hendriks, 2010; Avis, 2020). The leading concept in the missional church is premised on the new way that leadership and authority in the church are conceived. Niemandt (2019) confesses that authority in the missional church takes a totally different meaning from the traditional one. 'We might indeed see the end of leadership as we have known it for the last couple of centuries' (2019:213). The *missional* church approach to leadership also compares favourably to the postmodern dispositions because of its emphasis on individualism, autonomy, and equality or inclusiveness (Mahan 2012:82).

It is the missional church leadership concept that drives Leene and Hendriks (2010) in their female gender activism and inclusiveness in the church as they admit: "In respect of males and females, missional ecclesiology and theological anthropology influence our view on leadership in the church. That is how it is, simply because unity in diversity takes a central place within the Trinity' (2010:169). Similarly, Kwaramba's (2019:1, 2) demand for women inclusion in the top leadership of the Apostolic Faith Mission of Zimbabwe (AFZ) is influenced by the *mission Dei*. Her sentiments on equal participation of members in leadership positions finds support in Kheng who says 'the People of God share a common dignity and vocation. This fundamental equality overrides all other differences of race, nationality, social condition, gender, vocation and role in the Church' (2015:26).

But Avis (2020) takes this missional church leadership concept to another level when he stripes leadership of any administrative authority except the moral one. He writes: "We are driven to reflect on leadership by the nature of today's world. We cannot command, we cannot direct, but we can offer to lead, to show the way. Leadership is the form that authority takes in a voluntary society" (2020:117). Avis is building his argument on Mothoagae and Prior (2010) who years earlier had advocated that the Roman Catholic Church adopts this church-in-mission leadership style.

In this new form of leadership, leaders and followers exchange places in a relationship with a person becoming a leader in some systems and a follower in others, thereby creating a situation in which "all lead and all follow" (2010:92). With this concept in mind, Mahan (2012) has used the body metaphor model as espoused by Paul in 1 Cor. 12 (2012:75) to defend and justify the congregational system of governance used by the Church of Christ (2012:70).

But Stanford (2015) thinks that this perspective has over stretched the biblical concept of leadership as it reduces a leader to a mere participant and is contrary to the Pauline leadership language which is ‘characterized by authoritative truthfulness, confrontational honesty, and clarity of purpose, familial winsomeness, and reasonableness which reflects a didactic approach to leadership’ (2015:13). Even a careful look at the biblical leadership example demonstrated by Jesus shows that leadership has administrative authority because Jesus was both a servant and assertive (Magezi, 2015; Rasene, 2014).

Additionally, in contrast and contrary to the above postmodern views of church organization and leadership systems, the reformed Baptists view which this research espouses, strongly holds to the traditional Baptist position of the autonomous congregational setting of the local church, under Christ, that is self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating, as an all-encompassing principle of church government and the application of church government. This congregational polity means that “Christ is the head of the church and there is a priesthood of all believers” (Hammett, 2005: 148 - 149).

This means that even the leadership (elders and deacons) of these churches is bound to lead the congregants only in mutually agreed ways, arrived at during regularly held church business meetings. Theologically, the reformed Baptists have placed great emphasis on biblical doctrines and practice as historically believed by the early Baptists. They have done so by adopting the *1689 Baptist confession of Faith* into their constitutions and an inclination towards the Calvinistic doctrine of salvation in their preaching and practice, as opposed to an Arminian position. Doctrinally, the reformed Christian doctrines are the bedrock of the RBmZ’s Christian theology (Mbewe, 2017: 16-19).

It is precisely this principle of the autonomy and congregational polity of the local church at play that is threatening the future existence of the RBmZ, a threat which this research is attempting to manage. A detailed account on the reformed Baptists churches in Zambia and how they are organized will be given in chapter 3 of this thesis which deals with the interpretive task into the organizational and leadership structure of the RBmZ, in order to gain a clear understanding of the existing leadership system that is currently being practiced in this church organization.

But some ecclesiologists identify another form of empowerment which does not necessarily focus on the followers but on the leaders themselves. Nkonge (2011) has written about such empowerment when he writes concerning the need to theologically equip church leaders in the

Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK). He comments: 'A Church that is committed to growth and change must think seriously about its leadership and how this leadership can be improved mainly through training' (2011: 166).

His comments resonate with Elkington (2015) who responds that 'It would seem that, more than ever before, not only should people in vocational ministry be theologically adept, they also need to have incredible leadership capacity to navigate the complexity of a globalised world' (2014:3). To ensure leaders are thoroughly equipped, Elkington (2015) recommends that formal theological training be coupled with mentorship training. "With mentorship added, theological education becomes more than passing on a body of knowledge (experiential or otherwise), to include learning how to be in partnership with God together, in community, and what this together-with-God type of communal leadership entails" (2015: 11). Similar sentiments are expressed by White (2019) in regard to Ghana's largest Pentecostal church - the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI). 'Congregational nurturing must always be preceded or coupled with leadership training (2019:8).

Another transformational leadership model is that proposed by Stanford (2015) called the leadership language (LL) model. It emphasises effective communication between the leader and the follower as well as determine the leader's effectiveness and believability in the process of leading. From his studies in the books of 1 and 2 Timothy, Stanford observed Paul as a leader to Timothy by the manner of usage of language through their interaction verbally and he noticed that there was a consistent leadership language (LL) in him (2015:3). 'Leaders lead through communication of concepts and ideas with the goal of influencing and persuading followers to receive, accept, and implement such designs' (2015:4).

Having dealt with transformational management leadership models and observed their contribution to transformational leadership models, we turned to consider the proposed theological transformational models of leadership to see their own contributions to transformational leadership discussions. Both have been found to contain useful information that can enhance the understanding of transformational leadership. In their individual consideration, however, no model has been found to be magnanimous enough to comprehensively accommodate all the elements expected of an effective leader or leadership. This situation has raised the challenge as to whether there can be a single leadership model that contains within itself most of, if not all, the concepts presented both in the management transformational leadership models and the ecclesiological transformational leadership models.

1.1.3 Organisational life cycle (OLC), organisational management and leadership within the Reformed Baptist movement in Zambia (RBmZ)

1.1.3.1 RBmZ establishment, growth and achievements

With the understanding of OLC, organisational management and leadership as well as the understanding of leadership outlined above, it is worthwhile to turn to the situation of the Reformed Baptist movement in Zambia (RBmZ).

For three decades, the Reformed Baptist movement in Zambia (RBmZ) has existed as a vibrant and united force in spreading the reformed faith in the country and beyond. In the year 2019 these Federal Baptists family of churches met to celebrate their thirty uninterrupted years of gospel proclamation in the country. The celebrations were set to take place during the movement's reformed national conference, which is an annual event that has served as a major unifying factor of this family of Baptists for three decades. The celebrations focused on RBmZ achievements, which are evident through numerical growth of Reformed Baptist churches planted in Zambia and other African countries. This and other information about the major events in the RBmZ can be found in the church's quarterly periodical magazine¹ (RZ 2016:34). Notably, thirty years ago there was no single Reformed Baptist church in Zambia and now there are over sixty (60) churches and church plants dotted across the country.

1.1.3.2 RBmZ organisational growth challenges

While the successes and progress made by the RBmZ in its relatively short 30-year history is notable, there seems to be developments that are threatening the movement. There is bickering and misunderstandings that are evidently emerging within the movement. The bickering first surfaced publicly during the movement's preparations of its 30 years celebrations in 2019. Some members expressed dissatisfaction with the way a number of things were being done within the movement including the manner that the preparations were conducted. The dissatisfaction resulted in some church members boycotting the celebrations in 2019 by not attending the conference. Since then, there has been an increase in tension within the RBmZ

¹ Reformation Zambia: "A Zambian Reformed Baptist Periodical" (RZ) which has been in existence since May 2004 (RZ 2016, Issue 31: 34).

with some church members threatening to break away. The dissatisfaction concerns the current leadership style and focus being pursued. These concerns are yet to be addressed.

The tension, dissatisfaction and threat of a breakaway pose a threat to the movement's existence. The image, ministry and the successes achieved by the RBmZ thus far risk being disrupted and lost. There is rising instability within the movement, which is negatively impacting the church. If the bickering continues and the movement eventually splits, then the effectiveness of its mission will be weakened, and its image compromised. The cherished gospel ministry and the image of the church will be lost. Notwithstanding the RBmZ being a church, the developments that have been experienced indicate that the church like any other organisation, requires sound leadership to keep steering it forward. Good and effective leadership is critical to steer organisations in times of difficulties like the one experienced in RBmZ. The success of the church has been a result of the united effort of all member churches and individual members in those churches. There is need to restore unity in the church and ensure members are united as one body of Christ.

1.2 Problem statement

From a systems leadership perspective, existence of problems or their non-existence as well as successful address of problems in an organisation is indicative of leadership competences and capacities (White 2019:5; Nkonge, 2011:165; Elkington, 2015:4). Therefore, the current differences among the RBmZ members is a symptom of a leadership problem that is expressing itself as membership dissatisfaction and differences (Hao and Yazdanifard, 2015:2; Kwaramba, 2019:1; Khajeh, 2018:2). Thus, the overarching problem with RBmZ that is located within a leadership and organisational life cycle perspective is that: the church efforts that have resulted in phenomenal growth and other impactful developments seem not to be matched by relevant leadership and management changes to ensure that church developments are equally matched by relevant leadership changes.

It is notable that despite RBmZ's maturity (progress in years), increasing numerical numbers and increasing congregational assemblies, the leadership approach has not substantially changed to adapt itself to these changes. While the challenges seem to have arisen from the differences over the thirty years anniversary celebrations preparations (2018-2019), it is justifiable to argue that there are much deeper issues. At stake is the question, "If the RBmZ leadership has achieved so much success thus far, why then change a winning formula?" It is justifiable to ask, "Could the RBmZ leadership approach be requiring change?" What are the

factors that contributed to the current problems and decline in RBmZ despite the evident impact that the church had over the last 30 years? Stated differently, what is the type of leadership and leadership competencies required to lead RBmZ during this organisational change stage (OLC phase) to minimise organisational problems and at the same time ensure the organisation maintains its growth and impact?

1.3 Research question (s)

1.3.1 Main research question

How could the organisational life cycle approach (OLC) be conceived and applied to provide an understanding of RBmZ challenges to inform a church leadership approach that ensures organisation survival?

1.3.2 Sub-questions

Emerging from the above primary (main) question are the following secondary (sub-questions) questions that clarify the main question:

- What are the challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organisation has been growing?
- How should these challenges be understood from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership?
- What Christian leadership principles could be discerned from the Scriptures that could be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and life changes?
- What model of Christian leadership could be proposed that integrates biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change?

1.4 Study objectives

1.4.1 Main study objective

The main objective of the study is to develop a model of church leadership approach that fosters organisational survival through applying an organisational life cycle approach (OLC) to a church leadership praxis within the RBmZ contextual challenges.

1.4.2 Sub study objectives

- Explore the challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organisation has been growing.
- Understand RBmZ challenges from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership.
- Discern Christian leadership principles from Scripture that could be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and organisational life changes.
- Propose a model of Christian leadership that integrates Biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Study approach

This study employed qualitative and literature study methods. Qualitative data was gathered through interviews from selected church leaders. Creswell (2003) gives three types of research approaches namely; qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approach. For this study, a qualitative approach is preferred over the quantitative approach for three reasons. First, it is more compatible with practical theological approaches and processes espoused by practical theologians such as Dingemans, 1996; Louw, 1998; Hendriks, 2004; Anderson 2001; Osmer, 2008, among many others, which deals with peoples' situations, lives and contexts (natural conditions of people). These Practical theologians emphasise understanding and hermeneutical approaches, which require qualitative exploration and processes.

Second, in comparison with the quantitative approach, qualitative information results are often applied specifically to the sample while those of the quantitative are usually generalized to the population (Allwood, 2011:1425). Third, the data collected under the qualitative approach represents a better picture of the phenomenon under study whereas a quantitative approach is more theoretical, basic and hypothetical. For this reason, Creswell (2003) recommends qualitative research approach as the most appropriate approach when the research requires understanding of issues and relationships in context, as the case with this study.

Therefore, in order to answer the research question, a qualitative study has been employed to gain understanding of underlying perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation (Delpont, Fouche & Schurink, 2011:305). This entails self-reflection, speculation,

hypothetical and questioning issues. This approach fits with the objectives of the study as it seeks a way to address the differences and challenges currently obtaining in the RBmZ.

1.5.2 Practical theological approach to be employed

The practical theological framework that has been employed in this study is informed by Osmer's (2008: 4) basic guiding questions of the task of practical theology. The first question is a descriptive-empirical task (What is going on?), which is a situation and contextual analysis. The second question is a normative task (What ought to be going on?), which entails developing a perspective and understanding from the normative texts. The third question is an interpretive task (Why is it going on?), which is an interpretation and understanding of the situation. The fourth question is a pragmatic task (How might we respond?), which requires strategic steps that should be taken to respond to the situation. These four core tasks have been employed to guide the process of this study because they are simplified, thereby making analysis and application easy.

Guided by Osmer's (2008: 4) steps, the first question of the study was to describe and analyze the situation of the RBmZ. The second question involved developing a perspective and understanding from the normative texts, that is, to analyse and discuss the different transformational leadership models and their biblical and theological underpinnings with a view to develop an integrated leadership approach that responds biblically to various issues facing the church. The third question was to deal with the reasons behind the on-going misunderstandings in the church. It assisted to gain further insight in understanding the bickerings in the church. In doing so, the current challenges facing the RBmZ were explored and analysed.

Finally, the contextual understanding (questions 1 and 3) and integrated Christian leadership approach (question 2) was applied to develop a pragmatic model that responds to the issue under study. The model employs a practical theological focus that incorporates management theories, ecclesiological theories and biblical aspects that relate to the leadership of the RBmZ. The interview questions were developed from the research questions. The study is a case study of the Reformed Baptist movement of Zambia (RBmZ).

1.6 Data collection

1.6.1 Literature study

The purpose of a literature study was to critically review a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles (Borgatti, 1999). There is adequate material published on organizational life circles (OLC), organizational management theories and ecclesiological theories that would be analyzed to adequately answer the research questions. A contextualized study on emerging literature on Organizational life Circles (OLC) and leadership theories was analysed. The literature that was analysed for the study was gathered through literature search in NWU library where extensive repository of publications were accessed as well as internet search engine such as google. The following sources and data bases were consulted: Academic journals on open source through google search engine; NWU data bases on academic journals about organizational management and ecclesiological theories; Dissertation Abstracts, Periodicals, Internet searches for additional unpublished data sources. There was interaction with literature on OLC's and leadership of both the organizational management leadership theories and ecclesiological leadership theories (a descriptive analysis on organizational management and leadership theories). Further, literature on biblical texts that relate to church management and leadership was reviewed.

1.6.2 Fieldwork (empirical data)– qualitative data

Empirical data was collected through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). Fieldwork was conducted in a way that encourages people to identify and be able to challenge assumptions about the current status of the RBmZ for themselves (March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay, 1999:68).

1.6.3 Sampling and access to study sample

Non-probability sampling was used for the study. Trochim (2006:30) divides non-probability sampling methods into two broad types namely accidental or purposive. This study considered a purposive sample to be an ideal sampling approach because it has the following advantages: (1) The sampling problem is undertaken with a specific plan in mind (Babbie & Mouton (2003), (2) It enables identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the research questions thereby affording a researcher an opportunity to gain much insight into issues of central importance to the study (Benoot, 2016:2),

(3) It is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics, representatives or typical attributes of the population that save the purpose of the study based (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:232),

(4) Only individuals or groups knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of interest are selected as respondents (Palinkas *et al.*, 2013:3), to mention but a few.

The above advantages of purposive sampling gave the researcher a guide on how and who to select as research participants for the study. Thus, based on who fitted the description above, the researcher purposively sampled participants from the RBmZ who have experience and involved with the operations of the RBmZ church. The description of the study participants is indicated below.

1.6.4 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

The researcher conducted key informant interviews (KII) with key people within the RBmZ. An interview guide with discussion guiding questions was used to guide KIIs. The researcher interviewed fifteen (15) key people selected for their experience, knowledge and influence within the RBmZ. The following three (3) categories of respondents participated in the study: (1) church senior leadership, (2) senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to breakaway, (3) Church administrators.

These participants are key informants for this research because of their experience and knowledge of the RBmZ from its inception three decades ago to date. Second, they are interested parties who are keen to see the current situation normalized. Third, they are influential figures and therefore key to resolving the current problems in the church (RBmZ).

1.6.4 Recruitment of research participants and inclusion criteria

- a. Recruitment of church senior leadership (n=5):** Five (5) senior church leadership officials from the RBmZ (i) dealing or interfacing with the RBmZ operations (ii) who are familiar with its policies as well as (iii) aware or involved in implementing its initiatives were recruited to participate in key informant interviews (KIIs) from different representative member churches of the RBmZ.
- b. Recruitment of senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to breakaway (n=5):** Five (5) senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to break away from

the movement were recruited to participate in key informant interviews (KIIs). They were drawn from different representative member churches of the RBmZ.

- c. Recruitment of Church administrators (n=5):** Five (5) Church administrators from five different representative member churches of the RBmZ were recruited to participate in key informant interviews (KIIs). They were selected for their daily routine of dealing with church issues and operations within the RBmZ.

A total number of 15 KIIs were held with the participants described above and indicated on the table below.

Figure 1: List of KII participants

Category of respondents	Number per church	Number of KIIs	Justification
Church senior leadership	1 per church	5	They are the founding members of the RBmZ. As such, they possess the experience as well as the mission and vision of the church's movement.
senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to breakaway	1 per church	5	They have openly expressed their displeasure about the leadership and the manner in which it is conducting the affairs of the church (RBmZ). As such, they need to be heard and their concerns objectively analysed.
Church administrators	1 per church	5	They are involved in the day to day running of the church. They deal directly with all affiliate church members of the RBmZ and therefore are better placed to possess various views emanating from all the parties concerned.
Total KIIs		15	

1.7 Research procedure

The study followed two phases.

- I. Phase 1 involved literature analysis about OLC and leadership theories through the literature study approach presented above.
 - II. Phase 2 involved conducting KII interviews with the individuals indicated in table 1 and conducting preliminary analysis.
- (1) **Preparation:** The researcher engaged a research assistant for the study. The research assistant was oriented to the study and his duties clearly communicated and agreed with the researcher.
- (2) **Ethics clearance:** The study ethical clearance was done by the Faculty of Theology Research Committee. A research ethics application that outlines the details of how the research was to be conducted was submitted for ethics review. Once an approval was granted the research commenced.
- (3) **Study phases:** The study followed three phases.
- I. Phase 1 involved literature analysis about RBmZ through the literature study approach presented above. This included demographic mapping of the RBmZ situation.
 - II. Phase 2 involved conducting KII interviews with the individuals indicated in the table above and conducting preliminary analysis.
 - III. Phase 3 involved conducting verification and triangulation of data gathered through KIIs in phase two.
 - IV. This researcher who has experience in conducting KII conducted the fieldwork. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in detail. The leaders of the RBmZ were requested to recruit candidates to participate in the study guided by the sampling guidelines. Different dates were agreed on between the researcher and the participants in the study.
- (4) **Gatekeepers' letter:** An overall permission was sought from the Reformed Baptists Churches Association of Zambia (ReBCAZ). Further permission to interview the candidates (i.e. gatekeepers' letter) was sought from the leadership of the local churches that participants attend or any other authoritative structure that is in a position to issue such a letter at the church.

- (5) **Interviewers:** KIIs were recorded and transcribed by two interviewers who hold at least a master's degree and have experience in conducting such interviews. They also signed a confidentiality letter before interviewing the participant. Transcribed information was locked in secure metal cabinets. Data analysis (coding) was done by the researcher and interviewers using thematic analysis (see below for detailed description of analysis).
- (6) Credibility and trustworthiness of the research process was ensured through a number of ways. These include negative cases, constant comparison and member validation (Babbie & Mouton 2003). To ensure the information from the KIIs was valid, accurate, confirmed and complete, the data gathered during analysis was cross examined as follows: (1) identifying and responding to issues which were out of line or directly contradict explanations given by the participants and then respond to such cases, (2) checking the consistency and accuracy of interpretations that participants were giving during discussions through constant comparison, (3) allowing involved participants access to the kind of interpretations and explanations the data analysis finally generated, (4) including evidence in the analysis reports in the form of quotations from interviews and field notes, along with detailed descriptions of episodes, events and settings. This method of analysing data allowed for better verification and ascertain legitimacy of data without predisposition.

1.8 Role of the researcher in the study

Research integrity is important. Therefore, the researcher has a role in reducing bias and inspiring confidence. In qualitative research, the role of the researcher needs to be clearly described to inspire confidence to the reader. Therefore, reflexivity is critical.

I am a trained (MA) and practising Theologian as well as trained Church Pastor (BA) practitioner. Theologically, I am a confessional, Calvinistic, reformed and Baptist in my theological persuasion focusing on the doctrines of grace as espoused in the protestant reformation tenets of the 16th Century. I enter this research as a Pastor who has been in pastoral ministry in the reformed Baptist fraternity for 20 years. Over these years of my pastoral ministry service, I have preached in different parts of the world and lectured in various theological institutions in Africa. Currently, I serve as the Registrar at the Lusaka ministerial College in Zambia as well as an adjunct lecturer at other theological institutions in Africa. I am a regular contributor of articles to the local periodical Journal of the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia (The Reformation Zambia)

The impact of this experience on the study is double edged. On the one hand, it usefully places me at the centre of reflection and analysis on matters that I have phenomenologically, theoretically, and pragmatically in non-purist scientific ways reflected on. This certainly enriches analysis and insights. On the other hand, this previous experience risks ‘clouding’ analysis by the researcher ‘jumping’ to conclusions based on past personal experience without in-depth analysis. Therefore, reflexively, my experience positively contributes to analysis insight. And to mitigate the clouding of analysis in the entire research, I will stand back from tentative analysis conclusions and ‘let the data speak’. This will be done through indirect participatory observation through reflection of the Zambian reformed Baptist churches context in my subjective mindset.

For these reasons, I believe the balance on the utility of my experience as deployed in this research weighs strongly on the positive side. It is my view that my position as researcher in this study is understood with its strengths, promises and threats that it brings. If managed and deployed properly, the experience enriches this research. However, if it’s not critically harnessed, this experience may weaken the research study. Thus, it is my understanding that the researcher’s position in this study is appreciated. I utilised the positive side of it.

1.9 Outline of the chapters of the study

Chapter 1 - An introduction to the study

This chapter gives the direction this research has taken, which is along the lines sketched in this chapter. It shows what this research is all about; namely, to expose the cause of the ongoing bickering and misunderstandings in the RBmZ that threatens the loss of its focus, which until now has made great impact on the Zambian society and beyond. To understand the emerging challenges involved, the research gleaned insights from organizational management theories for a responsive leadership. Furthermore, the research discerned Christian leadership principles from ecclesiological transformational leadership models which should be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and life changes.

Chapter 2 – An analysis of OLC’s and leadership theories

This chapter integrates data from the literature on the organizational life circles (OLCs) and leadership theories. The focus of the chapter is to highlight how the challenges being faced by the RBmZ should be understood from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership.

Chapter 3 – Church leadership issues of RBmZ (literature and empirical)

This chapter integrates a descriptive and interpretive task into the organizational and leadership structure of the RBmZ. Its objective is to gain deeper insight into the leadership issues of the RBmZ as the church movement has been growing. It scans the RBmZ environment to recognize the trends that have affected the movement's smooth operations and which may continue to do so in the future if no intervention is done. It therefore exposes deficiencies in leadership and leadership competencies in the RBmZ.

Chapter 4 – Leadership in the bible

This chapter explores the leadership concept in Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments. The focus of the chapter is to discern normative church leadership elements from Scripture that could be used as guide to formulate the leadership model for the RBmZ. Special attention has also been given to leadership biblical metaphors to gain insight into the Biblical teaching on principles and elements that constitute plausible leadership characteristics.

Chapter 5: Understanding Church leadership within OLC and leadership principles

This is a critical analysis chapter that consists the sum of the gleanings for the notion adaptive leadership from the foregoing chapters (particularly the biblical-theological analysis of leadership in chapter 4) in order to develop a sound theological-ecclesiological church leadership model as a response to the challenges of the RBmZ. It normatively brings into light the harmonious relationship between biblical tradition leadership and church (RBmZ) leadership. This chapter, therefore, serves as a lens in analysing the church's response to leadership.

Chapter 6 – Proposed model of church (RBmZ) leadership

This chapter proposes a model design for the RBmZ. It proposes hybrid approach as the responsive model design to leadership in the RBmZ that would help mitigate the current infightings and propel the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia towards a successful future. The hybrid model brings together the pragmatic tools for the church from the foregoing chapters 1-5 to establish a church-focused responsive leadership model for the RBmZ. This operative theological-ecclesiological church leadership model is transformative both in action and service at different levels of church functions: personal, ecclesial and societal.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion and recommendation

Chapter 7 is the conclusion to the study. It summarizes the findings of the proceeding chapters and provides some final recommendations for all stakeholders in the RBmZ.

This chapter has introduced and outlined the process that this research has taken in search for an effective leadership for the RBmZ. Now, in the next chapter the study looks at the leadership theories and styles with the view of highlighting how OLC assists one to pick the right leadership to lead organizations based on understanding where it is in its growth cycle.

Chapter 2 – Relationship of OLC and leadership theories and styles in leadership

This chapter is a critical literature discussion on leadership. It focuses on two aspects, namely OLC and leadership theories and styles. On the OLC theory part, an in-depth discussion will be done on 1) what it is; 2) how it is applied; and 3) its relevance in church growth. On the leadership part, the study explores the leadership theories and styles with the view of highlighting how OLC assists one to pick the right leadership to lead organizations based on understanding where it is in its growth cycle.

2.1 OLC theory

2.1.1 What it is

An Organization Life Circle (OLC) theory is defined as “a theoretical model based on the changes organizations experience as they grow and mature, which specifies the structure, strategy, style and the critical conditions for development and environment according to the phases of the past and experienced by an organization” (Ahmed, 2013:450). Ford (2016:1) understands OLC “as the belief that organizations behave in predictable ways between their founding and death”. Rahimia and Fallah (2015:51) added that, “according to the life-cycle theory, firms and businesses also have a life cycle in each step of which they adopt different policies. In other words, it indicates the growth and aging of businesses based on their controllability and flexibility”. Even Jirásek and Bílek (2018:2) affirm this position when they regard life cycles in a manner akin to biological organisms that grow and decline in predictable patterns, and are determined by their “founding and eventual demise”. In between these two ends – the founding and the death - there are different phases that an organization passes through called life stages.

2.1.1.1 Stages of OLC

“A life cycle stage is defined as a unique configuration of variables related to organization context, strategy and structure. Stages of development can be verified by clustering organizations along these dimensions” (Hanks, 2019:9). Each life circle stage has specific factors that influence the organization’s performance at that particular time. Organizations move from one stage to another because it is facing challenges that are affecting it to function as it ought and thereby threatening its survival. To survive, “appropriate strategies should be developed and different policies adopted for dealing with a particular situation effectively to achieve controllability and flexibility of the organization (Rahimia and Fallah (2015:51). This

means that an organization should, therefore, be constantly making necessary adjustments along the way. This is Ford's point when he says: "this theory and its corresponding stages assume that even though organizations may experience phases of stability, they are nonetheless intrinsically unstable because every stage is primarily a struggle to survive" (Ford, 2016:1).

The stages of OLC vary from three to ten. However, most scholars in this field adopt a four or five phase cycle. These are (1) the start-up, also known as the birth or planning phase, 2) the expansion, or growth phase, (3) the maturity phase, (4) the decline phase, and (5) the death or renewal phase (Ford, 2016:1-2; Ahmed, 2013:450 and Jirásek & Bílek, 2018:15). The description of each stage is as follows:

The start-up stage. The focus of this stage is to find the type of business an organization will be involved in and plan how it will grow;

The expansion, or growth stage. At this stage the organization has attained stability as a result of its expansion both in size and the number of employees.

The maturity stage. The organization reaches a synergy in the workforce whereby there are healthy working relationships among the employees.

The decline stage. The organizations begin to show signs of drawbacks. For example, fewer customers, reduced profits or losses, aging workforce, among many other setbacks.

The death or renewal stage. This is when the organization is not reorganised to give it a new life, it fails to survive and just shuts down. "Virtually any organization existing for several decades will go through a revival stage, be taken-over or merge, or demise" (Jirásek and Bílek (2018:2). Each of these stages takes some time before graduating into the next one, as demonstrated in OLC models below. And as to what causes the change in stages, Hanks (2019) ascribes it to the "Metamorphosis theory," which he says centers on the fit between the organization and the environment (2019:10).

2.1.1.2 Organizational Life Cycle models

As can be seen from the ongoing discussion, OLC theory is made up of two parts - content and process. The content part comprises the theorized stages of the organization's growth and presents a general tone of stage of growth models (the start up stage, the expansion or growth stage, the maturity stage, the decline stage and the death or renewal stage). The process part, on the other hand, indicates five cycles through which organizations are expected to pass

through as they progress on the stages of the life cycle. Below are two different OLC theoretical stage pattern models typically followed by an organization with content and process. The first diagram, (in tabular form) shows content of growth stages from three recent scholarly works. The second diagram (in graphic form) presents the processes of organization growth and decline. Together, the two diagrams give a summarized integrated picture of OLC growth and decline in an organization.

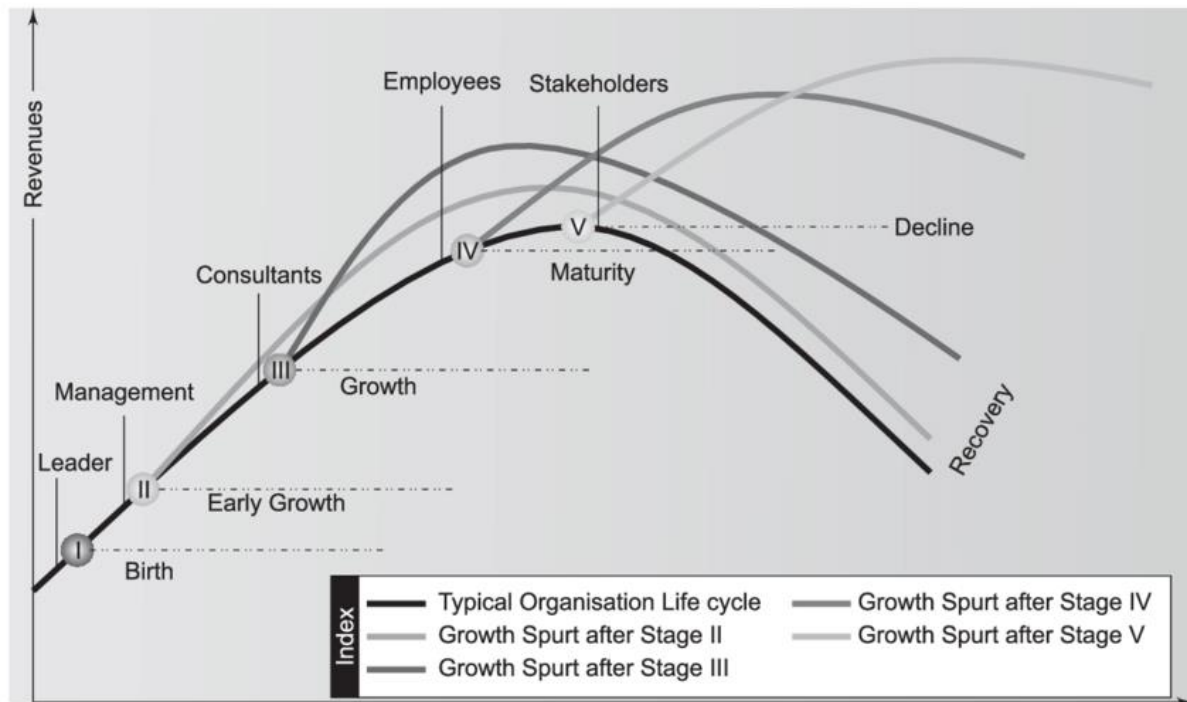
Figure 2: Growth and decline stages of an organization

Authors	Stages of life cycle	Stages of life cycle	Stages of life cycle	Stages of life cycle	Stages of life cycle
Jawahar and McLaughlin (2001)	1. Start-up (focus on development and implementation of business plan, proactive shareholders, creditors and customers focus, resource acquisition, entering market, failure as reference point – risk seeking)	2. Emerging growth (risk aversion, focus especially on creditors, employees, suppliers and trade associations)	3. Mature (risk-aversion, overconfidence of success, proactive stakeholder management - except for creditors)	4. Decline / Transition (risk-seeking, proactive management of shareholders, creditors and customers)	
Lester, Parnell and Carraher (2003)	1. Existence (focus on survival, centralization)	2. Survival (focus on growth attainment,	3. Success (high level of formalization and	4. Renewal (goal to achieve learner organization, support of	5. Decline (loss of market position,

		gradual formalization)	bureaucracy, delegation)	innovativeness, possibly matrix structure, decentralization)	decision making centralized again)
Dufour, Steane and Corriveau (2018)	1. Acting the future (entrepreneurial spirit, innovativeness, gap between vision for the future and current state)	2. Reflecting on the past (development of rules for success while trying to remain entrepreneurial, performance focus)	3. Acting on the past (keeping direction without sudden changes, exploitation focus)	4. Thinking the future (reflection of current position and thinking about a future one)	

Extracted from Jirásek and Bílek 2018: *The Organizational Life Cycle: Review and Future Agenda* (page 12).

Figure 3: Growth and decline stages of an organization



Extracted online: [www. Organization life circle diagrams](http://www.Organization life circle diagrams)

Although these models differ as to the specific number of stages, characteristics studied, and names assigned each stage, there is a considerable amount of commonality among them. “Firms may skip stages or revert back to certain stages but, on the whole, they tend to move generally from birth to decline” (Hanks, 2019:9). Ford (2016) speaks to this matter of commonality of models in terms of organization’s age (identifying where the organization is at) and size (growth). He reasoned that new organizations face different challenges from older ones. For example, threats in the start-up stage differ from those in the maturity stage.

At the start stage, an organisation operates with a very simple organizational structure with authority centralized at the top of the hierarchy. But as the organization grows and expands in size, changes in the nature and number of requirements, opportunities, and threats exert pressure for change on the business. This pushes the organization to adapt a more complex structure system and decentralized authority to cope with the changes. By maturity stage, the concentration shifts to managing the internal processes of the organisation to make it more efficient (2016:2).

From this, Hanks (2019:1) surmises that: (1) organizations grow through a series of distinct stages, with each stage characterized by a unique arrangement of contextual, strategic and

structural characteristics; and (2) Arrangements appropriate at one stage of development may be ineffective, even detrimental in successive life cycle stages.

2.1.1.3 Importance of OLC

OLCs are helpful tools to managing organizational change. “Change, not stability is the natural order of things in today’s global environment. Thus, organizations need to build in change as well as stability, to facilitate innovation as well as efficiency.” (Austin-Roberson, 2009:35). Organizational life cycles have predictable patterns that result in foreseeable crises. “Studying organizational life cycles allows both scholars and practitioners of public administration to better understand the common challenges faced by organizations over their life spans. Better understanding these life cycles can help policy makers and managers create stronger organizations that better serve the public” (Ford, 2016:4).

The fact that there is a pattern which all organizations undergo, makes events that might happen at every particular phase of an organization relatively predictable. Thus, understanding how an organization evolves in time at each stage of the organization’s life cycle, can shape organizational design to achieve its business goals. Management should understand and use that knowledge to appreciate the priorities of each stage and make decisions accordingly that will work best for that period. Failure to take a proactive stance toward organizational life cycle changes is likely to cause an organization to fall into crisis and decline. This is where not only planning but early planning comes in handy as well. It helps determine whether an organization moves to the next stage of development or fails.

2.1.1.4 Limitations of OLC models

It is important to acknowledge that despite the intuitively impressive evolutionary character they paint for organizations, organizational life cycle models have been subject to serious criticism. Czarnecki (2015) observes that whilst OLC models were a popular trend in the literature concerning organizational growth and development before the end of the 1990s (2015:42), the number of publications on the subject dropped considerably due to “excessive critique” (Davidsson et al., 2005:2). The reason for criticism of the OLC models was that it is hard to determine the exact number of proposed growth models based on the OLC concept. As such, critics totally rejected the assumptions underpinning the organismic metaphor that growth is linear, sequential, deterministic and invariant. They went further to demonstrate that OLC models are neither based on the empirical research nor are they consistent with each other” (Czarnecki, 2015:42).

However, in between these extreme views (deterministic and negation of OLCs) of the conception of OLC models, integrative models that seek to integrate the two opposing views with a more balanced approach have been proposed since the 1980s (Czarnecki, 2015:43). Although these models do acknowledge the weaknesses imbedded in the OLC linear and deterministic view approach, they nonetheless see some similarities as well. So, they don't disprove them. Instead, they regard these OLC models as being more of a collective interpretation of the organisation's environment based on the assessment by the top management. This way of approach makes the integrative models be said to free from the weaknesses that the critics raise against OLCs since they still see some similarities among them and even "some consensus about the characteristics of certain developmental stages" (Quinn & Cameron, 1983:40).

For example, Miller and Friesen (1984) contended that although there may be no common corporate life cycle, there are however common life-cycle stages which differ broadly and consistently from one another (1984:1177). Writing to show relationships between life cycle stages and criteria of effectiveness, Quinn and Camerons (1983:1) asserted that certain of the models are important in evaluating the effectiveness of organizations in particular life cycle stages but not in others. Ford (2016), who has noted a common ground between the two views (deterministic and negation of OLCs) says: "The common thread holding the diverse scholarly approaches together is the belief that organizations are a relevant variable in determining the performance of the public and nonprofit sectors. Hence, organizational life cycle theory has both explanatory and normative values to the field of public administration" (2016:1).

Jirásek and Bílek (2018) are other scholars who though they criticize some aspects of previous models they nonetheless consider growth and level of formalism to be the key characteristics that distinguish individual stages from each other: "From our perspective, organizational life cycle theory offers a perspective on how to look on generic states of organizations that can enrich other streams of literature rather than a self sustained analytical tool" (2018:15). After studying 17 OLC models, which he divided into the "earlier (9)" and "later (8)" models, Czarnecki (2015) remarked that the critique of the OLCs was excessive, in particular the "later" ones. He concluded his research by saying that rejecting OLC models in general because of the critical arguments that critics raised against them is tantamount to "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" (2015:45). Thus, integrative approaches gave back faith in sequence of phases of organizational growth which was once lost by some scholars at some point.

Having seen what OLC theory is, its strengths and weaknesses are, we now move to consider how it is applied.

2.1.2 How OLC is applied

Below are some ways in which OLC theory is applied in organizations.

2.1.2.1 In business management

2.1.2.1.1 In conceptualizing the life of an organization in OLC terms

Jirásek and Bílek (2018:2) allege that “Organizations change over time, not just in terms of their strategies, but also in their leadership, structure, innovativeness and many other areas. Most of these changes are subtle from the perspective of the overall life – the existence of the organization”. The recognition that organizations undergo constant change has made the OLC theory a useful tool for organizations to manage change and form expectations.

OLC theory has both explanatory and normative values that make possible the organization’s survival. It assists in making the organization become predictable, avoid stagnation and ultimately achieve its goals in relation to its business growth and aging. Jirásek and Bílek (2018:3) commented further that, “We believe that organizational life cycle theory may be helpful for numerous organizational researchers since organizations in different life cycle stages behave differently in e.g., capital structure decisions or market selection and its effects”. To this, Ford (2016) added that OLC theory “is also applicable to different organizational contexts whether business or social sectors and this regardless of whether it is public, private, or non-profit” (2016:1).

2.1.2.1.2 in planning and clarifying goals

OLC is a useful tool when it comes to ensuring organizational structural plan. Ahmed (2013:450) acknowledges that the overall operative system of an organization ought to be clear enough as to “specify the structure, strategy, style and the critical conditions for its development”. A clear road map for an organization is important because it not only provides a measure of predictability of the direction the organization is headed but also sets parameters of function. When a clear plan of an organization is in place, it provides a structural system base upon which other critical conditions for development of the organization would be erected. It serves as a compass to show the direction the organisation is taking.

2.1.2.1.3 In managing growth

Some scholars have argued that at the start stage there is no formal organization structure. What exists at this stage is simply a simple organization structure, “staffed by the founder who supervises the work of a few employees. Job assignments are very general. The tone is flexible, informal and personal. There are few if any formal systems; planning and control occurs on an ad hoc, often, intuitive basis. Decision making is highly centralized in the organization founder” (Hanks 2019:1). But according to Ford (2016:2), all this change as soon as the organization increases in complexity owing to expansion in size and the number of employees. The organization faces new challenges which require a proactive stance toward organizational life cycle changes. New strategies and structure systems to counter these changes must be employed otherwise, the situation may lead to a major developmental crisis or even a decline

2.1.2.1.4 In predicting change

It is often asked whether there are observable signs in OLC to indicate that the organization needs to transition from one stage to the next? Hanks (2019: 2) answers this question in affirmative and gives ten indicators that suggest the organization might be needing change when:

1. People feel that “there are not enough hours in the day”
2. People spend too much time “putting out fires”
3. People are not aware of what other people are doing.
4. People lack understanding about where the firm is headed
5. There are too few good managers.
6. People feel that “I have to do it myself if I want to get it done correctly”
7. Most people feel meetings are a waste of time.
8. When plans are made, there is very little follow-up, so things just don't get done.
9. Some people feel insecure about their place in the firm.
10. The firm continues to grow in sales but not in profits (Hank 2019:1-2).

Noticing these signs and acting on them early enough is fundamentally crucial to making necessary changes that keep the organization on a growth trajectory.

2.1.2.1.5 in competitive market situations

An organization can sustain its business in the face of problems caused by the rapid growth of the economic environment, uncertain future and unforeseen circumstances using OLC strategies. One such strategy that can be applied is “change management” method which allows the business to go through the three stages of change namely, “adapting to change, controlling the change and effecting the change (Hao and Yazdanifard 2015: 2, 3). This shows that when efficiently applied, OLCs are able to successfully guide the business forward in competitive markets and other unforeseeable occurrences the organization might face in the future.

2.1.2.1.6 in crisis situations

Businesses are not immune to crisis situations. Fortunately, OLC approaches can also be applied in crisis situations. Larceda’s (2019) research in the reasons for the survival of the Portuguese companies during 2008 world economic recession is one such notable case. During the crisis Portuguese companies focused on mitigating the negative social impacts on an organization (2019:192). They first identified the major organizational social elements that usually negatively affect both organizations and the people and then put barriers against them to act as ‘shock absorbers’ of the negative social impact. The three major organizational social elements that were identified and mitigated against were: Distrust in organizational life, uncertainty of the future, and toxic emotions in people (2019:190). Thus, the identification and proactive use of this OLC strategy helped offset the constraints of the organization during the time of crisis.

2.1.2.1.7 In selecting the right leadership style for the organization

OLC theory can assist reveal an appropriate leadership style for a particular life circle stage. Al-maaitah 2021:772 contends that organizational success or failure is directly linked to the leadership style that is being employed by the organization. He ascribes, among others, such aspects as unmotivated employees, high employee turnover, absenteeism, dissatisfaction, and inappropriate behaviors, to inappropriate leadership style. He further argues that the opposite is equally true. This shows how cardinal OLC theory approaches can be in assisting to notice that the organization needs a new leadership style for continuation of smooth operations and management of an organization.

2.1.2.1.8 In application of flexibility and not rigidity

Additionally, OLC also ensures there is flexibility in the use of varied leadership styles, structure and strategy for effective organization development. The ever-changing business

environment speaks of the rapid phases a company will be exposed to and the different leadership styles and strategies that would be employed at each stage for it to remain viable and competitive. For an organization to remain viable and sustain its business in rapid growth of the economic environment, fixed methods would not work. Organisational systems must not be fixed but be flexible enough to fit the particular phases of an organization seeing that they serve as a foundation upon which other critical conditions for development of the organization are built.

But it is not only in business management that OLCs are applied but also in the effective management of the people in the organization.

2.1.2.2 In human resource management

Employees are important because they are regarded as one of the basic components of every organization. For this reason, Al-maaitah, *et al.* (2021) recommend that the best way to manage human resource is by ensuring workers job satisfaction. They define job satisfaction as “a set of positive and negative feelings, attitudes and beliefs that employees have about their job”. They believe that job satisfaction has an effective role to promote good performance of employees in an organization as it has potential to “increase personal efforts, improve communication skills and employees' abilities, and help increase retention, thereby contributing to the growth of an organization” (2021:272)

It was this sensitivity to effectively manage personnel that helped the Portuguese companies survive the 2008 economic recession that affected Europe and America. Lacerda, (2019:190) records that leaders dealt with the three major organizational social elements - distrust in organizational life, uncertainty of the future, and toxic emotions in people – because they realized that change impacts on workers; and that problems in leading change arise chiefly from human resource management. Unmet social needs of employees can create serious problems to the organization that may carry serious productive repercussions such as reducing worker cooperation and labour output. There are a number of proposed mitigating measures against social impact disruptions by workers. Here are some of them:

2.1.2.2.1 Managing unmet workers' personal needs through empowerment.

A motivated workforce is a crucial factor to an organization's success. This is Krishnan's (2012) contention when he implores organizations to make their employees happy. He says that there is a link between a healthy life and work enjoyment, life satisfaction, and happiness (2012:552). He contends that because of this, worker-empowerment is indispensable as it

brings a sense of worth and valuableness in people when they feel appreciated and recognized (2012:559). When there is empowerment, there is equally workers full employment of their abilities to work which ultimately result into maximum performance, as opposed to when they feel that they are being used simply as tools of production.

Odeneye *et al.* (2018) had this in mind too, when they spoke about ‘Catering to stakeholders’ well-being need not be lopsided, as “it is possible for the ethical leader to understand and think about what’s good for the company and what’s good for the people that work for you” (2018:64). The point they were communicating is that meeting the needs of workers has potential to raise the level of their commitments to the attainment of organizational goals, increase innovative ideas, and enhance customer satisfaction (2018:68). But the other social element is managing the relations with their fellow workers.

2.1.2.2.2 Managing workers’ relations with other workers

A united workforce is a great asset for the organization. When individuals and groups unite for a common goal of the company it will result in good organizational culture. That is why improved worker relations are critical for an organization to thrive. Gatut (2013) captures this idea when he submits that only an organization capable of eliminating individual differences and uniting groups can function effectively and remain viable because only a “Unifier spirit can overcome the chaos, turmoil, prevent disruption and disunity of the organization” (2013:28). With diversity of people, chances of dissensions in culture, opinions, preferences and perceptions are very high. A great deal of skill is therefore required to fairly manage the diversity found in an organization for it to function well. Here, in Gatut’s (2013) submission, we find support for the importance of proper management of inter-worker relations that unites dissent between individuals and groups in an organization. But this is not all. Effective management of people will require that workers have healthy relations with their leaders as well.

2.1.2.2.3 Managing workers relations with their managers arising from emotions and perceptions

Harms & Credé (2010) define Emotional Intelligence (EI) as “the set of abilities (verbal and non-verbal) that enable a person to generate, recognize, express, understand, and evaluate their own and others’ emotions in order to guide thinking and actions that successfully cope with environmental demands and pressures” (2010:6). Ideally, workers relations with their leaders are through perceptions and emotions because they do not have power to initiate or prescribe

how they ought to relate with them. For this reason, it matters how workers perceive their leaders as perception triggers emotions that determine how they ultimately relate with them. This demonstrates that managing workers perceptions of and emotions towards their leaders is extremely important as it shapes the way they relate with them. Some areas of employee-leader perception may include:

2.1.2.2.3.1 Perception of leader's concern for the worker

Krishnan (2012:552) contends that “to the degree that workers perceive a leader to be committed to empowering them towards happiness, to that same degree will their relation to him/her be.” Since it is through employees’ perceptions of leadership that workers form a view of their leaders’ effectiveness, it is important to pay attention and manage workers perceptions of and emotions towards their leaders as these play a significant role in improving company performance (Harms & Credé, 2010:7).

2.1.2.2.3.2 Perception of leader's concern for the organization

Employees are stakeholders in an organization. Therefore, they too have interest to protect ‘the sense of community’ of an organization which is the core characteristic that holds it together. Hao and Yazdanifard (2015) submit that employees would appreciate a leader who they perceive to have a burden and ability to help an organization remain viable, competitive and sustain the business in the face of problems caused by the rapid growth of the economic environment. Additionally, he should be someone they perceive can efficiently guide their business forward in the face of an uncertain future. Furthermore, he should be seen as someone who can decrease their feelings of insecurity which is caused by that uncertainty, and who ultimately can help an organization survive the current rough business environment (2015:1).

In other words, workers perceive as an effective leader someone who is seen to be committed to helping an organization successfully go through the three stages in change management, which are: adapting to change, controlling the change and lastly effecting the change; and can even build an organizational culture of trust and team work (Hao and Yazdanifard, 2015:2, 3). If an organization is already in a crisis, employees would appreciate and consider effective someone who they perceive can offer ‘crisis leadership’ by acting as a ‘blocking agent’ (shock absorbers) that can take it out of the crisis (Larceda, 2019:192).

2.1.2.2.3.3 Perception of leader's moral credibility

The other determinant factor workers hope to see in their leaders for improved worker-leader relations is his moral character. Odeneye *et al.* (2018:64) have observed that team members who perceive their team leader to have “high integrity are less likely to commit unethical acts that impact the team itself and the organization”. This indicates that personal moral character has potential to enhance worker-leader relations. It is important that workers perceive him/her to be morally upright because as their leader they expect him/her to model morality too. But apart from managing workers relations with their leaders, it is equally important to manage workers’ relations with the organization itself.

2.1.2.2.4 Managing workers relations with the organization

2.1.2.2.4.1 Being a good employer

Negative perception of the company by workers can easily lead to distrust in organizational life, feelings of insecurity due to uncertainty of the future, and toxic emotions (Larceda, 2019:190; Hao and Yazdanifard, 2015:1). To build good worker-company relations, companies must build a reputation as good employers. Nagendra (2016) is of the view that organizations should ‘focus on the development of value system of employees, their motivational level and moralities with the development of their skills that induces employees to perform as expected’ (2016: 66). This entails that a company should render good conditions of service to its workers. Another positive way worker-company perceptions can be enhanced is by treating employees with justice and fairness.

2.1.2.2.4.2 Justice and fairness

The governing rules of the company must be perceived by workers to be just and fair across the board. This is the idea Strom (2014) is advancing in his Justice Leadership model at places of work. It promotes company rules fairness and discourages uncertainty management theories (2014:73). Organizational justice is crucial to the wellbeing of the organization because when an employee views that the rewards distributed by the organization are fair and the processes by which the organization decides to distribute rewards are fair, he is likely to perform well (2014:72). And the opposite is also true. As such, company laws and regulations must then not only be drafted in such a way that they instil a sense of security in workers but must be seen to be equally implemented without favouritism to all workers. But it is not only justice and fairness that matter to workers, their emotions do, too.

2.1.2.2.4.3 Emotional Intelligence concern

Comprehending and regulating workers emotions enhances organizational performance. Harms & Credé (2010) who have studied Emotional Intelligence (EI) think that managing workers' emotions by dealing with anything that negatively disturb them emotionally is important because "emotions somehow guide thinking and action as they try to cope with environmental demands and pressures" (2010:6). To enhance worker-company relations, companies must engage competent counsellors that would identify and deal with emotional issues of workers well before the negative effects begin to affect the company's performance (2010:7).

All these are different ways OLC theory is applied in business and human resource management. Now we turn to consider OLC relevance in church growth.

2.1.3 OLC's relevance in church growth.

"Despite its origins in the business literature, the theory of organizational life cycles has frequently been used in the business, public, and nonprofit sectors to explain the actions of organizations" (Ford, 2016:3). This qualifies the church as a non-profit faith based organizational entity to utilize the principles of the OLC theory.

2.1.3.1 Church as an organization

To link OLCs to church life, the key question that needs to be answered is: Does the church qualify as an organization since it is a spiritual entity too? This issue goes as far back as the reformation and hinges on the understanding of the nature of the church either as an organism or as an institution or both. It emerges from the question: Is the church purely visible (physical) therefore formally organizational or is it purely invisible (spiritual) therefore informal and none-organizational or is it both visible and invisible? The Roman Catholic church answered this question by saying that the church was purely visible therefore formally organizational. By this was meant that salvation and other spiritual blessings conferred on members to this church were not necessarily based on faith but simply by belonging to the visible hierarchical Roman Catholic church (Grudem, 1994:855; Erickson, 2000: 1054; McGrath, 2001:495).

The reformers opposed this view of understanding the church in purely visible (institutional) terms. As Berkhof (1938) writes: "This is the error which the Reformers sought to eradicate by stressing the fact that the Church of which the Bible says such glorious things is not the Church as an external institution, but the Church as the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, which is

essentially invisible at present, though it has a relative and imperfect embodiment in the visible Church and is destined to have a perfect visible embodiment at the end of the ages” (1938:566).

The reformer’s conception of the church (which became the protestant evangelical church’s position) was that it was both invisible (spiritual) and visible (physical) at the same time. They took care to recognize the priority and distinction that exists in conceiving the church in a dual sense simultaneously - primarily as an invisible organism, and only secondarily as an external institution (Berkhof, 1938:572; Letham, 2019:793).

Bavinck, Bolt & Vriend (2008) also acknowledge the dual nature of the church when they affirm that the church as gathering is manifest in both the institution and the organism. They go on to clarify that the distinction exists only within the visible (institutional) and not the invisible (organism) church. They maintain that the church from the very beginning, has appeared in a dual form and therefore, it “has never been without a government, either in the invisible realm in which Christ is its head, or in the visible in which it always possessed some form of organization” (2008:330).

Strong (1907) insists that government is indispensable for the church as a gathering of believers. As such, the church cannot lack the institution as it was always organized and institutionally arranged in some fashion (Strong, 1907:902). Thus, according to Bartholomew (2017), Kuyper would argue: “The great need of the hour is a church that is both organism *and* institution, two characteristics held together in a free church” (Bartholomew, 2017:174).

From the above discussion, we note that Churches are characterized by both human (organizational) and godly (spiritual) attributes. The church is at once the body of Christ and a human institution (Austin-Roberson, 2009:29). Notwithstanding its unique character, mission, source and culture, the church was, is and always will be a real human organization pleading for sound management (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015: 554).

It is assumed therefore, that a recognition of the church as an organization, does not negate its uniqueness as a spiritual entity. Rather, it recognizes that management skills and principles are universally applicable to the management of all organizations. As a non-profitable faith-based organization, the church qualifies to be managed in line with sound management principles and practices as well. The following are some ways managerial skills and principles can be applied to a church as an organization:

2.1.3.2 In promoting good church management principles

Churches need to be efficiently run. “Within the unique framework of the church as an organization, metaphorically referred to as the body of Christ, the different parts and contributions, together with the allocated resources, also need to be managed effectively and efficiently in order for the organization to realize its intended goals and visions” (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015:554). Knowledge of OLC management approaches coupled with proper utilization of the proven principles of organizational design can greatly enhance managerial challenges that churches often grapple with. This has become an urgent need especially in our era of advanced technology and a market-driven economy. The church cannot afford to lag behind but must strive to be relevant to meeting contemporary needs of its members by tapping from management principles systems.

2.1.3.3 In managing change in the church

Pearse (2011), who has based his research on the understanding that change is inevitable to an organization, saw the need to manage possible change that might occur in the church context. His “situation-adaptation” methodology is an OLC approach that uses three effective patterns: 1) the *freewheeler*, 2) the *focused-pioneer* and 3) the *reflexive-accommodator*. The system is meant to measure observable balanced patterns of interactions between leaders and their followers over a period of time. Whenever there is observable change in any of the three patterns, “situation adaptation” must be applied to repair the affected pattern. The objective of this approach is to ensure a balance is maintained whenever change is being effected in the church (Pearse, 2011:3). Although the system is highly technical and may not be user-friendly to some people in the church, nonetheless, the contribution of this method to the church is that it helps “preserve the sense of community and healthy relationships of the church” on its growth path and change circle (Pearse, 2011:6).

2.1.3.4 In church planting situations to kill paternalistic tendencies

OLCs can be applied in church planting situations. Mbewe’s (2014:150-166) research to finding a solution to the perennial problem of the weaning process commonly experienced in church planting situations is an OLC approach. He identifies three main phases that a new church plant goes through before it becomes independent (reaches maturity), which are: (1) the paternalistic phase, (2) the shared leadership phase and (3) the final withdrawal phase (2014:66-72). He opined that each of these stages must be strictly observed if paternalistic mentality, which though appropriate at the start stage, is totally undesirable when the church

has reached maturity stage. At maturity stage, the pioneers and the indigenous leaders must stand as equal labourers (Mbewe, 2014:152).

Mbewe locates the cause of the problems associated with the weaning process in church planting to pioneers' clinging to the paternalistic mind set even when the church plant has reached maturity stage. This often triggers a reaction from the indigenous leaders who feel marginalized. As a remedy, Mbewe proposes that the key to arriving at this equal status is mutual respect and admiration for each other, which is an element that must be cultivated and permeate the relationship right from the start stage all through to the final stage of withdrawal of the church planting phases (Mbewe, 2014:154). Mbewe's postulation underscores the OLC concept of the need to understand and be sensitive to the exact phase an organizational life cycle is at in order for relevant intervention for organizational survival.

2.1.3.5 In church human resource development

To succeed in its mission the church needs qualified personnel that will effectively equip the church. It must be an all-round training that encompasses both theological and basic management skills and principles. "The church as an organization is exposed to insufficient education in management principles and skills through formal education that, in turn, results in leaders that often struggle to perform the basic managerial tasks expected of them. Consequently, the lack of basic management principles and skills negatively affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization in pursuit of its goal and intent" (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015:566).

The church is replete with examples of the negative effects unskilled labour and theologically inept leadership have had on the life of the church. Examples include:

2.1.3.5.1 Anglican church of Kenya (ACK)

Nkonge (2011) has ably demonstrated from his Anglican church of Kenya (ACK) case study that inadequately theologically trained leaders are unable to sufficiently meet the needs of the people and promote the goals and objectives of the church. He is of the view that "A Church that is committed to growth and change must think seriously about its leadership and how this leadership can be improved mainly through theologically sound training" (2011: 166). He further comments that "Inadequately empowered leadership can have many detrimental effects on an organisation like, ill prepared personnel, shoddy works, poor products and bad company

publicity. These can cause frustrations in people and disruptions in works hampering the operations of an organization” (2011:170).

2.1.3.5.2 Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI).

Similar sentiments are expressed by White (2019) who has written the centenary history of Ghana’s largest Pentecostal church - the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI). He laments that lack of theologically well-trained leadership in the church has been one major cause of the problems the church has experienced over the ten decades of its existence (2019:5). He traces the root of this problem to the founders who themselves were theological academically ill equipped. “Lack of sound theological knowledge, in turn, led to doctrinal and leadership challenges as well as the inability of the church leaders to handle differences and conflicts” (2019:7). Thus, despite the many successes the church may have scored in other areas, the weakest point was the ill theologically equipped leadership. This led White to comment that “Congregational nurturing must always be preceded or coupled with leadership training” (2019:8).

2.1.3.6 In building strong leadership

The significance of efficiently developing human resource for the church is expressed by Elkington (2015): ‘It would seem that, more than ever before, not only should people in vocational ministry be theologically adept, they also need to have incredible leadership capacity to navigate the complexity of a globalised world...If weak leadership is offered and substandard approaches adopted, the follow-on impact can lead to disaster and disillusionment” (Elkington 2015:3, 4). All this goes to show how the church can greatly benefit from managerial principles and skills, even in the area of training and manpower development.

So far, we have discussed OLC theory in regards to: 1) what it is; 2) how it is applied; and 3) its relevance in church growth. Now we will look at leadership and discuss the various leadership theories and styles.

2.2 Leadership

It has already been pointed out from a systems leadership perspective that existence of problems or their non-existence as well as successful address of problems in an organisation is indicative of leadership competences and capacities. Further, that the invaluable role of an organisational leader is to conceive and understand where the organisation ‘stands’ and then manage the situation in a manner that enables it to ‘live/survive’ beyond now into the future.

Link between leadership theories and styles

Besides the OLC theory studies, equally important is the relevant leadership that should be deployed for organizational survival. Our discussion on organisational leadership will therefore be to explore the leadership theories and their resultant leadership styles with the view of highlighting how OLC assists one to identify the right leadership to lead organizations based on understanding where it is in its growth cycle.

There is a link between leadership theories and leadership styles. leadership styles are the product or application part of leadership theories (Dulewicz and Malcolm, 2005:107; Al-maaitah, *et al.*, 2021:773). Our discussion will therefore look at some leadership theories and the leadership styles which have emerged from these theories, since the latter derives inputs from one or more of the former. We begin with the leadership theories.

2.2.1 Leadership theories

As scholars have continued to search for effective leaders, it has led to the development of many leadership theories. “Many researchers and practitioners have developed a consensus that the progression of thinking over the years has developed a belief that leadership is a flexible developmental process, with each new piece of research building on and seldom completely disregarding that which was derived before it. Main theories that emerged during 20th century include: the Great Man theory, Trait theory, Process leadership theory, Style and Behavioral theory, Transformational, Transactional and Laissez Faire leadership theory (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016:1)

2.2.1.1 Great-Man Theory

The great man theory, also called event-making man theory, is based on the history of what heroic men have accomplished in this world. It espouses the notion that the ability for leadership is inherent, that leaders are born not made therefore are destined by nature to be in their role at a particular time; and this merely by virtue of them possessing some combination of traits such as outstanding capacities of intelligence, will and character rather than the actions of distinction (Madanchian *et al.*, 2016:199; Khan, Ahmed & Khan, 2016:1). But other scholars found this theory of leadership to be morally flawed and surrounded with dictatorial powers as the concept lacks the tenets of democracy. “On the amount of direction and guidance, the dynamic among these factors was established; socio-emotional support and task behavior, in performing a task the readiness level (commitment and competence) of the followers and

relationship behaviour required by the followers' functions and objective" (Khan, Ahmed & Khan, 2016:1).

2.2.1.2 Trait theory

Similar to the Great Man theory, it states that leaders have characteristics that they are born with and it remains consistent for a long time (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014:166). The person who emerges as a leader in a group does so because he possesses certain traits. This is the basis of saying that "Leaders are born not made" (Dike & Madubueze, 2019: 132). Thus, the focus of this trait is on the basic traits like physical and personal characteristic along with the competencies a leader should possess, such as individuals' personality, dominance and personal presence, Charisma, self-confidence, achievement, ability to formulate a clear vision, among others (Aghahowa, 2021:24). But some scholars believe that there is more to leadership than just bringing about change and that "Trait theories ignore the assumptions about whether leadership traits were genetic or acquired" (Khan, Ahmed & Khan, 2016:2). Like great man theory, Trait Theory studies were found to be indecisive and therefore leadership could not be adequately defined by the maxims of Trait Theory (Madanchian et al. 2016:199). Thus, other theories have been proposed, instead.

2.2.1.3 Transformational theory (also a leadership type)

The main thing about this theory is that "top leaders develop leadership in the ones below them to take more control of their work and purpose by nurturing and moving them toward higher and more universal needs and purposes (Hiwa, Osman & Salim, 2021:27). According to Khan, Ahmed & Khan (2016) the distinguishing feature of this theory is its emphasis on the ethical extents of leadership whose focus is on followers' needs and input in order to transform everyone into a leader by empowering and motivating them (2016:2). In this theory, leaders "aim for a greater good that raises the motivation and morality of both the follower and the leader through engagement in interactions with followers based on common values, beliefs and goals" (Suong *et al.*, 2019:274). This is Ariussanto's (2020) view too. He sees the focus of this theory to be on the leader's effort to raise and broaden followers' interest (2020:3). In turn, this process motivates subordinates to give back their appreciation, loyalty, obedience and trust to their leaders and do the assigned tasks without any hesitation (Murari, 2011:34). Because this theory encourages leaders' confidence and respect in their workers, it has the ability to influence their behavior in a way that results in job satisfaction and positive organizational

results (Aghahowa, 2021:8) Besides it being a leadership theory it has become a leadership style too.

2.2.1.4 Behavioural theory

Behavioural theory states that leaders are not born made as they can be trained. This is opposite to the concept of Great man and trait theories. It advocates that leadership skills can be learned and developed (Sethuraman, Kavitha & Suresh, 2014:166). This theory acknowledges the significance of certain necessary leadership skills that serve as enabler for a leader, suggesting that each individual has a distinct style of leadership with which he/she feels most contented. “Like one that does not fit all heads, similarly one style cannot be effective in all situations” (Khan, Ahmed & Khan, 2016:2). Its focus is on the way of doing things and not on being. Therefore, it is task orientated.

2.2.1.5 Contingency theory

Like behavioural theory, this theory too presupposes that there is no single leadership style that is best for all situations. “Solutions to problems depend on the particular situation or environment.” (Dike & Madubueze, 2019:134). Aghahowa (2021) also agrees: “Contingency theory focuses on factors connected to environment which might determine the leadership style that would be most appropriate for a particular situation” (2021:27). According to this theory, therefore, there is no single right way to lead because there are no fixed series of characteristics that can be transposed into different contexts. The contextual environment requires the leader to be flexible with different leadership styles used at different times depending on the circumstance. Thus, “rooted in contingency theory is the idea that promotes the relationship between the approach of leaders (or their leadership style) and the context in which they operate” (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005:107).

2.2.1.6 Transactional theory (Like transformational theory, is also a leadership type)

Transaction theory, is based on the word “transaction” - which means exchange, and focuses on the exchange between the leaders and their workers (Ariussanto, 2020:3). Murari (2011) says that as a way of encouraging workers to work, the theory emphasizes the use of “external motivations, such as rewards for satisfactory performances or punishment for the unperformed tasks, and in return, expects productivity, efforts, and loyalty from the follower” (2011:33). Khan, Ahmed & Khan (2016) report that the purpose for the activation of this theory was “to diverge from the specific perspectives of the leader, leadership context and the follower and

toward practices that concentrated further on the exchanges between the followers and leaders” (2016:2). The theory entails exchanging of rewards with high working efficiency.

However, “the principal problem with this style of leadership is the expectation” (Aghahowa, 2021:8). The theory is employer-interest based and not employee’s since it is largely an exchange-based relationship. It is also used as a control strategy to get employees to perform in the employer’s preferred way (Al-maaitah, *et al.*, 2021:775). This makes performance impact assessment whether positive or negative to be employee based. “Positive results can occur when employees evaluate transactional leadership positively and a negative impact can occur if employees think that transactional leaders cannot be trusted because leaders break promises, are dishonest or are not transparent (Suong *et al.*, 2019:274).

Out of these leadership theories discussed above have proceeded a number of leadership styles. It is to these that we now turn.

2.2.2 Types of leadership styles

Some leadership styles that have been born out of one or a combination of the leadership theories above are: charismatic, visionary, situational, laissez-faire, transactional, autocratic, Paternalistic, democratic, bureaucratic and transformational styles (Khajeh, 2018:2; Negandra, 2016:66; Mothoagae & Prior, 2010: 87-91; Öztürk *et al.*, 2017:457). For the purposes of this research, we shall focus only on five of these leadership types: Autocratic (authoritarian), paternalistic (father figure), democratic (participative), laissez fair (Delegated), and Bureaucratic (rule by book). (Nurani *et al.*, 2021:142).

Definition of leadership styles

Leadership style is an "art" to influence employees to work optimally in achieving the goals of the organization (Ariussanto, 2020:5). Others define it as “the pattern of behaviours displayed by leaders or interactions between leaders and subordinates during their work, “with two obviously independent dimensions: task and interpersonal relationships” (Al-maaitah *et al.*, 2021:774). Leadership style is useful in achieving organizational goals and in increasing organizational effectiveness (Al-maaitah *et al.*, 2021: 777). Tewari, Gujarathi & MaduleTTY (2019) insist that “there is no prescribed style for all organizations; rather, the leader should recognize the best style that suits a particular context” (2019: 115). “To strengthen organizational productivity, leaders’ ability needs to be developed sustainably and

systematically. Organizations that want to increase productivity need to find ways to develop leaders to adopt appropriate leadership styles” (Nurani *et al.*, 2021:141).

2.2.2.1 Autocratic (authoritarian) style

According to Aghahowa (2021), this is a leadership style that retains a high level of power and authority. It aims to have strict control over the workers in order to protect the rules of the organization. A leader makes decisions without consulting others but simply imposes his will on the employees. Workers are expected to obey orders without questioning the decisions made. To ensure control of workers, this leadership style tends to heavily rely on threats and punishment. As a result, there is a high degree of staff dependency on the leader (2021:10). Murari (2011) adds more disadvantages of this leadership style: de-motivation, alienation of staff, staff don’t participate in decision making, low job satisfaction and staff turnover, dampens employees’ morale. Generally, it is often detested by employers (2011:32).

Despite these negatives, autocratic style can be useful in situations requiring urgent decisions and decisive decisions. It can also suit situations that require detailed orders and instructions or where a close level of supervision is needed as when new and untrained staff who do not know which tasks to perform or which procedures to follow are involved.

2.2.2.2 Democratic (Participative) style

Democratic leadership style, also known as participative leadership style, encourages inclusion of workers in decision-making process in order to improve organizational policies. “The core issue about democracy is the importance it attaches to human personality. Its essence being the right of every man bound by the decision of a government (organization) to contribute (whatever is in him to contribute) to the making and remaking of those decisions” (Dike & Madubueze, 2019:131). Aghahowa (2021) observes that in this leadership style, the leader trusts employees, recognizes them and encourages their achievement. He not only takes on board their contributions but he also shares decision making and problem solving responsibilities. In this way employees are kept abreast about everything that affects their work. Even when changes are made in the organization, there is minimal resistance (if any) to proposed changes because workers would have participated in the change process. In most cases they respond to management decisions with cooperation, team spirit, and high morale. (2021:11)

This leadership style is useful in non-routine or unstructured tasks, where relationships are non-authoritarian and the staff locus of control is not external

2.2.2.3 Paternalistic style

According to Pellegrini and Scandura (2008), “paternalistic style is a leadership style in which a dominant, assertive figure operates as the father figure whom employees must trust, obey and be loyal to” (2008:568). “Paternalistic leadership is a leadership style that “combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence and moral integrity” (Dedahanov, Bozorov & Sung, 2019: 2). It is asserted that in this leadership style setting, the work environment is tailored to be like a big family with a paternalistic leader who fosters a friendly work atmosphere, where employees see their colleagues as family. The paternalistic leader plays the supportive role among the employees. This paternalistic leadership style lays huge importance on the needs of employees and the organization like a “father” in the home (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008:568).

Dedahanov, Bozorov and Sung (2019) say that under this leadership style, “employees are well taken care of in their career development, are given chance to learn from their errors, and are taught how to improve performance” (2019:3). They further add that this leadership style consists of three elements: benevolent, moral, and authoritarian. The authoritarianism is not as a tyranny but for protection and care. A leader’s focus is individualized concern for the familial well-being and needs of employees. He shows care and concern for issues surrounding employees’ personal and family matters by providing the needed support until the employees experience a work role fit and meaning in their work again. In response, staff express gratitude and feel obliged to give back in a similar manner (2019: 3). It is a useful leadership style in communities where paternalistic leadership is appreciated.

2.2.2.4 Laissez-faire (Free rein) style

A laissez-faire leadership style, also known as the “hands-off” leader style does not exercise control over its employees directly. “Laissez faire leaders rarely or never guide the team members and give the decisions for the team members” (Suong *et al.*, 2019:274). The leader gives staff a great deal of freedom and supervision is often minimal. Workers themselves determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems on their own. Thus, it often leads to unclear roles and lack of motivation for staff (Murari, 2011:32). This type of leadership can include all those leaders that do not supervise their team members, fail to provide continuous feedback resulting in high costs, bad service, failure to meet deadlines, lack of control, and

poor production. However, Suong, Thanh and Dao (2019:274) believe that this leadership style is important and useful in contexts where staff is excellent in their fields of expertise such as specialists or consultants. In this context, a leader need not provide supervision or continuous feedback to employees under him because they are highly experienced, trustworthy and need little supervision to do the work successfully on their own.

2.2.2.5 Bureaucratic Leadership (rule by the book) Style

In the bureaucratic leadership style, a leader believes in structured procedures and ensures that his employees follow procedures exactly. “The term bureaucracy refers to a sociological phenomenon. It is evolved for the achievement of desired goals” (Arshad, Ullah & Malik, 2021:211). Because of its strong focus on achieving desired goals, bureaucratic leadership style leaves no space to explore new ways to solve issues and in fact “work by the book” (Murari, 2011:32). This leadership style demands that everything be done with a strict adherence to laid down procedure or policy. As a matter of fact, bureaucracy’s inability to adapt to changing environments can make this leadership style to be very frustrating especially to energetic and self-motivated employees. Sapre (2000) rightly observes that “In this way, the decision taken under strict rules, regulations and generalities may blunt the creativity; in another way, the hierarchy constitutes hurdles for change and innovation” (2000:295). The leader’s role is as of a police officer – to enforce the rules.

However, it can be effective in organizations where procedures are standard and employees are required to perform routine tasks over and over again. Institutions such as hospitals, universities, banks and government organizations (to reduce corruption and increase security) (Arshad, Ullah & Malik, 2021:211).

2.2.3 Influence of leadership styles

According to Ariussanto (2020), leadership style does not directly affect employee performance but employee engagement and work environment do. A right leadership style is able to condition and build a positive work environment for employees. It should engage employees and create a conducive work environment that would ultimately lead to higher employee productivity and performance. The more conducive and positive the work environment is, the greater the employee attachment to the company (2020:7).

Significant about each one of these leadership styles is the resultant impact they produce in relation to the work environment and how the newly created environment influences workers’

job satisfaction. This is why Aghahowa (2021) argued that: “Output of the organization is dependent on the leadership style adopted. A strong relationship exists between the adopted style of leadership and the organizational performance. Consequently, by using adequate leadership styles, leaders can have a positive effect on both the commitment of employees and the productivity of the organization” (2021:5).

Dike & Madubueze (2019) add that the effectiveness of all the leadership styles should be measured against the four path-goal theory leadership styles namely directive, supportive, participative and achievement. They insist that there must be significant correlation between all the four path-goal leadership styles and employee performance (2019:130).

This generates important questions in relation to the identifying a right leadership style for a specific context, such as: How balanced and sensitive is this leadership style in meeting the demands of both the work environment and the workers welfare? Does the leadership style create an environment that gives workers room to be creative and innovative so as to significantly contribute to organizational performance and help the organization to stay competitive in dynamic business environments? Does it support employees with task related resources so as to give them a sense of power? Does the leadership style give employees autonomy and independence so that they are able to influence what happens in their jobs and feel empowered? Is it concerned about moral behavior? Does this leadership style promote innovative behavior that leads to generation and suggestion of new ideas? Or to the contrary, is the leadership style an authoritarian, non-worker participative structure system with strict rules that require employees to obey instructions completely without questioning?

Therefore, organizations need to improve their understanding of the influence different kinds of leadership styles have on workers and the organization as a whole. This brings us to consider how OLC approaches assist in picking the right leadership style for an organization.

2.2.4 How OLC assists in identifying the right leadership style

The significance of OLC theory, through its organism metaphor, is that it provides a life span frame work conception of an organization and the different stages that it passes through. This is why OLC scholars insist that organizations must adopt a right style of leadership if they are to succeed (Khajeh 2018; Saleh et al 2018; Nagendra 2016). They are aware that not all leadership styles are useful for certain stages of an organization’s life circle (OLC). Different leadership styles are suitable for different stages and each leader needs to know when to employ

a particular style. The satisfaction and performance levels of employees also depend upon the leadership styles adopted by corporate leaders.

An appropriate leadership style paves way to delivering successful plans for fulfilling the long-term organizational goals” (Tewari, 2019:115). Aghahowa (2021) contends that “business owners adopt different methods of leading subordinates at different phases of the organization to produce required results. One of them is the use of different leadership styles (2021:5). Ariussanto *et al.* (2020) remark that leadership style is a noticeable critical factor affecting good performance in organizations and applying the right style can help boost worker morale. They stress that leadership style has a significant influence on employee engagement and work environment. Employee engagement and work environment impact significantly toward the performance of the employees (2020:1).

To this Tewari *et al.* (2019) add the following: “Different leadership styles are appropriate in distinct situations. If an inappropriate style is adopted by the leader, it may pose several challenges for the workers, managers and human resources departments in the planning and execution of work in an organization. Similarly, the satisfaction and performance levels of employees also depend upon the leadership styles adopted by corporate leaders. An appropriate leadership style paves way to delivering successful plans for fulfilling the long-term organizational goals” (2019:115).

Having discussed the OLC, the different leadership theories and the resultant leadership styles that have emerged from them, we are now in a position to answer the question: how can OLC be used to assist in picking the right leadership type? Below are some of the suggested ways.

2.2.4.1 In determining the right leadership style for a particular term

Companies often plan for different terms – short term, medium term and long term. These different terms require different leadership styles if the company is to succeed. Khajeh (2018) is convinced that the reason some companies fail to perform well is because they don’t pay attention to the leadership style they adopt for a particular term. He believes that if companies evaluated well the available leadership styles, they would be able to pick one that would best suit the term the company is at and thereby improve its productivity. He demonstrated this by how he arrived at the right leadership style for his own long term project. Out of the six leadership styles he studied - charismatic, transformational, transactional, autocratic, bureaucratic and democratic, Khajeh found that three (the democratic, transformational and

autocratic) were suitable for long term. The other three (transactional, charismatic and bureaucratic) were only suitable for short term undertakings (2018:2).

2.2.4.2 In determining the right leadership style for a particular organization

2.2.4.2.1 For the banking sector

Nagendra (2016) wanted to find out which leadership style would be suitable for the banking sector management out from the many common ones used. The leadership styles he examined were the charismatic, transactional, transformational, autocratic, bureaucratic and democratic (2016:66). Of these, transformational and democratic styles had higher positive indicators than the rest. Thus, through this study Nagendra was able to find a right leadership style suitable for the banking sector in Puni.

2.2.4.2.2 For business companies

It was the same concern that Even Saleh *et al* (2018) had when they conducted research to find out a suitable leadership style for their business from the two most used leadership styles in companies – transactional and transformational. Equipped with the knowledge of OLC stage their business was at, they found that transformational style was the better of the two (2018:54).

2.2.4.3 In assessing the qualities of a leader

When it is known as to the exact phase an organization is in, it becomes easy for stakeholders to adopt and apply appropriate leadership styles, policies and control measures that fit that particular life circle stage (Rahimia & Fallah, 2015:51). The ability to be an effective leader therefore goes far beyond the acquisition of academic qualification to abilities that effectively critique and analyse issues with the goal of maintaining the core business of the organization. Depending on the prevailing need of the organization at a particular time, different leadership abilities will be sought in the prospective leader.

2.2.4.3.1 As an enabler

A leader as an enabler comes from concepts presented by Elkington (2015) and Pearse (2011) of ‘enabling function’ and ‘balanced patterns of interactions’ respectively. Elkington’s ‘enabling function’ model conceives the nature of church as an organismic system that require its parts to be enabled to function properly. His emphasis in this OLC concept is one of mutual benefit whereby something is occurring between the parts, over time, which maintains the system (2015: 8). It is in this context of organismic functioning that leadership role must

support the system's wide self-maintenance and growth, or inhibit its self-maintenance and growth. Therefore, in this context, the right leadership style to be picked is one that would be able to play the enabling role of ensuring the relational functioning occurring between the different parts of the organization is self-maintaining (2015:7).

This is the same idea that Pearse (2011) advocates in his 'situational-adaptation leadership' model which involves observable balanced patterns of interactions between leaders and their followers over a period of time. The emphasis of his OLC concept is that balance be maintained in the three effective patterns (the freewheeler, the focused-pioneer and the reflexive-accommodator) whenever change is being effected in the church (2011:3). The concern for maintaining this balance is for reasons of protecting, 'the sense of community of the organization' which is the core business that holds it together. In considering a right leadership style for such a situation, the right one to be appointed should be one that promotes unity and prioritizes the protection of the organization's core business.

2.2.4.3.2 As thoroughly equipped

Competency in one's area of speciality is vital. For an organization's leader to be an effective enabler he needs to be thoroughly equipped. Nkonge (2011) has argued that it is not just having any leaders but equipped leaders. It is one thing to have leaders but it is another to have qualified leaders (2011:165). This is no exception for church leaders, who though are called and gifted by the Holy Spirit, still need to enhance their gifting through sound theological training in order for them to offer optimum service to the church.

In many churches where pastors have been found to be lacking in sound bible knowledge, the results have been unpleasant. White (2019) noted doctrinal and leadership challenges as well as the inability of the church leaders to handle differences and conflicts in Ghana's largest Pentecostal church - the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI) (2019:7), while Nkonge identified frustration and spiritual immaturity in members of the Anglican church of Kenya (ACK) as among some of the effects (2011: 166). One way that can assist to reduce illiteracy in Bible knowledge among church leaders is to expose them to sound theological training. 'A Church that is committed to growth and change must think seriously about its leadership and how this leadership can be improved mainly through training' Elkington (2015:4). This goes to show how trained leaders will have a better understanding of their organization and the knowledge of the right leadership style that can best serve its interests.

2.2.4.3.3 As visionary

Because organizations go through life circles, sometimes they experience phases of crisis. A crisis creates an uncertain future of the organization as well as feelings of insecurity in people. Visionary leaders are able to help an organization to successfully go through the three stages in change management, which are: adapting to change, controlling the change and lastly effecting the change so that they can build an organizational culture of trust and team work (Hao and Yazdanifard, 2015:2, 3). Crisis times create an uncertain future and also decrease the feelings of security in their employees which is caused by that uncertainty. Therefore, the kind of leadership style in crisis situations would be one that has potential to help an organization survive the current rough business environment. It must be a leadership style that combines visionary and problem-solving factors.

2.2.4.3.4 As problem solver

Larceda (2019) has shown a problem-solving leadership that shielded the companies in Portugal from experiencing the economic recessions that negatively affected the world's economies especially Europe and the United States in 2008. Acting as 'blocking agents' to mitigate the negative social impacts on an organization, these leaders identified major organizational social elements that usually negatively affect both organizations and the people and then put barriers against them to act as 'shock absorbers' (2019:192). The three major organizational social elements they identified and mitigated against were: Distrust in organizational life, uncertainty of the future, and toxic emotions in people (2019:190). This shows that problem times require creative leadership. Thus, when an organization faces problems, the right leadership style to apply is that which is broad in content and encompass various OLC approaches.

2.2.4.3.5 As relational

Both the management and ecclesiological theories bring out the importance of relational leadership. Having good relations with subjects unlocks many channels to smooth leadership which otherwise would be littered with obstacles. Yet, not all leadership styles promote strong relations between employers and staff. The degree of implementing good relations is higher in ecclesiological than in management settings. In business management, there is a huge gap that exists between leaders and workers, with the leaders' focus being more on achieving the objectives of an organization than on workers personal needs and their welfare (Mahan 2011:62; Magezi 2015: 6; Huizing 2011:62; Kheng 2015:3; Odeneye et al. 2018:62). In the

church, relations are understood not just as mere social interactions (as is the case with management theories) but intimate loving relations where a leader has holistic interest in the person. Thus, ecclesiological organization theories put more emphasis on mutual love relations between leaders and their followers (Mbewe 2014: 169-170; Pearse 2011:6; Magezi 2015: 6; Resane's 2014:6) than Business organization theories.

It is in this sense of loving relationships that Resane (2014) advocates a relational leadership model of biblical shepherd motif. This model emphasizes an intimate shepherd-leader relationship. In this model of leadership, the identification and the biblical usage of the shepherd and the sheep is explored, with special focus on the role of the shepherd of caring, courage, and guidance (2014:5). Resane urges the leaders in the ecclesiastical community to emulate this relational model for the advance and the effectiveness of the mission of Christ in the world.

Mahan's (2012) body metaphor model is relational concept too. Based on 1 Corinthians 12, this body metaphor model is used to defend and justify the system of governance used by the Church of Christ, democratic congregationalists and corporal congregationalist church structures as "the most fitting church leadership models because they correspond with the biblical body metaphor model" (2012:70) that emphasizes intimate relations between leaders and their followers.

2.2.4.4 Promotes growth

Continual growth is an important factor in shaping the future of an organization, yet Keita (2019) noticed that for the Pentecostal churches in Alexandria and Springfield, Virginia it was not growth but decrease in membership that was taking place. Aware of the significant role church leaders play in ensuring growth, he embarked on the study of different leadership styles, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and servant to try and control the problem of decreasing membership in churches (2019:2). He knew that if he could make the church leaders be aware of their leadership styles and implement them appropriately, these styles would influence the growth of church membership in return and possibly even reverse the decrease (2019:6). His findings were that leadership structure varies among churches, and no standard or static form of leadership exists. Therefore, to remedy this decline, church leaders needed to change their leadership style and methods to reach the people of the church and community (2019:3).

2.2.4.5 Promotes unity in diversity

Organizations' workforce comprises different people with different backgrounds. In such settings chances of differing, chaos and turmoil are highly likely to erupt and cause disruption and disunity of the organization'. This was Gatut's (2013:28) concern when he wrote about 'unifier spirit' transformational leadership model. He wanted to find a pattern that unites dissent between individuals and groups in an organization. The objective was to fairly manage the diversity found in organizations by preventing disruption and disunity created at the work place due to varied opinions and views among the workers. He therefore advocated for 'unity in diversity' (2013:26).

Although it is difficult to manage diversity and build unity in diversity in an organization, there is a possibility of achieving it through the influence of relational leadership. Relational leadership is capable of eliminating individual differences and uniting groups for a common goal of the organization. When there is unity among workers it leads to high performance and productivity.

Relational leadership promotes integrity and accountability in leaders too.

2.2.4.6 Promotes integrity and accountability

Leaders must be mindful of the worker's perception of them. To avoid ineffective responses, leaders must ensure they become good models to their subjects so as to allow for a good rapport. By so doing they earn integrity. Without credibility, the influence of the leader is undermined and the ability to continue with any initiative compromised (Pearse 2011:6). One way by which leaders can earn their integrity is through accountability, which through good relations, make them vulnerable to their followers. Integrity in leaders is good as it increases leadership credibility which is an important ingredient to building a climate of trust and confidence within the group. Odeneye et al. (2018:62) observed that team members who perceived their team leader to have high integrity were less likely to commit unethical acts that impact the team itself and the organization. Consequently, when leaders detach themselves from their subjects, far reaching consequences on the social-economic areas of an organization occur as can be observed from the 2008 world economic recession (Odeneye et al. 2018). The same can be said from the continuing corruption scandals on the sub-Saharan Africa (Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2016).

Odeneye et al. (2018) wanted to show the negative effects that occur when there is detachment in relations between the workers and their leaders and no worker involvement is allowed in organizational management. He showed how the US investigators into the scandal that brought

Wall Street in America to a halt revealed unethical behaviours and gross unethical corporate practices of organizational leaders (2018:61). What was detected about these leaders was that they had put more focus on goal attainment and less consideration of the impact their actions would have on workers and the organization (2018:62). Wall Street scandal, therefore, serves as a good example of what might happen if leaders detach themselves from workers.

Similarly, the effects of lack of relational leadership are felt down in Sub-Saharan Africa, by the lack of integrity in leaders openly seen through rampant corrupt practices that characterize public sector institutions. The lack of moral-ethics and accountability in public leadership administration which freely trickle down and affect the conduct of public employees make the whole system corrupt (Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2016:326).

The solution is that leaders should recognize that workers are stakeholders in the organization. As leaders begin to strive for integrity, workers perception of their integrity will motivate them towards high performance, increase innovative ideas, and enhance customer satisfaction. In turn, this relational leadership will prove to be the remedy to unethical and corrupt leadership that characterize many organizations. Therefore, the beginning point for moral and ethical leadership that leads to the promotion of integrity and accountability is to have good relations between leaders and followers. Moreover, relational leadership is key to the promotion of communication between leaders and the followers.

2.2.4.7 Promotes good communication

At the heart of leadership is communication. This comes out clearly by Stanford (2015) in his leadership language (LL) model. It emphasises effective communication between the leader and the follower. From his studies in the books of 1 and 2 Timothy, Stanford observed Paul as a leader to Timothy by the manner of usage of language through their interaction verbally and he noticed that there was a consistent leadership language (LL) in him (2015:3). This made him conclude that effective leadership is about effective communication and for effective communication to happen the leader must be careful in the selection and use of the language. But selection of words will depend on the degree of the relationship that exists between the leader and the follower.

The healthier the relations, the better the language of communication. ‘Leaders lead through communication of concepts and ideas with the goal of influencing and persuading followers to receive, accept, and implement such designs’ (Stanford, 2015:4). Therefore, language may determine the leader’s effectiveness and believability in the process of leading. This largely

depends on how good the existing relations are. Another aspect worth noting regarding relational leadership is that it helps to protect the sense of community, which is a common factor that binds the leader and the worker in an organization.

2.2.4.8 Protects the sense of community

Relational leadership has the potential of preserving the common interest of the leader and the worker, which is, the organization core business responsible for its existence. Pearse (2011) calls ‘the sense of community’ the core characteristic that holds the organization together (2011:3). The organization’s continuity is of importance and benefit to both the leader and the worker in many ways therefore both have the interest to protect it from collapse. This common interest in the company is a good basis for building healthy relations between leaders and workers.

In fact, this is the main idea behind the mutual leadership forms proposed by Pearse (2011:2) and Elkington (2015:2) both of which emphasise the need for mutual benefit relations between leaders and workers. Thus, the organization’s survival, self-maintenance and growth is wholly reliant on the health relations between the leaders and the followers. In addition, good relations between leaders and their subjects help reduce resistance to change and leadership.

2.2.4.9 Reduces resistance to change and leadership

Credibility in leadership is an important ingredient to building a climate of trust, confidence and a culture of teamwork within the group (Hao and Yazdanifard 2015:2, 3), for in turn, it helps to reduce resistance to change and to leadership from the subjects. According to Pearse (2011) leaders that had closer relationships developed relational influence with people. As intimacy and genuineness in relations are promoted at a number of levels within the organization, it has the effect of increasing the depth of sense of community. As such, even in times of change this connectedness helps to reduce resistance to change and to leadership (2011:4).

2.3 church leadership is unique

It has been highlighted that there is a great deal of overlap between management and ecclesiological leaderships. However, it is equally important to point out there are significant differences between the two. There are many ways in which church leadership differs from management leadership. Highlighting this distinction is important for this research which partly focus on conflict management and resolutions in the church, for Sometimes, it is the failure to

observe these differences and respecting the unique characteristics of church leadership that has been the cause of problems in the church.

Eklou (2021) observes that “Although leadership in this context certainly overlaps with secular understandings of leadership (for example, influencing and being able to direct others), biblical and pastoral leadership has important differences” (2021:1). This is so because the church is a unique organization owing to its double nature. In one sense it is a physical organization just like any other needing an effective governance system that will ensure efficient and effective utilization of resources and management practices if it is to be successful and impact its growth and development (Awuku-Gyambo & Asare, 2019:99; Chatira & Mwenje, 2018:103; Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015: 554). In this way, church leadership shares much in common with the secular management leadership.

In another sense, however, church is spiritual and significantly differs from the secular management leadership. For example, Wiley (199:4) gives these seven principles of servant leadership (which is Christian leadership):

1. Servant leaders humble themselves and wait for God to exalt them (Luke 14:7-11).
2. Servant leaders follow Jesus rather than seek a position (Mark 10:32-40).
3. Servant leaders give up personal rights to find greatness in service to others (Mark 10:41-45).
4. Servant leaders can risk serving others because they trust that God is in control of their lives (John 13:3).
5. Servant leaders take up Jesus' towel of servanthood to meet the needs of others (John 13:4-11).
6. Servant leaders share their responsibility and authority with others to meet a greater need (Acts 6:1-6).
7. Servant leaders multiply their leadership by empowering others to lead (Exodus 18:17-23).

The church's uniqueness can be accounted for in terms of, among others, a distinct origin, distinct message, distinct purpose, distinct ethic, distinct reliance and a distinct mission (Mahan 2011:62; Magezi, 2015: 6; Huizing, 2011:62; Kheng, 2015:3; Odeneye *et al.*, 2018:62; Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015: 553). Therefore, to understand and effectively run this hybrid-

like organization, a good grasp of both the similarities and differences, particularly as they relate to leadership, is inevitable.

Highlighting this distinction in leadership is important for this research which partly focuses on conflict management and resolutions in the church. Sometimes, it is the failure to observe these differences by not respecting the church's spiritual nature that comprises and confuses the way the church is understood, run and how it functions. In turn, this leads to problems in the church. Since church leadership is closely tied to and located in the nature of the church, it raises the question, what is the church? And how does the right understanding of the church help in distinguishing its church leadership from that of other organizations?

2.3.1 Church is Christ's household

According to Shekhar (2017) there are two Greek terms that are often used to describe 'church' in the New Testament; one is *ekklesia*, 'an assembly of people gathered together to worship God'; and the other is *Kuriakon*, 'belonging to the Lord'. Often times *ekklesia* is defined by the genitive phrase *ekklesia tou theou* (church of God) (e.g., see Gal. 1:13; I Cor. 14:4; Phil. 3:6). Taken together, *ekkelesia* and *kuriakon* would render the meaning of church to be the company of God's people called to worship him (2017:1227).

Out of this definition of church have arisen related descriptive terms of the organic nature of the church in the New Testament such as a body, a flock, a household, a fellowship, a family, (Eph. 2:22-23; 4:4; 1 Pt. 5:2-4; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:19) which is dynamic, growing and changing within the boundaries of the biblical text (Jacobs, 2014:74). Of these descriptions of church, those of household and family are of particular relevance to our study as we endeavour to find a biblically informed remedial church structure and leadership system for the RBmZ.

From the account in Acts 2:44-47, Shekhar (2017:1228) argues that although the early believer's conception of the nature of the Church may not have been very clear, nonetheless, Jesus' selection of the Apostles indicates the early formation of a carefully organized and structured system of strong group relationships known as members of the family of God - *Oikos*. The term *Oikos*, generally translated as 'household' is the most commonly used word for family that encompasses the extended family, housemates and servants, in the New Testament (Flores, 2020:12; Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015:556; Wendt, 2018:2; Brown, 2010:1; Cress, 2018:10). In the technical sense, this term 'household' was used to describe both the natural and the spiritual family (the church). For purposes of this research, and in order to

highlight the differences between secular and church leadership, we will focus our discussion on the spiritual side of the church.

2.3.1.1 Church is gospel centred

When used in a spiritual sense and in relation to the church, *oikos* carries the same connotation as *ekklesia*, which means an assembly or the gathering of believers. Shekar (2017: 1228) states that “The constitution of the body of Christ finds fulfilment in the history of salvation in the unity of believers in the body of the church”. One immediate noticeable element from this nature of the church as a family of God’s people is its membership composition and the quality of relationships that these members enjoyed one with the other which are more organic than mechanical / institutional: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28). Out of these family ties develop deep relationships that then produce love, trust, security, honesty, vulnerability and stability, all virtues which are required to encounter deeply rooted hurts, insecurities and problems within family relationships (Lau, 2016: 45).

Jesus inaugurated the household of God (the church) using the gospel and set it as the standard principle upon which it was to be administered and governed. Jacobs (2015) contends that the church is “formed in the Gospel, informed and transformed by the Gospel and therefore it has to exist and operate by the principles of that Gospel” (2015:74). This makes Jesus not only the head of the church but his gospel of grace (Act 20:24) is the gospel of the heavenly kingdom he came to establish (Mat 24:14) (Lau, 2016: 48).

2.3.1.2 Church is mystic

But church is not only Christ/gospel centric, it is also mystic due to the unity the Holy Spirit forges between believers to one another and to their divine Head (Shekhar, 2017:1229). The mystic union between believers to Jesus and conversely to one another renders church relationships more organic than institutional. In this way, the church can be rightly said to derive its character from Jesus Christ and not from its members, for as Shekar (2017) further observes, “The structural wealth of the church, which indicates its status in the relation between God and humankind, is the contest of the saving message of Jesus and is that to which the church owes its distinctiveness and ongoing existence” (2017:1229).

This validates Jacobs’ (2015) assertion that “both the aim and content of the ministry model must be determined out of the Word. The Word provides guidelines for the atmosphere

(attitudes) within which the ministry should take place as well as certain guidelines regarding the structure of the ministry” (2015:54). The implication of this is that deeply woven into the very fabric of the Gospel are the New Testament ethics suitable for forming, managing and leading the household of God - the church.

2.3.1.3 Church is service oriented

Another principle Jesus introduced through the discipleship concept which he wanted to characterize all members of his new family was for them to live as a caring community that render sacrificial service toward God and to one’s neighbour as well as acknowledge one’s dependence on God (Jacobs (2015:55). He demonstrated this type of life by washing his disciples’ feet: “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (John 13:14-15).

Christ’s self-giving life was to be a permanent standard of how believer’s service of one another ought to be – servanthood. This self-giving life was further and fully demonstrated in his paradox cross-centred loving and sacrificial life whereby he declared that weakness is power, loss is gain, death is life and servant-hood is greatness (Mat 16:24-26; Mk 9:33-37). “Jesus himself is the ultimate fulfilment of the typological pattern of the suffering righteous shepherd” (2014: 31). Magezi (2015) highlights this self-sacrifice principle on leadership in the African context where cultural idea of leadership still lingers on with all its tendencies of illimitable supreme power that is unchallenged and oppressive when he proposes as remedy “Jesus as Servant King, who portrays a paradoxical mix of king with power but vulnerable and serving” (2015: 7). However, it is important to note that the depth of the strength of this leadership style of Jesus is only made possible in the power of the cross, as one becomes a disciple of Jesus (Jacobs 2015:55).

2.3.2 Christ’s household codes continued in the epistles

After Jesus left, it remained incumbent upon his disciples to implement the new household codes in the new churches that were being planted. This is captured in those passages that have come to be commonly known as the domestic or household codes in the epistles (Col 3:13-4:1; Eph. 5:22-6:9; 1 Peter 2:13-3:7). “The main difference in the Christian household code compared with the natural one, was the Christological motivation or the Christian characteristic when household members carried out the household code” (Lau, 2016:48). This means that the

household codes of the epistles were known for their gospel values and a Christian family spirit (Col 3:23-24).

Tien (2006:28) mentions four essential characteristics that made these early churches truly a church: *Koinonia* (community), *diakonia* (service/mission), *kerygma* (gospel-rooted proclamation) and *leiturgia* (eucharist). All these characteristics were rooted in Jesus and his gospel. It was this doctrinal emphasis that helped in shaping and defining the nature of the new family of Jesus that was being established. Leadership in the household of God was equally informed by Jesus' teaching and example. "The view of the house in the New Testament suggests that Christ is actually head over everything. The man of the house is subject to Christ. This is not the addition of another "head" of the house. All roles in the house are affected by placing Christ at the head (Cress, 2018:43). Household codes fostered spiritual leadership and spiritual relationships that were exercised in the light of the Gospel to both those who ruled and those who were ruled.

For householders (leaders) of the household of God, though their authority was absolute, it was nevertheless, regulated by the household codes which did not allow them to lord it over their members, instead demanded sacrificial love to be extended to them. "Where the church exists as the locus of believer development and elders play a vital role in that development (as indicated by Eph 4:11-16, for example), elder function should necessarily be notably relational, based on leadership" (Mahan, 2012:77).

Having discussed the spiritual nature of the church which differentiates it from any other secular organization, we can now move to look at possible leadership issues that arise whenever there is failure to uphold the household codes as inaugurated by Jesus in the gospels and spread by the apostles in the epistles.

2.3.3 Possible challenges for failure to apply Jesus' household codes

There are many problems that might arise due to lack of or failure to correctly apply sound theological knowledge in the church context.

2.3.3.1 It has potential to cause leadership crisis in the church.

Eklou (2021) attributes the causes of pastoral leadership crisis in the Baptist churches in Togo to the failure of leaders to imitate Christ's example and teachings in their approach to leadership. He also accuses them of measuring success by using numerical growth, which is a secular standard, and not by using spiritual health of the church members, as required by

scripture (2021:1). Further, he alleges that the leaders turned pastoral work into professionalism by the enjoyment of privilege gained from being in a powerful position, when church leadership is always servant leadership that requires the leader to be personally involved with the led. “Shepherds do not live far away from their sheep. They live among them and guide them” (2021:8). He cites a lack of sound knowledge of purposeful definition of pastoral leadership elements as what has created a misunderstanding of the pastor’s responsibilities and ultimately led to the crisis in the church (2021:3).

2.3.3.2 It might lead to divisions in the church.

This was White’s (2019) findings regarding the problems that engulfed Ghana’s largest Pentecostal church - Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI): “Lack of sound theological knowledge in turn led to doctrinal and leadership challenges as well as the inability of the church leaders to handle differences and conflicts” (2019:7).

2.3.3.3 It may frustrate the progress of the church

This was Nkonge’s (2011) observation in his Anglican church of Kenya (ACK) case study in relation to inadequately theologically trained leaders: “Inadequately theologically empowered leadership can have many detrimental effects on an organisation like, ill prepared personnel, shoddy works, poor products and bad company publicity. These can cause frustrations in people and disruptions in works hampering the operations of an organization” (2011:170).

2.3.3.4 It replaces biblical requirements of leadership with human philosophies.

This is the point of Raubenheimer’s (2010) argument about the crisis in church leadership and the Bible. He cites the lack of strictly observing the biblical description of the criteria for Church leadership as the main cause of problems in churches. Ultimately, this trend leads to the misunderstanding of biblical leadership and responsibilities since it does not provide a theologically informed definition of Church leadership at all: “The only criterion which remotely fits the biblical description of the criteria for Church leadership is the vague ‘balanced spiritual life as a disciple of Christ’, This has not only led to a general confusion about the nature of leadership, but also to a comprise in understanding of the character and role of the leaders of the Church in a post-modern era” (2010:7).

He blames, particularly, the post-modern theologians for promoting a new expression of the Christian faith on church leadership and power which is informed not by contextual biblical exegesis of selected texts on leadership but by the light of postmodernist thinking, new

advances in science, and new trends in theology. In this way, postmodernists new hermeneutic does not contribute but detracts from the understanding and application of the Word of God, and especially as it relates to church leadership and authority (2010:4).

2.3.3.4.1 Postmodernists new hermeneutics

Post-modern theologians (otherwise called missional theologians) are calling for an end to the traditional approach to leadership and authority in church. Their central rallying point of argument is the doctrine of the Trinity. They urge all church leadership to be patterned after this example of how the triune God relate (Niemandt 2019; Kwaramba 2019; Leene and Hendriks 2010; Avis 2020; Kheng 2015; Mothoagae & Prior 2010 Zscheile (2007; Nell, 2015:6). They argue for a paradigm shift of understanding leadership in the church from the traditional way it has always been perceived.

Zscheile (2007) describes church leadership as traditionally conceived “Deistic images of God that have eclipsed Trinitarian images of God for a very long time.” He therefore calls for a leadership shift from Deistic to Trinitarian images of God which promotes the idea of ‘diversity-in-unity’ (2007:53). Nell (2015:6) admirably agrees with Zscheile’s point of view: “It is also in this regard that the insights help us to understand the relationship between the Trinity and power and sensitises us for another very important shift in power. For me personally, this may be the most important shift”

Kwaramba (2019), who is also driven by this Trinitarian pattern of thinking has been able to condemn as unfair and unbiblical the traditional approach of side-lining women from top leadership positions within the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe (AFMZ). She challenges the traditional way use of power and authority in the church as an exclusive approach that disfranchises not only one group of people in the church but in most cases the biggest. She sees in the AFMZ system of church governance women discriminated, a move she says, is contrary to loving relations that ought to characterize the church (2019:2). Kwaramba’s sentiments find support in Kheng who writes: ‘The People of God share a common dignity and vocation. This fundamental equality overrides all other differences of race, nationality, social condition, gender, vocation and role in the Church’ (2015:26).

Even church female gender activists Leene and Hendriks (2010) also use the same Trinitarian leadership argument to call for a shift in church leadership to that which allows women to have equal leadership rights with men based on the understanding of a Trinitarian theological anthropology and missional ecclesiology regardless of gender. They contend that ‘Only by

means of diversity within unity can male and female represent God's image and fulfil their task. In respect of males and females, missional ecclesiology and theological anthropology influence our view on leadership in the church. That is how it is, simply because unity in diversity takes a central place within the Trinity' (2010:169).

Ultimately, the underlying idea of all the postmodern theologians (missional theologians) regarding leadership is an all-round flat organizational leadership structure that empties leadership of any administrative authority except the moral one. "We are driven to reflect on leadership by the nature of today's world. We cannot command, we cannot direct, but we can offer to lead, to show the way. Leadership is the form that authority takes in a voluntary society" (Avis, 2020:117). Avis' argument is supported by Mothoagae & Prior (2010) who believe that leaders and followers must exchange places in a relationship with a person becoming a leader in some systems and a follower in others, thereby creating a situation in which "all lead and all follow" (2010:92).

2.3.3.4.2 Responses to postmodernists new hermeneutics

But other scholars consider the postmodern view of leadership and authority to be extreme and misrepresents the biblical teaching on leadership and authority. Stanford (2015) thinks that postmodern perspective of church leadership and authority has over stretched the biblical concept of leadership as it reduces a leader to a mere participant and this, he said, is contrary to the Pauline leadership language which is "characterized by authoritative truthfulness, confrontational honesty, and clarity of purpose, familial winsomeness, and reasonableness which reflects a didactic approach to leadership" (2015:13).

Even Magezi (2015) who advocates for 'servant leadership' model does not support postmodernism flat leadership that is void of any administrative authority but rather advances the idea of leadership authority that is infused with servanthood and goes beyond one's self-interest as its core characteristic (2015:6). This comes in the wake of his endeavour to find an appropriate African leadership model that suits the church in Sub-Saharan Africa which is greatly marred with abuse of power. The reason for the abuse is that the people of this region are influenced by African kingship concept whose ideology, sadly, was founded on war and conquest. This cultural idea of leadership still lingers on with all its tendencies of illimitable supreme power that is unchallenged and oppressive (2015:1). As a remedy, Magezi suggests a relational leadership model of servant leadership model of Jesus as Servant King, who portrays a paradoxical mix of king with power but vulnerable and serving (2015: 7).

As for Raubenheimer (2010), he regards modernists and postmodernists views on church leadership and authority simply as unbiblical (a view this researcher also agrees with): “Modernism and post-modernism are all fundamentally human philosophies which clash with the Word of God. The Word of God stands in the face of all human philosophies and worldviews as the truth revealed by God. We err, not when we choose a philosophical outlook contrary to the prevailing outlook (although so often that is when we are charged with error by those who wish to uphold the status quo), but rather, when we move away from the revealed truth of Scripture” (2010:5).

2.3.4 It may cause disagreements in the church

But it is not always that problems in the church arise out of lack of sound theological knowledge or poor exegesis of texts by leaders. Sometimes it is due to disagreements of the leaders on the correct interpretation of the text (s) regarding the subject under discussion. Wring’s (2005) contention against the elder rule in the Southern Baptist Church polity is one such case in point. The discussion centres around the topics of elders, elder rule, and the congregational form of church government (2005:189). This issue has plunged the church into a crisis as different leaders strive to persuade their congregants towards adopting what they deem to constitute a true Baptist church leadership and proper form of church governance (2005: 188).

As the number of Southern Baptist churches adopting elder rule system increases, Wring (2005) feels obliged to warn other southern Baptist churches against adopting such a practice as it not only lacks biblical backing but it also lacks emphasis on Baptist distinctives. He writes: “Whatever name is given to this group of leaders in a Baptist church, the truth of the matter is, elder rule is not necessary. It does not have biblical support, nor does it have strong historical Baptist precedence” (2005: 203). He maintains that Christ’s intended principles of church government are leadership by a pastor(s) and deacons, and the congregational polity which allows every member of the church to participate in the making of informed decisions which affect their corporate lives (2005: 210). He further argues that under Christ, the whole congregation was the final court of appeal (2005:191). He, therefore, condemns elder rule that it dilutes the democratic process found in congregationalism, or it outrightly abandons it altogether. “Actually, elder rule and congregational church polity are odd bedfellows. It is a presby-gational polity which is difficult to maintain (2005:203)

Wring (2005) accuses the proponents of elder-rule as those who have either come out of the Presbyterian tradition and have retained the idea of a ruling eldership, or they have been

influenced in their polity by the Presbyterian form of church governance found in the writings and practices of the Puritans and others which included the office of lay ruling elders (2005:200). “It is usually the churches that are Reformed in their theology that are adopting elder rule as the proper form of church governance. There is a distinct connection between Reformed theology, Calvinism, Presbyterian ecclesiology and elder rule” (2005:206). He mentions some leading reformed figures that are influencing elder-style of church polity rule - John MacArthur, John Piper, Richard Mayhue, Alexander Strauch and Mark Dever (2005: 206)

Wring’s arguments raise some pertinent issues related to this research and connected to problems in the church. His mention of the reformed Baptist churches in his discussion on church polity, indirectly extends his argument on church polity beyond the southern Baptist churches to include reformed Baptist churches as well. Implicitly, Wring’s arguments have helped highlight the roots and connections of the reformed Baptist churches with the puritans and the Presbyterians, thereby locating the origin of the system of their church government. But further and perhaps more importantly to this research on the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia is that by describing how each one of the leading men of the elder-rule system practices it in their respective congregations, Wring has been able to reveal that even within the elder-rule system there is no uniformity but variety. Elder rule has varying shades of understanding and carried it out.

He evaluates these leading men’s elder-rule as follows: MacArthur’s church is purely an elder-ruled church. It is the highest court of appeal in the church. (2005:206). Mayhue’s church is more less like MacArthur’s except the reason for the ruling elders is because they are more spiritually mature and more religiously capable (biblically-centered in their thinking) of making decisions that affect the affairs of the church (2005: 207). Piper’s church elder rule is simply a pragmatic concern at best. It comprises eighteen elders (“Council of Elders”) which are a mixture of ordained pastors and laymen (who are in the majority on the elder board). Some are rulers, the others are teachers (2005:107). Strauch is anti-preacher in his idea of elders. He has lay elders he calls Shepherd-elders. They are a “council of men” who function “as the official oversight body (God’s household managers) of the local church (2005:208). Dever’s church is a mixture of elder rule and congregationalism; which makes his church government structure a presby-gational polity; although he argues against the Presbyterian type of church government structure (2005:208)

These differences in the way elder-rule is understood and practiced are worth taking note of particularly by reformed Baptist churches who practice this system of church government. These variations are a potential source of conflict even among those who practice elder-rule. They can easily cause disagreements as leaders continue to search for the pure church polity.

Summary

It has been established that success or failure of an organization depends on its leadership. Effective organisational management should be characterised by understanding the right phase of the OLC, deploying appropriate leadership that corresponds to the needs at the stage of the organisation's growth phase, being flexible in leadership than being rigid, and monitoring performance. Appropriate leadership style is, therefore, very important because it drives the strategic needs of an organization for all the phases it passes through.

Since the style of leadership that is operative in some circumstances may not be effective in others, organizations should adjust their style to the phase of organizational life cycle phase they are in. Disregard of the organizational life cycle and misapplication of leadership style for a particular OLC phase is one of the issues that impede the satisfactory implementation of the related strategy of an organization. Further, a right leadership style improves the employee work environment since the work environment affects employee performance. But equally important to note about OLC approaches in relation to the church is the fact that management skills and principles are not enough for effective functioning of the church, but must be seen to compliment its spiritual nature. A theologically well-informed leader would care to recognize this balance of the dual nature of the church as it has a positive contribution to make towards building a healthy church government and leadership system.

Conclusion

It has been established that a good understanding of the principles and benefits of organizational design is key to effectively lead organizations through inevitable change. The responsibility of guiding the change process rests in the hands of leaders. Their role is critical in creating, implementing and sustaining the kind of effective organizational change that is needed to meet the new challenges that are emerging every day. However, if leaders insist on doing things the same way all the time, the inevitable result might be stagnation. Therefore, leaders should take a proactive stance to seek to constantly renew the operations of the organization using OLC approaches and appropriate leadership styles for particular stages.

The church, as an organization, cannot escape the importance to be managed in line with sound management principles and practices if it is going to accomplish its God-given mission. Acknowledged to be unique and possessing some distinct characteristics from any other organization, yet the church still shares much in common with the structure, function and organization of other organizations. This is even more compelling when it is discovered that in scripture church leaders are considered “managers of the household of God” (1 Cor 4: 1, 2). It is incumbent upon church leaders to understand the effectiveness and impact of different leadership styles whilst at the same time being cognizant of the spiritual nature of the church.

Having considered the relationship of OLC and leadership theories and styles in leadership, in the next chapter we will look into the organizational and leadership structure of the RBmZ so as to glean insights of its leadership and leadership competencies.

Chapter 3 – Church leadership issues of RBmZ (literature and empirical)

This chapter integrates a descriptive and interpretive task into the organizational and leadership structure of the RBmZ. Its objective is to gain deeper insight into the leadership issues of the RBmZ as the church movement has been growing. It scans the RBmZ environment to recognize the trends that have affected the movement's smooth operations and which may continue to do so in the future if no intervention is done. It therefore exposes deficiencies in leadership and leadership competencies in the RBmZ from the information gleaned from three main sources: 1) Literature on the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia, 2) literature on the Reformed Baptists, and 3) information from empirical data collected through KII interviews.

3.1 Literature on the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia,

3.1.1 Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia

3.1.1.1 Origins

In his account of the first 100 years of Baptist witness in Zambia (1905-2005), Mbewe (2006:22-23) places the origins of the Reformed Baptists in Zambia round about 1979/1989. This date is supported by Kalifungwa (2021) in his Master's Thesis on "New Calvinism in Zambia" submitted to the faculty of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, who places the date about 1988/1989 (2020:50). Mbewe (2006) associates the birth of the Reformed Baptists in Zambia to the expository preaching ministry carried out by the consecutive pastors of Lusaka Baptist church during this time, namely Graham Ingram, Michael Eaton, John Symons and Joe Simfukwe.

But it was during Joe Simfukwe's pastorate through his expository preaching labours that the stage was set for the theological focus that led to the discovery of the doctrines of grace as espoused by the reformers. His form of preaching put great emphasis on the importance of doctrine in matters of faith. The significance of this emphasis may be captured by Sider (2005) who observes that there is a scandal in the evangelical conscience that needs repairing, which he calls, "the disconnect between belief and practice" (2005:129-130). That doctrine must inform praxis is acknowledged by the practical theologian Louw (2014:11) who points out that right doctrinal formulations are such as have clear and relevant implications for the existential challenges of people. Hendriks (2007) too, in proposing a practical theology methodology insists on one that fuses and integrates who God and His Word (scriptures) is in his world, the church, the mission and responsive practical actions (2007:999).

So, Simfukwe's form of preaching and the discovery of the doctrines of grace were revolutionary at a time when there was discrepancy in theology among many evangelical churches regarding doctrine and practice. "There is a trend in the church today to elevate unity above truth. Many are willing to set aside essential doctrines for the sake of harmony. While unity is a prime virtue for the body of Christ, it should not come at the expense of truth" (McDowell, 2008:3). This is the kind of theology that those who attended Lusaka Baptist Church at that time, especially the students in tertiary institutions of learning, came to realize was prevalent in the church and, therefore, wanted it changed. Mbewe (2006) observes this about them: "Previously, the main sense of self-consciousness among the Baptists was that they were largely Evangelical Lamba-speaking churches whose missionaries came from South Africa, Sweden, Australia or the USA. The only difference between them was where the missionaries who planted their family of churches came from. This defined their allegiance. The differences were not doctrinal" (2006:23).

It was precisely in the area of doctrine where these young people saw the problem of the church to lie – practice had overridden doctrine - and to them, this was a serious biblical anomaly as it was essential to the Christian faith. Geisler (2005) describes an essential doctrine as "that which is connected to our salvation (soteriological or salvific in nature). In other words, salvation as God has revealed it would not be possible without the doctrine being true" (2005:2). For these young people therefore, "essential doctrines are nonnegotiable for followers of Christ and are matters over which we should divide" (McDowell, 2008:3).

It is therefore not surprising that later, new Baptist church plants that came to fall under the pastorates of these young men who had imbibed reformed doctrinal convictions as their distinguishing marks of the Christian faith, led their churches to conform to the tenets of the Protestant reformation of the 16th Century which held the Holy Scriptures in high esteem. In this sense, these family of Baptists have added their own heritage as reformed Baptists, so that their church members are not only self-consciously Baptist but also Reformed in doctrine and practice. Mbewe remarks (2006:22):

"Whereas the leadership of Lusaka Baptist Church would have been content to see these churches remain as conservative English-speaking Baptist Churches, these younger pastors came under the influence of Reformed literature (especially Banner of Truth) and so moved their churches into a Reformed Baptist position. They led their churches to adopt the *1689 Baptist confession of Faith*, and in due season this doctrinal statement

became the rallying point of a number of new English speaking Baptist churches that were starting across the country. In 1990, they even started an annual ‘reformed’ conference, which has been a rallying point for their churches to this very day” (2006:22).

3.1.1.2 Growth of the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia

With the passage of time, the number of Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia continued to grow and spread in different towns and cities of the country. Mbewe (2006) records “the churches that had adopted the *1689 Baptist confession* began to make deliberate plans to plant more churches in strategic towns and cities (2006:23). Efforts to start planting Reformed Baptist churches in neighbouring countries were also being made. To date (2021) there are 63 Reformed Baptist churches and church-plants dotted across the country. The table of the Reformed Baptist churches and church plants in Zambia, as recorded in the quarterly periodical magazine - *Reformation Zambia: “A Zambian Reformed Baptist Periodical”*, forthwith shortened as (RZ), which has been in existence since May 2004², can be found as an annex in the appendix.

The increased number of Reformed Baptist church plants heightened the need for close fellowship and cooperation among the members of this family of Baptists. It became inevitable to closely work together, coordinate and collaborate in projects that would be done collectively. New church plants needed qualified personnel to pastor them. Money to build places of worship as well as money for new pastors’ salaries and accommodation was required. These and many other related issues required collective collaborative efforts as the capacity to manage them went beyond a single local church’s abilities. Stronger ties were needed than ever before when the work was still small.

3.1.1.2.1 impact

The need for theologically qualified ministry workers to serve in the new church plants led to the establishment of regional ministerial colleges and internship programmes to thoroughly equip the church planters. Three ministerial colleges were established in three of the ten

² RZ May-August 2016, Issue 31: 34.

provinces of Zambia. These are: the Copperbelt ministerial College³ in Ndola, the Lusaka ministerial college in Lusaka⁴ and the Mongu Ministerial College in Mongu⁵. Plans were also mooted to plant at least one Reformed Baptist church in all English-speaking countries in Africa. These works have already started in Botswana⁶, Zimbabwe⁷, Malawi⁸, Sierra Leon, Tanzania⁹, Rwanda and Nigeria¹⁰. Even a revolving fund¹¹ was started to help the new church plants put up basic worship infrastructure, and a number of churches have already benefited from this initiative and others are still benefiting.

3.1.1.2.2 influence

Locally, Reformed Baptist churches work closely with other Baptist churches to document and preserve the history of Baptists as a denomination in Zambia under the auspices of the Zambian Baptist Historical Society (ZBHS)¹². Regionally, they actively support and participate in evangelistic programmes and projects aimed at theologically equipping the African church and African pastors through the African Pastors Conference (APC)¹³ and the Sola 5¹⁴.

On the social front, they have established a university called the African Christian University (ACU)¹⁵ which provides education from a Christian worldview with the aim of inculcating biblical morals and principles across all its disciplines. Even the Zambian political sphere has had its share of moral guidance¹⁶.

Theologically, the contribution the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia have made is that they have brought greater clarity and emphasis on biblical doctrines and practice as historically believed by the Baptists. This has been demonstrated by their adoption of *1689 Baptist confession of Faith* into their constitutions and an inclination towards the Calvinistic doctrine

³ RZ May-Aug 2012, Issue No. 25:35-38; RZ Sep-Dec 2007, Issue No 011:25-26.

⁴ RZ Jan-April 2018, Issue No 036:38-40.

⁵ RZ Sep-Dec 2018, Issue No 038:33-34.

⁶ RZ Sep-Dec 2012, Issue No. 026:30-32

⁷ RZ May-Aug 2019, Issue No. 040:32-35

⁸ RZ Jan-Apr 2008, Issue No. 012:22-24; RZ Sep-Dec 2006, Issue No. 08:32-33

⁹ RZ May-Aug 2017, Issue No. 034:31-33

¹⁰ RZ May-Aug 2018, Issue No. 037:24-26

¹¹ RZ Jan-April 2009, Issue No. 015: 13-17

¹² RZ May-Aug 2018, Issue No. 037:37-40

¹³ RZ Sep-Dec 2017, Issue No. 035:30-33

¹⁴ RZ Jan-Apr 2016, Issue No. 030:35-36

¹⁵ RZ Jan-Apr 2018, Issue No. 036:34-38; May-Aug 2015, Issue No 028:1-5

¹⁶ RZ May-Aug 2012, Issue No. 25:1-27

of salvation in their preaching and practice, as opposed to an Arminian position. Doctrinally, the reformed Christian doctrines are the bedrock of the Reformed Baptist churches' theology¹⁷ in Zambia.

Going by the OLC system approaches, this unprecedented growth, impact and influence needed to be managed according to the stage the organization was at. At growth stage, therefore, these Reformed Baptist churches needed to put in place a clear organizational and leadership system that would effectively manage the prevalent growth. The challenge, however, is the system of church government that this family of churches espouse which does not encourage forging strong alliances with other independent bodies. As such, opportunities of OLC changes cannot be utilized by the RBmZ as its organizational structure system prevents it.

We now move on to highlight the organizational and leadership structures of the Reformed Baptist local churches to appreciate why they could not act in tandem with and act in accordance with OLC stage-approaches system.

3.1.1.3 Governance and leadership structure of Reformed Baptist churches

The Reformed Baptists in Zambia are part of the larger family of Reformed Baptists and therefore share in the organizational structure and leadership system. Structurally, Baptists as a denomination are generally congregational. "In their confessions of faith and other literature, Baptists have stood virtually unanimously in favour of congregational church government" (Hammett, 2005: 143). This means they hold to the autonomy and independence of the local church.

The 1689 London Baptist Confession of faith (Hereafter to be referred to as "The Confession") which all Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia subscribe to and have adopted as their own confession of faith states that "The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church. In him is vested, by the appointment of the father in a supreme and sovereign manner, all authority for the calling, institution, order and government of the church" (The Confession Chapter 26:35). The idea behind congregationalism church government system is that no authority outside of the local church is regarded authoritative on the affairs of the church. This is a church government

¹⁷ RZ May-Aug 2019, Issue No. 040:1; RZ Sep-Dec 2017, Issue No. 035:1-2; RZ Sep-Dec 2018, Issue 038:3-6

system where the local church is independent of any outside influence of authority except that of the Lord Jesus Christ as its head.

But it must be pointed out that there are different shades and emphasis of internal governance systems practiced within congregationalism. One is a full democracy, where the power and final say in the affairs of the church lies with the members and leaders of that particular local church. Policy matters of the church are discussed and agreed upon during members ordinary and special meetings and then passed on to the leadership (Elders and deacons) for implementation.

The other shade is republicanism or the rule by representation. In this system, elected church leaders (elders and deacons) preside over the affairs of the church but in consultation with the church members through regular church ordinary and special meetings. But it is the elders, in particular, who are charged with the full responsibility to rule and guide the affairs of the entire church and, as such, have the final say in the affairs of the church.

The Confession affirms this elder rule when it states: “A local church gathered and organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members. The officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church are Bishops or elders and the deacons. They are appointed particularly to oversee what the Lord has ordained, and to execute the powers and duties, which the Lord has entrusted to them or to which he calls them. This pattern is to continue to the end of the world” (The Confession chapter 26: 36).

Therefore, whether a local Baptist church practices pure democracy congregationalism or rule by elected representatives or republicanism (elders and deacons) the principle of the autonomy and independence of the local church from outside influence of authority is retained.

3.1.1.4 Governance and leadership structure of Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia

The material under this section is based on the researcher’s own experience as indirect participatory observation through reflection of the Zambian reformed Baptist churches context in his subjective mindset.

Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia practice elder-rule type of congregationalism, in consultation with the people. Therefore, although these reformed Baptist congregations have a common basis of faith, yet their independency and autonomy introduce a tension that inhibits them to foster strong inter-church relations.

The type of church government system they espouse poses serious and complex challenges when it comes to inter-church fellowship and collaboration with other churches as it does not recognize any authority outside of itself. Because it is too protective of itself and suspicious of any outside influence or authority, this church government system tends to refrain from any suggestions to form strong relational bonds with other churches for the fear these might become a parallel centre of authority to the local church. It creates difficulties as to how far a local church can embrace those outside its confines.

Thus, while in theory, desire to have fellowship and to collaborate closely with other churches of the same family is there, fear of violating the principle of the autonomy of the local church prevents these churches from practically engaging in meaningful fellowship and collaboration. As such, their relations remain a loose cooperation without any binding agreements. Churches operate more on a gentleman's agreement without any strings of responsibility and accountability attached to this relationship. This is the context in which the RBmZ is couched and in which its organizational structure and leadership system ought to be understood. It functions under a rigid system of the autonomy of the local church espoused by the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia.

3.1.1.5 Governance and leadership structure of the RBmZ

The RBmZ is a body or a forum by which independent and autonomous Reformed Baptist local congregations attempt or seek inter-church fellowship, have interaction and cooperation amongst themselves. The idea to conceive the Reformed Baptist churches as one family (RBmZ) began right when the earliest Reformed Baptist churches started. However, as observed earlier, there was the concern that formalizing the RBmZ into an independent body with its own organizational structure and leadership system might disturb the autonomy of the local church as it might become a parallel body of authority to it.

Thus, while it was generally accepted and acknowledged that a unifying body or forum for fellowship was inevitable, nonetheless Reformed Baptist churches could not formalize this relationship and allow RBmZ to become an independent identity for the sake of protecting the autonomy of the local church. Chiwele's (2009:13-17) caution after acknowledging the benefits of inter-church collaborations is representative of the common and popular voice of fear and concern against forming such a strong forum or body of association among the Reformed Baptist Churches in Zambia:

“Collaboration may be unhealthy and could undermine the vibrancy and authority of the local church. It, therefore, must be done under clear principles. Mostly, the autonomy of the local church should not be compromised – we should accept that the local church remains the primary vehicle appointed by God for reaching out to the world and meeting the spiritual needs of its members. It is easy to distance these efforts from our members through undefined vehicles with little accountability to the local church. However, we define our collaboration and whatever the joint projects, there must be clearly laid out oversight and accountability arrangements to the local church through the body of its elders. This is not easy and requires very clear thinking each time we agree to collaborate” (2009:16).

This concern of the autonomy of the local church being compromised is the main reason for structuring the functions of the RBmZ as a local church-driven ministry and not as an independent entity with its own organizational structure and leadership system. This meant that activities and projects which were inter-church in nature were to be equally administered under a particular local church as a ministry programme of that particular church. Other sister churches were to be only invited as participants and not as partners or stakeholders.

This way of conceiving an otherwise inter-church body as a local church ministry raised several challenges and implications for the leadership role of the RBmZ. Ideally, and in the minds of some stake holders, the RBmZ was supposed to be perceived and indeed to function as a co-owned entity by all the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. Its governance structure and leadership system was supposed to reflect this reality of common ownership.

But by placing the RBmZ under one particular local church to administer its affairs, automatically turned this inter-church fellowship forum into one of the ministries of that particular church. Making it come under the guardianship of one local church took away the sense of common ownership of the RBmZ by the other churches. It meant that from that point on, the RBmZ took the organizational structure and leadership system of that particular autonomous local church under which it had been placed. This arrangement makes it difficult for stake holder members to have a say in the affairs of RBmZ for fear of being cited for interference.

From the OLC theoretical frame work point of view, this organizational challenge affected the outcome of the RBmZ leadership style. Operating the RBmZ as a local church-driven ministry, emptied it of a formal structure and leadership style of its own suitable for bringing about

responsibility, accountability and better coordination in works and projects of mutual interest among all the stake holders. But now functioning as a local church-driven ministry, how would other churches participate as equal partners and stake holders in the affairs of the RBmZ?

Also, without a formalized structure and leadership system to help understand how the RBmZ functions, it was natural for those who were joining the movement later on to assume that the pioneers of the movement were in fact the leaders when technically they were not. This created confusion in the way leadership was conceived in the RBmZ. Yet, this is how the RBmZ operated over the years - as a loose and informal body administered under a host local congregation as its ministry. It was sustained for all this time largely because it had the support of the majority founder pioneers who not only mooted this structure of the RBmZ but were at the same time friends. Friendships, therefore, played a major role in enforcing the organizational structure and leadership system of the RBmZ as a loose, informal and local church-driven body. They also ensured it was perpetuated over the years.

Member Churches chose to continue to work together under this loose, informal and hardly ideal arrangement mainly because it was the only available option for Reformed Baptist churches to have some form of inter-church fellowship and interaction with other sister churches at the time. Despite the acknowledgement of the anomaly in the functioning of the RBmZ, they still needed to work together with others somehow albeit in a loose and informal way. They resolved to prioritize common identity with the like-minded churches notwithstanding the incumbrances that surrounded their associations.

This is an affirmation of the OLC management concept that leadership is influenced by how an institution is organized. There is a link between the organizational structure and the leadership of an organization. The way an institution is organized determines its leadership style or how it will be led. Similarly, the RBmZ leadership is influenced by the organizational structure and leadership style of the church government system practiced by the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia.

Some KIIs reported that over time, some stakeholders began to increasingly feel that the RBmZ in its present form of operation was not serving their interest as it was meant to do (KII 6, KII 7). The loose, informal and church-driven arrangement was not working towards an effective and meaningful inter-church relations among the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. They felt that this arrangement was denying some members their right of ownership of the movement, of meaningful participation in inter-church activities and projects as well as failing

to render meaningful fellowship among sister churches (KII 8, KII 9). They regarded it to be more retrogressive than progressive and therefore, needed to be transformed (KII 5). In OLC terms, the RBmZ leadership style being employed at this stage of the organization's growth was not appropriate; it needed to be changed.

3.1.1.6 Governance and leadership structure of the RBmZ sentiments for strengthened inter-church associations

To confirm that there was indeed an acknowledgement among stake holders that the existing organizational structure and leadership system of the RBmZ was not delivering adequate inter-church relations as expected by representative churches, the local magazine (RZ) carried an issue entitled "inter-church relationships," to highlight the problem created by the manner in which the RBmZ was functioning. The objective was to urge the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia to warm up to the idea of interdependence by forging strong, formal and officially recognized inter-church associations that enhances meaningful fellowship and close collaboration among churches of common faith and doctrinal convictions.

Sunkutu (2009:3-5) contributed three biblical reasons why reformed Baptist churches needed to go beyond the current weak status of relationships to a much stronger inter-dependent one.

1. The idea of inter-church fellowship as grounded in the doctrine of the Trinity. The three persons of the Godhead although distinct, yet one cannot be conceived of as existing without the other persons. They plan and execute their plans together (Matt 28:19; John 17:11).
2. The idea of inter-church association is also grounded in the doctrine of the universal and local nature of the church of Christ. The word "Church" in the New Testament literally means "the called out ones" (1Pet. 2:9), and now formed into one organic living body (1 Cor. 12:13, 27; Eph. 4:16). Therefore, when local churches visibly cooperate, they are displaying the Lord's desire for unity in his universal body (John 17:11, 20-23). This idea is also supported by Mbewe (2011) who writes: "We noticed from Scripture that the very first reason why we should associate as churches is because the church is one body, even if it is scattered throughout many nations.

The second was that the church has one mission. Whether the church is in America or Africa or Asia, it is one and the same job description that we are given, and we need each other's help. These two reasons for inter-church associations demand that we should pray

for one another as churches. The parallel between the spiritual and the natural family will help to illustrate the point” (2011:236).

3. The idea of inter-church fellowship is seen in the practice of the early church (Acts 15:2,23; 16: 4; Romans 15:25-27; 2Cor. 8:1-12; 16-24; 9:12-15; 3 John 8-10)

Sunkutu (2009) concluded by saying, “It is clear from these passages that the early churches held communion together. Their autonomy did not blind them to the need to have fellowship with a wider body of God’s people. And neither were they intoxicated with their independency that they lost sight of their mystical connection with the “catholic” church (2009:5).

Makashinyi (2009: 7-11) used the history of reformed Baptists inter-church association as far back as 1688 – 1707 (using the Philadelphia Baptist Association in America as a case study) to appeal to churches not to fear to forge strong inter-church relations as doing so in no ways violates the principle of the autonomy of the local church.

He narrated the beginnings of how informal church fellowship meetings began taking place annually at Pennypack from 1688 to 1692, and then monthly from 1692 until 1707 when a more formal and organised body was born. Being congregationalist churches, the birth of the association and the autonomy of the local church required that the question of power and authority of these two institutions be addressed. Benjamin Griffith was appointed to prepare an essay to guide on this matter which he did and was unanimously adopted by representative churches.

A section of the adopted minutes read: “That it may appear what power an Association of churches has, and what duty is incumbent on an Association; and prevent the contempt with which some are ready to treat such an assembly, and also to prevent any future generation from claiming more power than they ought – lording it over the churches” (2009:8). From this historical narrative of reformed Baptists’ history, the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia could see an example for them not to fear but be encouraged to formalize the RBmZ and thereby forge close fellowship and collaboration with other churches.

Mbewe (2011) also added his voice to urge churches to work towards forming deepened collaboration and strong bonds of fellowship that have remained loose and weak among the Reformed Baptist Churches in Zambia for a long time. He cited one pertinent area that has been adversely affected by this weak fellowship as being that of the flow of information among

churches, which he said was generally poor as it rarely reached the ordinary members of the churches.

“The inter-church bonds of purposeful cooperation flow from the bonds of the information and prayer... Yet, this sequence is being overlooked in much that is being done in the name of “inter-church projects. A lot of churches are officially involved in all kinds of inter-church activities, but the members have no clue what is going on and certainly have no interest in praying for the matter” (Mbewe 2011:250). And then Mbewe locates where the problem lies: “So it is people we know, people with whom we share our mutual woes, people with whom we’ve cooperated in various ventures – those are the people we trust when we need spiritual counsel and advice” (Mbewe 2011:273).

What Mbewe was communicating is that the present arrangement of weak inter-church association has eclipsed and crippled the RBmZ making it difficult for it to help churches become “friends” so that out of that friendship communication can flourish. It is friendships and not casual relations that would open up people’s hearts to each other. Naturally, friendships lead to openness and sharing of deep and intimate things among those involved. And even when misunderstandings do arise, friendships often tend to tame the tempers and sooth the path towards an amicable settling of differences.

3.2 Literature on the Reformed Baptists

3.2.1 Reformed Baptist literature in support of church interdependence

Other Reformed Baptist authors are also in support of the strong inter-dependance of churches notwithstanding the autonomy of the local church. Kingdon (2001: 16) writes: “While we have in general rediscovered Calvinistic Baptist theology, we have not yet rediscovered the ecclesiology of Particular Baptists in the formative years of 1640-60, when Particular Baptist churches were first founded in considerable numbers and operated in associations.”

Hulse (2001: 125) goes further and gives some statics numbers of these associations: “In America between 1780 and 1790 twenty-three new associations were began, almost twice as had been established in the previous 140 years of Baptist life. By 1800 there were 48 associations, and by 1814, 125. The best-known association in America was the Philadelphia Association which functioned well for over a century before it declined from its original reformed doctrine.”

Similar sentiments are expressed by Blackburn (2001: 37) who says, “Prior to the ‘revivals’ and the revivalism of Charles Finney, Baptists operated within associations of churches, not fellowships of pastors or ministerial fraternals. Baptist church history is replete with inarguable proof of these facts. Had there not been that association of churches in London, there would not have been our thorough and insightful confession of faith. Contrary to being ‘without the support of the 1689 Confession’ as some have claimed, the Confession would not be known apart from its publication and propagation by associations of particular Baptist churches”.

And this is the same view held by Renihan (2001:43): “From their beginning in the 1640s, the Calvinistic Baptist churches in England believed in and practiced inter-church communion. They held that the independence of local churches did not mean isolation, and put this belief into practice by means of associations. The first London confession of 1644 was issued through the cooperative efforts of seven London churches, and the political climate of the 1650s provided opportunities for several regional associations to organize and function”.

Interestingly, the 1689 London Baptist confession of faith itself (an official document of all Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia) does not only teach the autonomy of the local church but it equally strongly advocates for inter-church relations and fellowship among sister churches. It lays down the theology of inter-church association thus: “Each church and all its members are obliged to pray continually for the good and prosperity of the all churches everywhere. At all times, churches should assist all believers within the limits of their area and calling in exercising their gifts and graces. Therefore, when churches have been planted by the providence of God so that they may enjoy the opportunity and privilege of the fellowship, they should seek fellowship amongst themselves to promote peace, increase love, and mutual edification” (The confession Chapter 26:14).

The language of Chapter 26:14-15 reveals that the framers of the Confession believed the New Testament church practised formal inter-church fellowship and collaboration. Blackburn (200: 35) writes that “New Testament passages do not show the creation of associations of churches, but the existence and function of associations of churches”. As such, they wanted that pattern replicated among all the churches of Christ. This is most emphasized on the matter of inter-church relations as it deals with conflict resolution among churches (Chapter 26:15). Here are three ways in which the confession assumes inter-church fellowship and interdependence:

3.2.1.1 Inter-church conflict resolution presumes prior inter-church association

By virtue of mentioning inter-church conflict resolution to be done among churches, the confession assumes formal inter-church relationships were not only practised in times of conflict but existed even prior to them. “The New Testament writers assumed and took for granted that churches would associate with one another, work with each other, care for one another in unauthoritative way, and be answerable to one another. The apostolic practice of churches associating themselves with one another already existed before most New Testament books were written (Blackburn 2001: 29).

Kingdon (2001:15) ascribes this practice as having been adopted by the early particular Baptists practice of formal association as the proof of their love to all saints: “When the honour of Christ and love of the brethren demand that something must be done they did not reason or see it as we do - ‘an interference’ but rather the reverse”. Three main areas of cooperation and co-action were identified: Mutual recognition (or explicit fellowship), mutual action in ministry, and mutual obligation and accountability (Renihan 2001:61; 87). The Confession, therefore, assumes that churches were mutually bound to be accountable to each other because they were enjoying strong formal brotherly love among themselves at all times. “It is a law of the believer’s near relation to Christ that he or she be a member of a local church. So, it is a similar law that particular churches ought to manifest their care for each other as members of the same body of Christ” (Kingdon, 2001:13-14; Blackburn, 2001:28; Renihan, 2001: 47).

Understood this way, formal inter-church associations were therefore done as the law of the gospel and not as a desirable option, as the practice currently is in RBmZ. Churches coming to render a helping hand to resolve matters at hand was conceived as love, care and concern by the brethren, and not an interference, as the case would be if there was no prior relationship. This is in opposition to some suggestions that formal associations of churches should only take place when there are conflicts or problems. It also explains why the current informal system approach practiced by the reformed Baptist Churches in Zambia has failed to resolve the conflicts currently being experienced in the RBmZ - Churches did not enjoy active formal inter-church fellowships prior to these conflicts.

3.2.1.2 ‘Messenger’ and his role presumes prior inter-church association

Another key to the confession’s assuming inter-church associations ‘prior to the conflicts is found in the term ‘messenger’ or a representative of the church and his role. “The term ‘messenger’ was an associational term. It was regularly used of those who were appointed by their churches to represent them at the association meetings” (Renihan 2001:103). Apparently,

each stakeholder member-church sent a representative to represent them at the assembly of messengers. The mention of these assembled messengers shows that churches had structured, formal and active organizations of affiliation for inter-church fellowships.

Further, the introduction of the messenger or representative shows the care which the authors of the confession took to protect the autonomy of the local church while at the same time ensuring that it did not lead to a neglect of cooperative endeavours. “The records from the 17th and 18th centuries are full of instances where associations erected structures to meet various needs: ministerial training, church planting, ministerial relief, benevolence, and a variety of other causes. The notion that Baptist associations have not been willing to form formal mechanisms to meet pressing needs has no support in the historical record” (Renihan 2001:61). The principle being inculcated by the confession is that of cooperation and co-action in various ventures of interests by like-minded churches but without in any way compromising their independence and individuality.

3.2.1.3 ‘Hold (holding) communion’ assumes formal inter-church association

Waldron (2016:385) commenting on this issue says this in the footnote: “The notion of ‘formal associations’ has been much debated among the reformed Baptists since the 1st Edition of A Modern exposition. It seems clear to me now that the most natural interpretation of the confession is that it assumes formal associations in 26:14-15. I am also convinced by the historical studies of Jim Renihan which show that the term, communion, was used formally by the framers of our confession and that, therefore, its use in both paragraphs 14 and 15 speaks of formal association and not informal fellowship”. Blackburn (2001) highlights some of the negatives associated with local church isolationism: “It breeds an elitist mentality, a hyper-censorious spirit toward other confessional churches, a stunting of spiritual growth among its members, a negative and pessimistic attitude, and a distorted view of the kingdom of Christ” (2001:40).

Contrary, then, to the main reasons advanced for anti-formal association being to do with the love for, faithfulness to and the upholding of the scriptures’ authority (Kingdon, 2001:16), Blackburn (2001:38) gives reasons for anti-formalization of inter-church association: “On the part of a church, a refusal to be accountable through an association of churches, usually though not always, is either deep insecurity on the part of its leadership, pride or an elitist mentality, authoritarianism, or hidden sin that is fearful of being discovered. To be fair, some have

justified their refusal on theological grounds. But based on the Holy scriptures, supported by the hermeneutics and practices of our forefathers, their refusal is without foundation”.

There is urgent need for the RBmZ to readjust the conception of the doctrine of the church on inter-church relations among its members by accepting the formation of strong formal association and enjoy the opportunity and advantage it brings, which is, to enhance fellowship, promote peace, increase love and mutual edification. By deciding to place the RBmZ organization structure and leadership operations under the local church governance system and making it a church-driven ministry, the pioneers of the RBmZ missed the balanced view of the church in the interest of protecting the autonomy of the local church. This arrangement transferred the leadership authority from the RBmZ to the local church leadership authority thereby crippling its leadership authority. This could be a contributing factor to issues facing the RBmZ today.

Another weakness with the RBmZ has been the failure to think in primitivism¹⁸ terms. This means a broad and not narrow way of thinking over biblical matters. Renihan (2001:113) quotes Dykstra’s comment of Baxter where he said, ‘Baxter’s point is that the Bible speaks not only specifically but generally. We do not need a Bible command in order to proceed. A Biblical example is sufficient warrant, and this we have in 2 Cor. 8:19. Owen and Baxter are united on this.’

The strong emphasis put on the autonomy of the local church makes it difficult to properly conceive the RbmZ’s organization structure and leadership system. Yet, despite the challenges it poses among stakeholders, it has been maintained. The difficulties comes when this approach is evaluated from the OLC perspective. According to OLC management systems there is no single structure system or leadership style that is suitable for all the different stages an organization passes through. Observing the periods of change and applying flexibility in organization structure and leadership styles is key to organization success, bearing in mind the link that the challenges experienced by organizations and the way they are addressed relate to organisational leadership. “The Christian leader is always involved in hermeneutics—

¹⁸ Renihan (2001:83) defines “Primitivism” as ‘the emphasis in faith and practice on the first, earliest form or pattern as described in the New Testament that entails efforts to re-create or imitate such a form in the present’. This means that primitivism way of thinking through the scriptures is broad and holistic in nature as it encompasses express commands (*Chapter and verse*), principles and patterns of the New Testament.

interpreting the current time, culture, community, and story. Additionally, the Christian leader is interpreting other parts of Christian history through contemporary eyes” (Mahan, 2011:68).

It is the invaluable role of an organisational leader to conceive and understand where the organisation ‘stands’ and then to manage the situation in a manner that enables to ‘live’ beyond now into the future. It would appear from the voices represented above that the challenge or difficulty by reformed Baptist churches in Zambia to fail to warm up to strong inter-church fellowship and collaboration lies in their uncompromising adherence to their system of church government – the autonomy of the local church, which from the effects it is having on inter-church relationships, may be revealing a weakness that it is applied in an extreme way than the scriptures intended.

As Hammett (2005) observes: “Despite the long and virtually unanimous support for congregationalism among Baptists, it is facing a number of challenges today, of both a practical and theological nature” (2005:151). It can be clearly seen that the system is not serving its intended purpose, and yet the adherents are uncompromisingly holding on to it. The system needs to be revisited and revised in terms of how it ought to be properly understood and applied.

In view of the above, KIIs affirm that what seem to have sustained the RBmZ over the years were friendships of the pioneers and pioneer pastors who also happened to have been the lead men in advancing the reformation agenda in Zambia (KII 2, KII 7, KII 11). Their recognized zeal and passion in advocating and spreading the reformation agenda earned these pioneer pastors respect and admiration by many who also deemed them as leaders of the movement (KII 9, KII 15).

But technically speaking, they were not but only leaders of the local churches that they pastored. But, in spite of this technical leadership challenge and even with the loose inter-church relationships among this family of Baptist churches owing to their autonomous church governance system, the influence of these leading men continued to pull together, especially through the national conferences, all the reformed Baptist churches together. Over the years, this informal system has given the Reformed Baptist churches of Zambia a form of common bond, identity, unity and fellowship albeit a loose one. It is this relationship of the RBmZ that is now being threatened to break with a possible split.

Summary

The RBmZ needs to recover its leadership and leadership competencies. Currently it operates under the local church-driven concept system which aims at protecting the autonomy of the local church. Granted that the RBmZ's leadership and leadership competencies must be derivative for the sake of protecting the autonomy of the local church, this should, however, not be from one or a few local congregations, as the case is now, but from all member churches whose interest the RBmZ aims to serve and protect. An inclusive approach would make all RBmZ representative churches have a real sense of ownership of it as real stakeholders.

To rectify this problem would require a mindset shift on understanding the correct relationship between the autonomy of the local church and inter-church fellowship and interdependence. The process of mindset change should begin by regarding the RBmZ as an organization with an independent organizational structure and leadership system informed by OLC approaches.

3.3 Governance and leadership structure of the RBmZ (Empirical data)

3.3.1 Information from empirical data collected through interviews.

3.3.1.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

This section presents analysed data collected from 15 KIIs. The researcher conducted key informant interviews (KII) with key people within the RBmZ. An interview guide with discussion guiding questions was used to guide KIIs. The researcher interviewed fifteen (15) key people selected for their experience, knowledge and influence within the RBmZ. The following three (3) categories of respondents participated in the study: (1) church senior leadership (Pioneers), (2) senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to breakaway (whistle blowers), (3) Church administrators. These participants are key informants for this research because of their experience and knowledge of the RBmZ from its inception three decades ago to date. Second, they are interested parties who are keen to see the current situation normalized. Third, they are influential figures therefore key to resolving the current problems in the church (RBmZ).

3.3.1.2 Recruitment of research participants and inclusion criteria

- a. Recruitment of church senior leadership (Pioneers) (n=5):** Five (5) senior church leadership officials from the RBmZ (i) dealing or interfacing with the RBmZ operations (ii) who are familiar with its policies as well as (iii) aware or involved in implementing its initiatives were recruited to participate in key informant interviews (KIIs) from different representative member churches of the RBmZ.

- b. Recruitment of senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to breakaway (Whistle blowers) (n=5):** Five (5) senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to break away from the movement were recruited to participate in key informant interviews (KIIs). They were drawn from different representative member churches of the RBmZ.
- c. Recruitment of Church administrators (n=5):** Five (5) Church administrators from five different representative member churches of the RBmZ were recruited to participate in key informant interviews (KIIs). They were selected for their daily routine of dealing with church issues and operations within the RBmZ.

3.3.1.3 Sampling and access to study sample

Non-probability sampling was used for the study. Trochim (2006:30) divides non-probability sampling methods into two broad types namely accidental or purposive. This study considered a purposive sample to be an ideal sampling approach because it has the following advantages: First, the sampling problem is undertaken with a specific plan in mind (Babbie & Mouton (2003). Second, it enables identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the research questions thereby affording a researcher an opportunity to gain much insight into issues of central importance to the study (Benoot, 2016:2). Third, it “is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics, representatives or typical attributes of the population that save the purpose of the study based” (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:232). Fourth, only individuals or groups knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of interest are selected as respondents (Palinkas *et al.*, 2013:3), to mention but a few.

The above advantages of purposive sampling give the researcher a guide on how and who to select as research participants for the study. Thus, based on who fits the description above, the researcher purposively sampled participants from the RBmZ who have experience and involved with the operations of the RBmZ church. The description of the study participants is indicated below.

3.3.1.4 Discussion numbers and description of participants

The KIIs were assigned numbers to make them anonymous. As such, the 15KIIs were assigned numbers from KII 1 to KII 15. A total number of 15 KIIs were held with the participants described above and indicated on the table below.

Figure 4: List of KII Interviewed

Category of respondents	Number of KIIs	Discussion number	Description of participants & date interviewed
Senior Church leadership (Pioneers)	5	KII 1 KII 2 KII 3 KII 4 KII 5	- Pastors church A in Lusaka 08/09/2021 - Elder at church B in Lusaka 07/10/2021 - Pastors church B in Lusaka 31/08/2021 - Pastors church C in Eastern Province 28/09/2021 - Pastors church D on the Copperbelt 06/011/2021
Senior leaders of unhappy group of people threatening to breakaway (Whistle blowers)	5	KII 6 KII 7 KII 8 KII 9 KII 10	- Pastors church C in Lusaka 22/10/2021 - Pastors church E on the Copperbelt 05/11/20221 - Pastors church F on the Copperbelt 14/10/2021 - Pastors church G on the Copperbelt 27/10/2021 - College Registrar in Lusaka 27/10/2021
Church Administrators	5	KII 11 KII 12 KII 13	- Elder at church I in Central Province 18/10/2021 - Elder at church J in Lusaka 02/09/2021 - Elder at church K in Lusaka 11/09/2021

		KII 14	▪ Elder at church L in Lusaka 06/09/2021
		KII 15	▪ College Principal in Eastern Province 01/10/2021
Total KIIs	15	15	

3.3.1.5 Data collection

Data from the KIIs was collected using one-on-one interviews. The researcher transcribed all the responses from the participants emanating from the designed interview questions. The approach utilised during the KIIs was guided interviews with open-ended questions that encouraged discussions. The guide interview questions are shown in table 2.

Figure 5: Guide KII interview questions

Question	Aim and objectives
1. What are the challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organisation has been growing? Probe: Why did the RBmZ leadership not foresee these challenges? If the challenges were foreseen, why were they not managed effectively? If the challenges were not foreseen or anticipated, why did the leadership not foresee or anticipate the challenges?	Explore the challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organisation has been growing.
2. How should these challenges be understood from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership? Probe: What is the kind of leadership that has been employed thus far in RBmZ that has	

resulted to such positive growth and impact? How does RBmZ's leadership style relate to a church that is on a sharp growth curve? Could the RBmZ leadership approach be requiring change? If the RBmZ leadership has achieved so much success thus far, why then change a winning formula?	Understand RBmZ challenges from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership.
3. What Christian leadership principles could be discerned from Scriptures that could be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and life changes? Probe: What are the factors that contributed to the current problems and decline in RBmZ despite the evident impact that the church had over the last 30 years? What are the leadership problems and challenges that are associated with growth and maturing organisations such as RBmZ?	Discern Christian leadership principles from Scripture that could be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and organisational life changes.
4. What model of Christian leadership could be proposed that integrates biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change? Probe: What is the type of leadership	Propose a model of Christian leadership that integrates Biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to

and leadership competencies required to lead RBmZ during this organisational change stage (OLC phase) to minimise organisational problems and at the same time ensure the organisation maintains its growth and impact? What changes can be made to the current leadership and leadership competencies that would bring about meaningful organizational change that will foster unity and growth?	encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change.
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Through the coding process, themes were generated from data corpus

3.3.1.6 Identification of themes

The preceding coding process across KIIs helped to generate and identify codes that can build themes. According to Braun & Clarke, “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set”. The themes discussed are those that stood out during the study and analysis of data corpus. They were selected because they contain something important in relation to the main research question. To ensure the research stays close to the data so as to allow it speak for itself, there will be constant reference to data from participants to get supporting evidence to each theme. “Write-up must provide sufficient evidence of the themes within the data, that is enough data extracts to demonstrate the prevalence of the theme” (Braun and Clarke, 2006:92)

3.3.1.6.1 Key themes extracted from KIIs

Themes emerged during data corpus coding from KIIs.

1. A possible revival
2. The main men of the movement

3. A Strict beginning
4. Conferences - the main rally point of the movement
5. Informal structure
6. Leadership system
7. An overly emphasis on the Autonomy of the local church and the local-church-driven ministries concept
8. Regionalism
9. Play of friends

The identified key themes were able to generate sub-themes as indicated below.

Figure 6: Identified themes and Sub-themes

Main Theme	Sub-theme (s)
1. A possible revival	
2. The main men of the movement	▪ <i>Their rise</i> ▪ <i>Their unique gifts</i> ▪ <i>Their ejection from the Zambia Baptist Association</i> ▪ <i>Young and inexperienced</i>
3. A Strict beginning	
4. Conferences - the main rally point of the movement	▪ <i>The main rally point of the movement</i> ▪ <i>The early and first crack in the league of friends</i> ▪ <i>A short-lived compromise of rotating the national conference</i>

	▪ <i>A short-lived arrangement of co-hosting the national youth conference</i> ▪ <i>A new dawn on the hosting of conferences</i>
5. Informal structure	▪ <i>Protection of the autonomy and independence of the Local church</i>
6. Leadership system	▪ <i>Friendship based</i> ▪ <i>Purpose driven</i>
7. Achille Blaize and the 1990 conference	▪ <i>An overly emphasis on the Autonomy of the local church and the local-church-driven ministries concept</i> ▪ <i>Para-church organizations were condemned</i> ▪ <i>Bible/theological colleges were condemned</i> ▪ <i>Running of conferences as a joint inter-church project was condemned</i> ▪ <i>Running the Parsons diet as a joint inter-church project was condemned</i> ▪ <i>Formal inter-church association condemned</i>
8. Regionalism	
9. Play of friendships	

3.3.2 A possible revival

Many Key Interview Informants (KIIs) associate the beginnings of the movement with a possible wave of a revival, that is, a special work of the Lord that might have swept the 1970s and 80s. In that sense, the beginning of the movement is regarded as special in that it may be likened to that of the ‘great awakening’ - a spiritual revival that happened in Europe and America. KII 2 recalls those special times and comments thus: “It was a unique thing – a revival – God coming down and working in the hearts of men. The basic manifestation was the hunger for the word of God.” Perhaps this revival may explain in part and put into perspective the extra-ordinary gifted manner that characterized the pioneers of the movement, especially the preachers, some of whom later became the first pastors of reformed churches. This is confirmed by KII 5 who stated that, “The instruments that God chose to use had hunger for the word and for God. Desiring to know this God more led them to the searching of the scriptures and reading Christian literature that would point them to God more.”

But since the Zambian context revival is subjective, as there are no official documents to support it, it can only be a suspected possible revival based on the observable effects of the gospel on the people at that time. Most KIIs allude this assertion to the prevailing atmosphere of the hunger for God and his word that characterized the new believers’ lives; that such could only be described or understood in terms of a supernatural act.

KII 2 describes those times in this way: “Looking back on those days, I can describe them as days when we experienced a revival without us knowing it because most of us were new Christians and so we took it that it was a normal Christian life. They were very special times when we had great appetite for God’s word and Christian literature. After church, we would not rush home but would stay at church for prayer. We also did a lot of evangelism, knocking on peoples’ doors to share the gospel with them. We were youths (students) but very vibrant young men and women”.

The very fact that the RBmZ started in such a supernatural way (a possible revival), may explain partly why issues that relate to organizational structuring of the movement may not have been prioritized. No one would have envisaged how long the revival would last so as to begin to put in place a plan for a formalized RBmZ with its own organization structure and leadership system. The supernatural origin of RBmZ may be one reason it never got to have a consensually system of inter-church fellowship by all stakeholders. The direct supernatural influence of the revival entails that leaders cannot be blamed for lack of visionary thinking and planning ahead and therefore contributing to the current challenges in the RBmZ, nor for the

church organization's continued function in the same way over the years since its beginning. The supernatural beginnings of the RBmZ may have superseded the OLC models which require that different strategies and leadership styles be applied at different stages as the organization grows.

3.3.3 The main men of the movement

3.3.3.1 Their rise

KII 15 said that "Reformation in Zambia was around individuals and not churches. Highly gifted preachers emerged from the elbicites.¹⁹ They were invited everywhere to preach and in due course they became popular. They galvanized people around them who were eager to listen to their good preaching. They were zealous, evangelical and doctrinal in their preaching. Besides their preaching and teaching engagements, some began to write their own literature which they distributed to a wider audience, thereby increasing the influence and outreach of the reformed theology and faith in Zambia and beyond".

KII 14 adds that "Later, some among these young people took up full time pastoral work and continued to espouse their reformed convictions there." Between 1987-1989, four names of those who took up pastorates in different churches emerged. These were Conrad Mbewe (Kabwata Baptist Church), Ronald Kalifungwa (Mufulira Central Baptist Church), Choolwe Mweetwa (Chingola Central Baptist Church) and Brian Njovu (Choma Central Baptist Church). These became the key leading men or the 'main men' of the reformed movement in Zambia. That these were indeed the initial main men of the movement is supported by KII 6, KII 7, KII 11 and KII 12.

Rev. Joe Simfukwe, a missionary minded pastor of Lusaka Baptist Church, is said to be the main catalyst of the reformation in Zambia through his expository preaching and urban outreach strategy that targeted students in higher institutions of learning that resulted into a strong student and former students' movement body, called the elbicites. This resulted in many English-speaking churches being established in different towns of Zambia by former elbicites

¹⁹ Elbicites was the name of the students' fellowship of young reformed-minded people at Lusaka Baptist church. It was mainly attended by those young people who had become strongly influenced by the reformed doctrines.

members now graduates from various tertiary institutions of learning and posted all over the country.

Thus, the early reformed Baptist churches were born out the urban outreach work of Lusaka Baptist church spread through the elbicites network scattered all around the country. They were affiliates of the Zambia Baptist Association (ZBA). Later, some of these young preachers took up full time pastoral work. With strong conviction for reformed theology, they zealously began to advocate for reformed doctrines.

3.3.3.2 Their unique gifts

Although these men were all highly gifted, each one had his own unique and more pronounced area of strength that stood out above the others. Pastor Brian Njovu was a preacher per excellence. His strength lay in the care and uncompromising manner in rightly diving the word of truth. His painstaking faithfulness in handling scripture could easily be mistaken for a controversial or rigid or even uncompromising person. For Pastor Ronald Kalifungwa, it was the Pastor /Shepherd strength that emerged supreme. His strength was observed in his focus and emphasis on seeing a stable, united and thriving church established. As such, his love for peace and welfare of the church could easily be mistaken for being too lenient or too tolerant.

As for Pastor Choolwe Mweetwa, his prominent strength was that of a competent teacher. His strength lay in his delving deep into the scriptures to draw out the mysteries and glory purchased by Christ's atoning work for her bride - the church. His strength was his emphasis on a deeply knowledgeable church of her Saviour, an element that could easily be mistaken for pride. For Pastor Conrad Mbewe, his strength was that of a restless evangelist who will stop at nothing than seeing the gospel reach the ends of the earth. His passion for evangelism and church planting could easily be mistaken for a liberal or doctrinally compromised person.

KII 15 comments thus: "Over time, Conrad turned to have more fire than the others, for although they all commenced their pastoral ministry work around about the same time, Kabwata Baptist Church became way ahead of the others. It was the first to have a building of their own for worship. This helped them to stabilize early and numerically grow. It was also the first to officially adopt the 1689 Baptist Confession of faith. The other important thing they started, which was later to have a great impact on the reformed churches, was an annual conference." KII 11 says, "But Conrad stood out and was greatly appreciated and attracted interest even from outside the country."

Combined, these aspects made Pastor Mbewe (and the church he pastored - KBC) to stand out as the lead man of the reformed movement in Zambia, and even among the main men. His church became the center of reformed activities in the country. KII 13 commented that “But among the young people, reading puritan writings helped them to begin shaping up their convictions towards the reformed direction. When KBC became fully reformed, we joined and progressed on that ethos. So while LBC was a forerunner, KBC ran with the idea and realized it.” Over the years his influence and that of his church grew beyond the borders of his country and became global. It is because of his popularity and influence that many perceive him as the key leader of the reformed movement in Zambia. KII 4, KII 6, KII 12 agrees with this assertion about Conrad Mbewe and KBC.

3.3.3.3 Their great ejection

There was strong resistance at the start of the reformed Baptist movement from the established Baptist churches. KII 9 vividly remembers and narrated an incident that led to the ejection and final exit of these four pioneer pastors (Conrad Mbewe, Choolwe Mwetwa, Brian Njovu and Ronald Kalifungwa) from the Zambia Baptist Association (ZBA). He had come to Ndola to represent the churches of his constituency at the ZBA meeting, when the then outgoing chairman stood up and said, “There is a group of brothers, and are here with us today, who are regrouping themselves and advocating the adoption of the 1689 Baptist Confession of faith that contain things that I don’t agree with; for example, the Pope being the anti-Christ.” He then went on to mention the names of the four brothers named above. From that meeting, the four pioneer pastors left the ZBA and began the reformed Baptist movement.

Generally, the reformed Baptist churches looked like they were dying and greatly frowned upon. But this did not discourage these leading men – they continued to preach and espouse the reformed faith.

3.3.3.4 Young and inexperienced

Now that they were out of the ZBA establishment and on their own, these pioneer pastors faced numerous challenges, among them was the challenge of being young and inexperienced. KII 8 says, “Most of the first reformed Baptist pastors were good preachers but young and inexperienced in pastoral ministry. At that time, there was no existing reformed Baptist Church in Zambia to model as an example. Much was to be figured out along the way; as most of the churches then had the chairman arrangement. Being young, they had not yet matured to handle their own churches on one hand and the interchurch relations matters on the other. Church

government lessons took time to teach before implementing. Much time was spent defining and understanding it. With time, it came to embrace church government in its current form that undermines interchurch relations.”

As young ministers, they were prone to most if not all the disadvantages that come with zeal but inexperienced youth. But God in his mercy, provided them with one older man - Rev. Gevera Nyirenda - who relentlessly encouraged these young pastors to push forward with the reformation agenda. He himself pushed the same reformed agenda first at Lusaka Baptist Church and later at Kitwe Chapel where he laboured as pastor, respectively.

A further challenge that these young pastors could not escape was the absence of a local model reformed Baptist church on which they could pattern their own churches after. Their case was a job on training kind. With no prior experience and example to learn from, they nonetheless had to pioneer the ecclesiology doctrine of the reformed Baptist church using the best available means, methods and resources at their disposal.

What may be clearly observed about these main men are both their leadership competencies and lack of them. Even though they had the advantage of being friends and also specially gifted, they nonetheless faced challenges of being young, inexperienced and lacked a model reformed Baptist church locally to pattern their own after. This posed a challenge on the suitability of an organization structure that leaders with such limitations would adopt to effectively run the affairs of RBmZ.

For that reason, pioneers needed to be open to criticism, listen to new suggestions and be flexible enough to implement necessary and reasonable ideas of change whenever it was demanded regarding church government. But arising from the protracted complaints and unresolved issues noted above, this doesn't seem to have been the case. It remained a potential area of conflict over the years.

Further, the fact that these men were pioneers of the work, means that not everything they began with in the first stage of the movement needed to be carried on into the future stages when the work had grown and expanded. Thinking in OLC approach terms would have greatly assisted them not to be rigid, insisting on doing the same things all the time just because it had worked in the past. Rather, they should have embraced new ideas and be able to accept and implement change whenever that was necessary.

3.3.4 A strict beginning

There are strong sentiments from KIIs that the RBmZ was very strict at the beginning, as the pioneers strived not only for the survival but the establishment of the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. KII 4 who experienced the early life of the reformed movement put it this way: “There was a lot of truth but a lot of casualties too along the way. A number of people were injured by this radical approach of doing church. There was seriousness, zeal and passion for the scriptures, but the manner in which it came (or was applied) was injurious. This was partly the reason the 1689 confession of faith was highly resisted when it was first proposed for adoption by RBmZ churches”. Emphasis was put on faith being not just theoretical but practical. This led to strict ‘policing’ of observable practices in believers’ lifestyles.

Some KIIs narrated some ways in which this strictness was enforced including but not limited to criticizing and discouraging people from owning a television set (but today they own Plasmas), ladies were neither permitted to have modern hair styles (Now ladies are free to do any type of hair style of their choice) nor to speak or stand in front of men (today they can be ushers, pray and participate in a number of cooperate church activities).

Church was taken very seriously, not as a place of entertainment - thus, singing of choruses and anything deemed to be of entertainment nature was discouraged in church. Even inter-denomination association (especially with Pentecostals / charismatics) was condemned. Pioneer pastors highly emphasized the autonomy of the church and condemned associations and denounced other systems of church governments like the Presbyterian and Episcopal systems (KII 9, KII 11).

Also, because of their giftedness and discipline to personal study, pioneers turned out to be better in handling the scriptures than an average student from a theological school. As such, formal theological school training was condemned (But this has since changed with some pioneers themselves now attaining high degrees in theological academics).

This turn around has offended those who heard these men condemn theological training but now have greatly benefited from it. They allege the change to compromise of faith. KII 7 commented that “We regarded pioneers as leaders; they taught and gave us literature. But later, the same leaders compromised or changed their minds over the things they taught us. They used to be radical but now have become liberals.” To this KII 5 also added, “We began to lose sight of him (God). When you are expanding and being appreciated, success begins to get to the head; you begin to ascribe these things to yourself”.

But KII 4 understands this change differently and positively: “Have they compromised? I don’t think so. It is an issue to do with facing reality and maturity. This paradigm shift is owing to the generation after them – which is not as studious, committed and eloquent in preaching. It’s a recognition of ‘something missing’ that led to the recognition of the need for theological training to fill up that gap.

This strict approach to practicing theology in formative years may account for the rigidity and lack of flexibility observed in the implementing of the principle of the autonomy of the local church at all costs in later years of the RBmZ. Whilst strictness may have been fine and acceptable at the start of the movement for purposes it sought to establish then, continuing with it over the years may lead to serious even permanent damage of the good name of the organization.

This strict or rigid way of practicing theology resulted in people almost refusing to adopt the 1689 London Baptist confession as their own confession of faith. Thankfully, over the years there was a relaxation in some of areas, though such flexibility did not still go far enough to include all areas of the RBmZ organizational structure and leadership system to make it suit and better serve the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia.

What this entails is that different methods, strategies and leadership styles are required for different stages of organization growth and success. Implementation or failure of implementation of necessary changes at particular times of the growth of RBmZ has played a major role in leading to the current impasse being witnessed in the movement.

3.3.5 The conferences - the main rally point of the movement

It ought to be understood from the onset that the national conferences were and have continued to be the main rally point for the RBmZ. All reformed Baptist churches in Zambia were invited by the RBmZ host church - Kabwata Baptist church (KBC) - to participate. KII 1 “From the inception, the conference was a KBC conference to which others were invited to participate. It was a ministry of KBC.” The reason for this is that “It was a little more organized with a plural eldership than the others” (KII 11, KII 12, KII 13, KII 14, KII 15).

Thus, from the onset, KBC became the main stream reformed Baptist Church in Zambia and the running of the national conferences therefore came to fall under it. The extent to which there was common agreement on how the conferences were run, to that extent was the degree of interchurch relations and unity.

3.3.5.1 The early and first crack in the league of friends

Earlier on before the commencement of the national conferences, one of the pioneer pastors, Brian Njovu, in a bid to try and unify the RBmZ, suggested a formation of a national conference which would bring together all the like-minded churches to run it as a co-joint venture. KII 10 affirmed that the idea originated with Brian Njovu: “The reformed conference is his brain child; but his colleagues (other pioneer pastors) shot it down. Then later, Conrad Mbewe started it and invited them. Brian felt betrayed”. Almost all the KIIs acknowledge a rift that has long existed between Pastor Conrad Mbewe and Pastor Brian Njovu from the early years.

But while some KIIs expressed ignorance of what the exact problem for this long difference was, a number pointed to this ‘hijacking of the national conference idea’ incident as the source. KII 7 comments that “Brian and Conrad differed a long time ago and he vowed never to attend, because KBC insisted it was their conference. Brian never attended these conferences nor encouraged his members to participate.” Even KII 1 says “Brian has had issues with Conrad since the 1990s and he has not been there.”

The idea to run the national conferences as a cooperate entity has been there since inception of the RBmZ. Brian Njovu proposed its formation arguing that, in line with its national character reflected in the name ‘Zambia Reformed Baptist Conferences’, the national conference needed to be run as a co-joint venture by all Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia collectively. If it is to be run as a local church-driven ministry, then the conference’s name should reflect that local church’s name. But the idea was shot down by his colleagues who perceived a danger in running it that way, fearing it might endanger the autonomy of the local church in the same way as the Presbyterian system does its local churches.

But later, Conrad Mbewe opted to start the national conference with Kabwata Baptist Church as the host-church, to which others were simply invited as guests. While this was done in good faith and in conformity with the commonly held principle and concept at the time, of the local church-driven ministry, whose aim was to protect the autonomy of the local church from any outside influence or authority, it did not go down well with Brian Njovu. He felt betrayed by his friend for hijacking his idea which previously had been disapproved of, but which now his friend had chosen to implement without even consulting or acknowledging him as the originator. This was the first crack in the league of friends and the early one in the RBmZ.

From the onset, therefore, not everyone was happy with the arrangement of running a national conference under a local church-driven ministry concept. It was deemed a monopolization of

the national conference by one local church instead of it being run collectively by all stakeholders. It raised feelings of exclusion by other stakeholder churches and caused sentiments of dissatisfaction from affected churches.

Sadly, there was no recognized leadership in the RBmZ to bring the parties together and settle the matter once and for all. The failure to reach consensus on this matter regarding the autonomy of the church and church interdependence at this time would turn out to be a recurring problem to haunt the RBmZ for many decades to come, and eventually become one of the major reasons for some churches' complete session of any and all interactions by 2019 from this family.

3.3.5.2 A short-lived compromise of rotating the national conference

As a compromise measure on the arrangement of hosting of the national conferences, the pioneers agreed that the conference be held in a rotational manner among the stakeholder churches, that is, between the Copperbelt province and the Lusaka province churches.²⁰ KII 5 remarked, "The movement was growing and doing very well. But with the passage of time things began to deviate from the original." By 'original' was meant that the national conference was being monopolized by one church as against the envisaged joint hosting it by all churches in the movement.

At the core of the differing opinion was the organizational structure issue of whether the conference would be co-hosted by all the stake holders (view held by Brian Njovu and others on one side) or it would remain a local church-driven ministry (as held by Conrad Mbewe and others on the other side); it was left unresolved. As such, the rotational arrangement didn't last.

Many reasons are cited for the stoppage of this rotation arrangement, but suffice to say it only happened twice on the Copperbelt (Once in the city of Ndola and once in the city of Kitwe). The withdrawal of the rotational arrangement of the national conferences did not go down well with the Copperbelt churches who felt their Lusaka brethren were not treating them as equal

²⁰ The Copperbelt and Lusaka are two of the Ten Provinces of Zambia. They are also the most populated provinces due to high economic activities. Lusaka Province houses the Lusaka city which is the Capital and administrative Centre of the country. The Copperbelt Province, on the other hand, is a mining hub of the country and therefore hosts major economic activities that support the mining industry. It is in these two Provinces that the biggest concentration of the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia are found. Due to their geographical distance from each other, the churches located in these provinces are often referred to as either the Lusaka Churches or the Copperbelt churches as a distinguishing mark of identity of location.

partners. As KII 7 laments, “Autonomy of the church yes, but you also voluntarily choose to work with others.

What has happened over time is that the equal status of churches has not been achieved. Some feel to be greater stakeholders than others. There is no spirit of deliberate inclusiveness to work together. Rather, there is more control – even the conference – others are only worth to contribute money and their members to beef up the numbers of the conference – not necessarily working together.” Since then, feelings of inequality, dissatisfaction and even resentment increased in the Copperbelt province churches. This was also an initial indicator that revivals don’t last forever, soon things settle and go into a low gear.

Once again, the opportunity by the RBmZ to forge close ties and interdependence was lost. The rotational arrangement challenges should have been worked on rather than resorting to withdrawing. But there was no generally recognized independent leadership body in place to adequately hear the matter and advise a fair settlement of the matter.

Instead of the Reformed Baptist churches getting closer together, they were drifting further apart. At the Centre of it all was the unresolved issue of organizational structure and leadership system. There was no leadership to handle the issues as the RBmZ leadership system was eclipsed under the local church’s leadership it was placed under. Again, the inflexible adherence to the principle of the local church-driven ministry robbed the RBmZ of a platform of arbitration and accountability by churches working together as it lacked leadership of its own.

3.3.5.3 A short-lived arrangement of co-hosting the national youth conference

The challenge of organization and leadership structure spilt over and affected every other area of church life of the RBmZ, including the youth meetings. The Reformed Baptist churches on the Copperbelt province used to organize a regional youth rally they called the Copperbelt Annual Reformed Baptist Conference (CARBYC). Over time, this conference became very popular and it was felt that it should be turned into a national youth conference of the RBmZ.

A meeting was held between the church representatives from the two Provinces (Copperbelt and Lusaka) and they agreed to turn CARBYC into a national youth conference. This saw the birth of the National Annual Reformed Baptist Conference (NARBYC). But it didn’t last long, only two to three years. KII 6 says, “The first issue that arose was over the age group demarcations. CARBYC had no age distinctions but with NARBYC, a demand for age

demarcation arose. The two regions failed to reach an agreement, with each region insisting on their stance.

Second, being a national Youth conference for all the churches, it was proposed that it takes place during the Easter holidays period. This crushed with the long-standing church program for the senior YP conference of Lusaka Baptist Church (LBC), who refused to shift their conference to any other date, and the church backed them.” This is confirmed by KII 2: “This issue didn’t work because of the timing. LBC has a senior young people conference during Easter. There was a request but we received a violent reaction that you can’t take this that has been happening for a long time to the Copperbelt province. They are the ones who should be joining us. Youths refused and as elders we gave in.” In response, KII 5 said, “Lusaka churches didn’t have anything to do with it – they didn’t see the need for interchurch relations”

NARBYC, like the rotational program of the national conferences before it, didn’t last long. Again, the reasons for its failure for continuity are many but the most outstanding one relates to the same issue of non-flexibility on the principle of the autonomy of the local church which is understood to override inter-church fellowship and cooperation. Having agreed to turn CARBYC from a regional into a national youth conference, the churches also agreed that because it will be benefitting all the youths of the RBmZ, it should be held during the most appropriate time of the year.

NARBYC, should have been seen and welcomed as a stage of opportunity for unity in the RBmZ. But again, the opportunity to effect necessary change was not seized. Another grand opportunity of forging strong inter-church relations was lost; this time among the youths. This did not go down well with the Copperbelt churches who interpreted this action as another sign that this church was not interested in building strong inter-church fellowships and partnerships with other sister churches.

In fact, the absence of the culture and platform to sit down and talk over matters of concern was cited by KII 5 as one of the four reasons he thinks things went wrong in the movement: “Loosing focus, failure to talk, failure to listen and worldliness”. This challenge of not sitting down to resolve issues as soon as they happened would haunt the movement for a very long time, and later become a danger that would openly threaten its unity. But all this was because of a lack of a formal system with a clearly laid out mechanism that could easily be consulted or turned to by anyone at any time for guidance and direction.

A process that should have brought the youths of reformed Baptist churches in Zambia closer together turned out to be the very one that separated them more. And even though from the church interdependence view this stance might appear rigid, it was nonetheless justified by the principle of the autonomy of the local church. This reveals that the people involved were not thinking in OLC terms, where these happenings should have been interpreted as organizational life stages requiring necessary change. With no recognized and accepted structure to mediate and try and clear out the differences, everyone proceeded on the assumption that everyone knew the correct position and structure of the movement, when in fact there was divided opinion over the matter.

What may not have been realized even at this stage of the movement's growth was that some churches and their leaders had different opinions and perceptions of what the right relationship between the autonomy and the interdependence of churches needed to be.

3.3.5.4 A new dawn on the hosting of conferences

The annual conferences continued to be run as a church-driven ministry of KBC to which other churches were simply invited. With time, however, two important developments occurred. The first is captured by a KII 11 who says, "But with more reading of the confession, we came to see a place of partnership of churches with like-mindedness and similar convictions. Perhaps this is where other churches and groups came in". This was a good sign of turn-round regarding the hosting of conferences. It opened a small window of flexibility to include other churches in the running of the national conferences.

The second is that the conference grew and it became clear that KBC needed other churches to come on board. But instead of including all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia, only three other churches (Lusaka Baptist Church, Mount Makulu Baptist and Evangel Baptist churches) were brought on board to co-host the conference, but none from outside of Lusaka.

But, just this shift from one church running the conference to a shared ownership elated even some Copperbelt province churches that had stopped attending the conferences. Encouraged by these signs of inclusivism, they started coming to the conference again. With stakeholders now warmed up to the idea of inter-church fellowship, discussions of strengthening the movement's ties further were reignited and soon there was an agreement of the formation of a formal association.

This gave birth to the idea of the formation of the Reformed Baptist Churches Association of Zambia (ReBCAZ), with an inclusive executive committee comprising members from churches within and outside of Lusaka. But while these looked like exciting days and promising great outcomes, ReBCAZ remained more on paper than in real practice terms. KII 1 remarks: “We never established an association; all was done informally, and it has been like that. In 2005/7 we decided to form an association and we formalized partially. Church leaders were invited from across the country and they signed up. It was meant to be for fellowship, and church planting – pull resources together and assist local churches. Sadly, it has really never been effective. So, we have never had a functional association. To that extent, there has been challenges. The associational side has never been in the DNA to associate formally, but always informal.”

KII 13 observes that “We have never met to discuss. The platform has been difficult because ReBCAZ was and still is not officially recognized by participating churches. If it had been officially recognized, ReBCAZ would have assisted because the co-hosting of the conference would have moved from the four churches to include all others. The idea was welcomed but it was never implemented. The reason is that there wasn’t the commitment to make it work.” A number of KIIs from the grieved group are of the view that the failure to formalize ReBCAZ is deliberate (KII 6, KII 7, KII 8).

For as long as ReBCAZ would not be realized as an officially recognized body of the RBmZ churches, the churches on the Copperbelt would continue to be simply invited guests and not partners in running the conferences and other inter-church ventures. This continuously reinforced the feeling of exclusion, resentment and the desire for complete separation by the Copperbelt churches from their counterparts in Lusaka province.

From this,

3.3.6 Informal structure

3.3.6.1 Protection of the autonomy and independence of the Local church

KII 1 “Formalization can easily cause churches to be easily dragged into problems which they are no part of. One person who had a fight/quarrel with his leadership did not limit it to his local church but brew it up to RBmZ. It is one thing to read about the problem, it is quite another to be part of it. We are independent and autonomous local churches”.

But KII 8 holds a different view: “In my view autonomy and independence of the local church has been pushed to an extreme of selfishness and self-centeredness by the emphasis of ‘self’ in the current description of the local church as a, self-governing, self-propagating and self-sustaining entity. The self must be replaced with Christ, as in Christ-governing, Christ propagating and Christ sustaining.”

This is supported by KII 3 “Informal structure served us well up to some point. We have not done well; the movement is extremely informal. I feel we have not critically and satisfactorily thought through the dynamics of interchurch association/fellowship. Interchurch fellowship is biblical. Principles of this are there both in scripture and in history”. In addition, KII 5 says, “Church association is a scriptural concept. Its failure has nothing to do with autonomy of the local church. Association was equal to a body of like-minded churches; that is how we formally thought. But now ReBCAZ is a white elephant because some churches feel they don’t need it; they have everything so they don’t need anyone. They are self-sufficient. That is the problem with ReBCAZ; it is dying.”

Another KII also confirms that from the onset, the movement was informal. “It neither had properly ordered structure nor clear leadership system, a situation that made it difficult to conceive its functionality clearly. And the main reason for this was to protect the autonomy of the local church” (KII 10).

The reformed Baptist system of church government espouses the autonomy and independence of the local church, an arrangement which does not allow any other outside body to usurp power of the local church. But this system of church government has posed a challenge in forging inter-church relationships. Strong formal inter-church associations are often frowned upon as they are often perceived a threat to the independence of the local church, which may easily lead to either of two undesirable systems of church governments - Episcopalian or Presbyterian systems.

3.3.7 Leadership

3.3.7.1 Friendship based

KII 2 confessed that “A number of us knew each other before – we were friends. Therefore, it was easier to come together, to gel and to trust each other. But friendship could be a blind spot. One reason for informal structure may be that things were taken for granted because of friendship” This is affirmed by almost all the KIIs. Even though in its early years the movement

was informal, with no official leaders elected, its boundaries of leadership were very clear. This is so because even without a formal structure, leaders emerge in any setting or grouping of people – either by vote or consensus or by service or giftedness or geographical location or personality or charisma. Within the reformed movement, pioneer pastors emerged and people simply rallied behind these ‘main men’ as their leaders. Hence, the movement was led by pioneer pastors, as *de facto* leaders, who had taken up full time pastoral work. They were friends, like-minded, reading and believing the same things.

Some KIIs think that too much confidence may have been put into the prevailing high spirituality brought by the revival and the strong friendships that existed among the pioneers that the people involved underplayed other factors such as the temporary nature of revivals which don’t last forever and fickleness of friendships owing to their own indwelling sin which had great potential to break their friendships in case of disputes and differing opinions and preferences.

3.3.7.2 Purpose driven

The common purpose and commitment of these men was a united desire and effort to establish and spread the Calvinistic reformed faith as well as to see more and more reformed Baptist churches planted in Zambia and beyond. Indeed, with their recognized influence through their giftedness in preaching and teaching these leading men have helped pioneer and keep together the reigns of the movement for the last three decades. Brethren from other parts of the world came to attend and some even to speak at the national conferences by the invitation of these main men.

KII 1 clearly confirms this when he says, “There is misunderstanding and confusion of equating Pioneers to leaders of the movement. Pioneers are not leaders of the movement. They don’t occupy any influential position in the movement but in their local churches where they serve. To ask the Pioneers to come out and give the position, say on New Calvinism, is expecting too much from them.” This confirms that technically, there was never any authoritative leadership in the RBmZ to effectively guide the movement on its own.

The irony of this position however, is that when there were no issues, there was no doubt as to who was in charge of the RBmZ. Everyone regarded the pioneer pastors as the leaders of the movement. But in a time of crisis when leadership was needed most, the reality was unveiled that the informal leadership structure system of the RBmZ unrealistic. For the followers in the movement who always thought that pioneer pastors were the leaders of the movement, this

revelation came as a shock, disappointment and heartbreak. The sad turn of events brought to the fore some serious leadership flaws of the RBmZ and revealed the negative effects that might arise when the organizational structure and leadership system of an organization is not clear or adequately explained to people. It may cause people to lose confidence in the organizational structure and build mistrust for the leadership.

Further, in such an environment many negative things can easily go unchecked or uncensored due to the system lacking a clear guide on responsibility and accountability procedures in place. Worse still, its flaccid nature, can easily be manipulated especially by people that are influential and who possess strong personalities for their own motives. And this is exactly what happened in 2019 when this informal leadership system was tested and it was discovered that the long assumed *de facto* leaders could not bear the responsibility of leadership as they claimed to have no official capacity to do so. This would not have been the case had the RBmZ's structure been patterned after the OLC approach systems.

3.3.8 Achille Blaize and the 1990 conference

In the effort to find an appropriate church government system for the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia, Achille Blaize was invited to speak at their conference on this subject. It was entitled, "*The Church of Christ - Eldership rule, the use of Confessions of Faith*". His teaching and position on these matters, and indeed other related matters, have remained the most influential position held by an average reformed person in Zambia today. His teachings on Scripture, Calvinism and the autonomy of the local church as well as the concept of the local church-driven ministries, remain the yardstick for defining reformed theology on church government among Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia today.

Many KIIs who attended the 1990 family conference affirm that the obtaining situation in the movement now is a fruit of that conference. They see Achille Blaize the main speaker at the conference, as the driving influence behind both the good and the bad that has since characterized the reformed movement in Zambia.

Deviation from what Achille Blaize taught then is regarded by many as synonymous with deviation from the true Christian faith. It is important, however, to qualify here that the problem was not so much in Achille Blaze's fundamental teachings, but rather how these teachings were grasped, interpreted and later applied to personal lives and ministry situations by the people and the churches present – which in some areas took an extreme side, as observed in the following areas:

3.3.8.1 An overly emphasis on the Autonomy of the local church and the local-church-driven ministries concept

On ecclesiology, Achille Blaize stressed the autonomy of the local church and its accompanying component of church-based ministries, without a corresponding emphasis on how this independence fitted into the interdependence of churches according the Chapter 26 of the 1689 Baptist Confession where both issues are tackled. This created an unbalanced view of conceiving the independence and interdependence of churches as it was biased towards the autonomy of the local church. KII 3 observed: “We have not done well; the movement is extremely informal. I feel we have not critically and satisfactorily thought through the dynamics of inter-church associations.” This fits with KII 11 sentiments that “But with more reading of the confession, we came to see a place of partnership of churches with like-mindedness and similar convictions.”

These statements above affirm that the place of partnership of churches was not addressed by Achille Blaize. It was only discovered later on as churches became aware of the anomaly about the extreme emphasis on the autonomy of the church and how this was affecting meaningful inter-church collaboration. The practical consequence of this bias approach was that it downgraded the significance of inter-church fellowships, reducing it to desirable but not obligatory relationships. It also robbed believers of a biblically balanced view of the doctrine of the church as one household of God. There have been practical implications to this unbalanced ecclesiology of overly emphasizing the autonomy of the local church and church-based-ministries such as:

3.3.8.2 Para-church organizations were condemned

One implication of this understanding of ecclesiology was that para-church organizations such as ZAFES and Scripture Union were regarded unbiblical (or they have no biblical basis for their existence and operation), and as such, the church was advised not to have any association with such and other similar organizations and institutions.

3.3.8.3 Bible/theological colleges were condemned

KII 10 acknowledges that Achille Blaize “condemned Theological and Bible colleges, that we do not need them”. Furthermore, applying the principle of the autonomy of the local church and local church-based ministries only concept, theological and Bible colleges were equally deemed undesirable because they were outside of the church’s control.

KII 9 who had attained formal theological training and suffered at the hands of those who held this view recollects his experience at a conference held at Northern Technical College (NORTEC) in Ndola in 1995: “What I experienced at that conference is what I continued experiencing for the next twenty years, that is, apart from the conferences themselves, I never enjoyed the fellowship. This was mainly because I was undergoing formal theological training at the time. It was strongly held by the brothers from Mufulira, Chingola and Lusaka that it is not biblical to go for theological training. Jesus didn’t go to a theological college. This concept was passed on from their pastors who themselves never had formal theological training and yet were great preachers.”

This teaching not only discouraged formal theological training but put a false dichotomy between the gift of preaching from God and Bible training which exists not to gift but equip the gifted. It also helps put in perspective why those who join the reformed Baptist churches fraternity having been already formally theologically trained are often frowned upon by those who hold strongly to these convictions within the movement circles.

Many people who experienced the special phenomenon of the revival and saw the Spirit’s power gifting the pioneer pastors with special preaching abilities wanted to maintain this as a qualification standard for assessing those desiring to take up full time pastoral work later and not theological training.

This is a serious leadership issue because it touches on the importance of training and equipping men for ministry. The church needs qualified manpower to effectively carry out its great commission mandate in the world. Fortunately, this aspect of ‘formal training’ has been one of those areas in which change has been effected in later years. Some who may have championed its condemnation in early years later embraced and benefited from theological training, albeit being accused of hypocrisy and compromise of their faith for taking such a stance.

3.3.8.4 Running of conferences as a joint inter-church project was condemned

Consistent with the teaching of the autonomy of the local church and the local church-driven ministries concept, it meant that the running of the reformed Baptist Conferences too, were to be local church driven ministries. KII 1 remarks: “1990 conference – Behind it the driving influence was Achille Blaze – was the first family conference speaker on the topic “Confessions” with the 1689 as emphasis. He helped see the importance of working through a local churches concept. At that time KBC was a little bit more organized with a plural

eldership”. It was this understanding that led Kabwata Baptist Church, having stabilized earlier than the other churches, to adopt and start to run the Zambia Reformed Conferences as its church-based ministry in the early years, to which other churches were simply invited.

But not all stakeholders agreed that the concept of church-based ministry should be extended to projects that were inter-church ventures in nature. Such projects, and indeed all other joint interchurch ventures, needed to be run with a separate system of governance and leadership style which nonetheless respected and protected the principle of the autonomy of the local church. Failure to do so would allow monopoly of one church to run national events at the exclusion of other equal partners. But those who argued thus were accused of being inconsistent in the application of a clearly set principle of the autonomy of the local church.

The rigid stance in the defense of the autonomy of the local church has, over the years, been the centre of controversy and now even threatens the split of the RBmZ. The argument is that the way that the RBmZ is run currently does not promote its expected key elements of unity, fellowship and close collaboration in mission projects among all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. Flexibility in organizational management is very important as it helps in effecting needed change at the right time of the organization growth stage. Sometimes, differing in opinions should not be taken negatively; it may be an indicator that an organization is at the point of transition into the next phase, therefore requiring necessary change. Leaders must be open to new ideas if they are going to discern these different stages that an organization goes through.

3.3.8.5 Running the Parsons diet as a joint inter-church project was condemned

Similarly, in keeping with this view of the independence of the local church and local church-driven ministry concept, not only were the conferences to be run as a local church-based ministry but the Parsons diet,²¹ which was a national reformed Baptist Pastors fraternal, too. KII 15 narrates his frustration with the Parson’s diet thus: “It revealed a segregation in speakers who, we were told, were chosen based on their ability of presenting quality and credible papers – a clear lack of trust and confidence in other pastors. At one such meeting only two speakers

²¹ The parson’s diet was a special pastors’ fraternal of the Reformed Baptist churches’ pastors. It met every other year in Chingola town on the Copperbelt province. Although a national event, it was nonetheless run on the principle of church-driven ministry under Chingola Central Baptist church.

were selected to handle all the sessions, and when it was asked why it was so, the response was that they were the most competent to handle the subject matter. Annoyed by the response, some pastors resolved to stop attending these meetings.”

Some stakeholders who were not preview to this arrangement wondered why it was Chingola Central Baptist Church that always hosted the Parson’s diet and why its resident pastor always dictated the speakers and themes, just as was the case with Kabwata Baptist Church and its elders for the national conferences. Well, the Parson’s diet was operated under the principle of a local church-driven ministry, in this case under Chingola Central Baptist church, to which pastors from other reformed Baptist churches were simply invited to discuss theological and other pastoral matters. It was meant to be conceived this way and not as a joint inter-church venture of all pastors in the RBmZ, as many would have loved it to be.

But again, those who opposed extending the local church-driven ministry concept to inter-church projects disagreed that it be applied to the Parson’s Diet too, arguing that just like the national conferences this was a national pastors’ fellowship and therefore required the participation of all pastors in planning and decision making. To achieve that, it needed its own organization structure and leadership system to coordinate the pastors’ fellowship affairs without this body threatening the autonomy of the local church.

This again reveals the direct link that exists between an organization and its management. The leadership of an organization depends on how it is organized. The Parson’s diet leadership was derived from the organization structure of the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia (the autonomy of the local church and the local church-driven ministries). It is from this structure system that the style of leadership for the Parson’s diet was determined. To change this leadership style, you must change the organization structure first. But it is not easy to change a rooted principle such as the autonomy of the local church among Baptists because it speaks of their very existence. However, other alternative approaches can be sought that do not threaten this core value of the organization but simply works towards its enhancement and effective operations. Leaders must be flexible to discern such alternative methods and not just rigidly defend the autonomy of the local no matter what.

3.3.8.6 Formal inter-church association condemned

That the overly emphasis on the autonomy and local church-driven ministries made formal association undesirable is captured by KII 1 who commented: “Behind it, the driving influence was Achille Blaze. At that first family conference in 1990 on the topic “Confessions” with

emphasis on the 1689, he helped us see the importance of working through a local church concept and taught us the importance of always jealously guarding and upholding the doctrine of the independence and autonomy of the local church. So, we never established an association; all was done informally, and it has been like that. The associational side has never been in our DNA to associate formally, but always informal. The way forward is not to form an association even though, yes, there are advantages in formalizing an association”. This sentiment is one main reason the movement has largely remained informal despite efforts to try and formalize.

KII 13 confirmed: “The idea of forming a Reformed Baptist Churches Association of Zambia (ReBCAZ) was welcomed but it was never implemented. The reason is that there wasn’t the commitment to make it work. Lack of support for an association is the main reason for its failure to be practically realized”. KII 1 adds that, “There has been some attempts, trying to come together and do something together. Church leaders were invited from across the country and they signed up. It was meant to be for fellowship, and church planting – pull resources together and assist local churches. Sadly, it has really never been effective. So, we have never had a functional association. To that extent, there has been challenges.”

Behind anti-formalization is the concern that it would compromise the independence and autonomy of the local church. But what some KIIs find surprising and perhaps qualify for serious inconsistency is that many churches, especially from Lusaka, joined a regional association of reformed churches called Sola 5 without first implementing their own local one. In fact, some of the leaders from these same churches were key players in the formation of this regional body.

Because inter-church associations were condemned at the 1990 Conference, another opportunity in the growth stage of the RBmZ was lost by failure to practically effect to operationalise ReBCAZ with its own organizational structure and leadership system. Since ReBCAZ was supposed to involve and represent the interests of all Reformed Baptists churches in Zambia, it was important that all stakeholders came on board.

Unfortunately, as some sentiments from some KIIs suggest, it would appear that the idea of formal inter-church relations could not materialize because some influential leaders and their churches were not warmed up to the idea of associating formally. Once again, this reveals the effect of being rigid and calls for flexibility in thinking about the principle of the autonomy of the local church.

There is need to warm up to the fact that interdependence of churches is an equally fundamental and necessary doctrine of the church that needs to be appreciated and embraced. Without that flexibility, ReBCAZ may remain a work in theory and on paper only, or serve only some out of the many churches of the RBmZ. The very fact that the envisaged fellowship and collaboration of all reformed Baptist churches in Zambia has not been achieved is indicative of the fact that the existing organizational structure and leadership system being implemented by the RBmZ is ineffective and needs to be revised.

The above discussion highlights the aspects of leadership competencies or lack of them. Among these competencies are the need for flexibility, tolerance, discernment, accepting criticism, respecting other's opinions, patience, considerate, respectful, to mention but a few. Different situations will require different leadership competencies approaches to deal with them. Varying the application of leadership competencies can help in solving many problems and overcoming many challenges. The problem comes when there are no leadership competencies employed in handling or resolving issues. Correct assessment of the situation and right application of leadership competencies can help in resolving even these divisive theological debates that have become rife within the RBmZ.

Achille Blaize's exposition of Chapter 26 of 1689 Baptist Confession of faith on the doctrine of the church did not do justice on the subject matter, instead it created an artificial dichotomy in conceiving the local church and the local church interdependence, both issues which the Confession urge churches to practice simultaneously. His approach did not give a balanced view on how these two issues – the autonomy of the local church and the inter-church relations – are supposed to be practiced side by side.

He ably addressed the principle of the autonomy of the local church but did not balance it up with how this independence worked out in relation with the principle of inter-church fellowship and collaboration. He biased the autonomy of the local church over inter-church relationships. But this is contrary to what the framers of the Confession had in mind when they penned down those two sister principles – the autonomy and the interdependence of churches. They envisaged a healthy balance between the two.

The result of conceiving church in the manner Achille Blaize taught was that it created an artificial dichotomy between the autonomy of the local church and its relationship to other sister churches. Eventually, this led to the extreme isolation of the local church as it perceived active formal inter-church fellowship and collaboration as a desirable option and not an

obligation for churches to practice. This anomaly needs to be rectified. It is at the heart of the many problems that the RBmZ faces today.

3.3.9 Regionalism

KII 2 says, “Due to geographical reasons (virtue platforms were not there) it was difficult to incorporate other churches outside of Lusaka. But Churches were to send representatives – we would have a session to talk about other churches and pray together. The fact that most of the people complaining are coming from the Copperbelt churches means that the geographical issue has somehow contributed, but exactly how is not known”

Due to separate geographical locations, two separate centres of power have emerged in the movement – one in Lusaka province and the other on the Copperbelt province. And in an informal setting where there is no structured mechanism for fellowship, there is nothing formal in place to help manage this challenge. As a result, this geographical distance has led to decreased levels of communication and fellowship, and eventually increased the sense of independence and isolationism from each other.

Regionalism is a leadership issue too. If the RBmZ had been structured well with its own organizational structure and leadership system, it would have been the right tool of bridging this geographical gap between sister churches in these two provinces. But since there is no leadership to think through such challenges and to advise ways of overcoming them, communion of these saints between these two regions is reduced. In turn, the strength of fellowship and collaboration is equally affected and, in the end, leads to complete breaking of the relationship. The RBmZ needs to provide leadership to bridge the gap between these two regions. But sadly, in the current state of the RBmZ operation, it is incapable to provide leadership until it is empowered.

3.3.10 Play of friendships

It was observed earlier by KII 15 that the reformed movement in Zambia revolved around individuals and not churches. These individuals were mainly the pioneer-pastors who also happened to be friends (Pastor Choolwe Mweetwa, Pastor Ronald Kalifungwa, Pastor Brian Njovu and Pastor Conrad Mbewe), and together, in what may be properly tamed as a play of friendships among themselves and between two regions - Lusaka and the Copperbelt, have impacted and shaped the status of the movement from inception to what it is today. From the beginning they were one, working together but as friends.

KII 8 said that, “Informal associations worked well among like-minded churches because of friendships and influence of the founder pastors who, fortunately, are still living and actively serving. But what happens when friendships break in the informal setting? There is nothing left to hold the ropes together – cracks begin to form and before long, things begin to crumble. Time may come with new people who do not know each other very well; how will they function without a formal structure to follow and guide them? It will lead not only to segmentations within the circles of ‘friends’ but theological shifts are likely to occur as well due to the absence of clear guidelines. Therefore, while friendship plays a vital role of promoting love and unity between the parties involved, nonetheless its role is limited and fragile.”

What the RBmZ need is a forum recognized and respected by all stake holders with its own organizational structure and leadership system to guide the movement and foster responsibility and accountability among themselves. Relying on friendships would not take the move far as friendships can break and people can die. With friendships there is a perception of succession where leaders choose their successors from their friends. But these can be avoided by simply putting up a formalized structure and leadership system that can stand a test of time.

Summary

The information gleaned from the three sources discussed above: 1) Literature on the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia, 2) literature on the Reformed Baptists, and 3) information from empirical data collected through interviews, reveals some important aspects that relate to this research’s theoretical framework of OLC and leadership. Below is a summary of a basic OLC of the RBmZ and the organizational structure and leadership system challenges it has encountered in the three decades of its existence due to the stakeholders uncompromising adherence to the principle of the independence and autonomy of the local church. It comprises three life circles divided into three 10 years periods each showing the focus, quality of interactions and the key issues that characterized each period.

Figure 7: RBmZ 30 years’ life circle

Stage	Period	Focus	Inter-church relations	Issue

Start stage	1 st 10 years 1989 - 1999	Doctrinal discovery and clarity	Pioneers and Pastors relationships driven by Friendships	Independence and Autonomy of the local church
Growth stage	2 nd 10 years 1999 - 2009	Organizational structure	RBmZ run as a local church-driven ministry	Weak inter-church relations and collaboration
Decline stage	3 rd 10 years 2009 - 2019	Leadership system	Loose and Informal leadership	Threat of secession

Both human beings and organizations need leadership. The RBmZ lacks appropriate leadership. The leadership challenges faced by the RBmZ are directly connected to its organizational structure and the leadership system which it currently espouses. The principle of the autonomy of the local church and the local church-driven ministry concept practiced by the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia has greatly affected and compromised the organizational structure and the leadership system of the RBmZ. A right leadership to drive the movement now and in the future is lacking, and yet that is what the RBmZ requires at the moment. Every progressive organization must have an organized structure and leadership system formally and clearly spelt out. Without a properly formalized structure and recognized leadership, as the case is with the RBmZ, the organization is unlikely to succeed. Success of an organization depends on how it is organized and managed. The RBmZ cannot succeed because it is managed under a local church-driven ministry system which curtails its own leadership system needed to serve the Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. This anomaly is what need to be addressed.

Conclusion

Unless the strong perception of the autonomy of the local church (which eclipses the organization structure and the leadership of the RBmZ) in its current form is revisited, it will be difficult for Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia to have strong, meaningful fellowship and collaboration among themselves. The highly desired cooperation shall remain elusive, unrealistic and a wishful thinking. Friendships may to some extent work at building inter-church relationships but they are limited to how far they can go in doing so. Friendships cannot sustain large scale collaboration of churches, and certainly not the rate of scale of growth that the reformed Baptist churches are growing at. That kind of exponential growth requires a formalized forum that brings every stakeholder together in common interest.

To achieve that, there will be need to begin to consider perceiving the RBmZ in OLC terms, allowing for flexibility on the principle of the autonomy of the local church so that appropriate changes may be effected at the different stages of the movement's growth as opposed to the current rigid situation where even where change is clearly inevitable it nonetheless cannot be effected for fear that it might tamper with the autonomy of the local church. Also, many issues that have arisen can be handled by effecting right leadership styles that come with appropriate leadership competencies. Lack of the utilization of these OLC tools is the main cause to a number of problems that have affected the RBmZ and above them all, lack of leadership.

In the next chapter we shall consider the biblical teaching on leadership. This is done with the view to discern normative church leadership elements from Scripture that could be used as guide to formulate the leadership model for the RBmZ.

Chapter 4 - Leadership in the Bible

This chapter is a theological/Biblical analysis on leadership. The focus of the chapter is to discern normative church leadership elements from Scripture that could be used as guide to formulate the leadership model for the RBmZ. It explores the leadership concept in Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments. An analysis of the meaning of leadership, how it is applied and practiced in Scripture has been done. A systematic biblical study from a grammatical-historical exegesis framework was employed i.e., both Old and New Testaments using exegetical tools like lexicons such as Louw and Nida (1989) and Newman (1993)] and other literatures such as commentaries.

We begin by considering how the terms leader and leadership are used and understood in the Bible.

4.1 Philological considerations of the terms - “leader” and “leadership”

4.1.1 In the Old Testament

The word Leadership is used all the time but what does it mean? In Hebrews the word designated for leadership is מְנַהִיגוּת (manhigut). The one for leader which comes from the same Semitic root is מְנַהִיג (manhig). We can understand the meaning of this root word, through the verb. The verb לְנַהֵג (linhog) stands for "treating people" and "being consistent with your actions". Moreover, in Modern Hebrew this verb is actually used for driving a car! Thus, being a leader in Hebrew is not just a concept, it is a responsibility that comes with your persistent character²².

Borchardt (2017:1121-1124) identifies four different Hebrew and Greek terms in the Old Testament that are translated by the English word leader:

1) *śar*, used 381 times in the Old Testament and by far the most frequently occurring of these terms. It is used to denote many types of leaders such as tribal chiefs (Judg 5 :15), royal figures (Jer 26 : 11), priestly officers (Ezra 8 : 24), officials of many different offices within a functioning court bureaucracy (Gen 40 : 2). Sometimes it is used in connection with plural

²²Quoted online at http://lp.eteacherbiblical.com/lp_biblical_hebrew_leadership-en.html.
Visited on 14th July, 2022

nouns, for example; *śar bêt hassōhar* is the leader of the prison (Gen 39: 23), *śar haṭṭabāhîm* is the leader of the stewards (Gen 40: 4), and *śarê šēbāōt* refers to the commanders of the troops (Deut 20: 9).

There are also instances when the term is used in conjunction with a noun or proper noun. For example, *śar hā'îr* is the leader of the city (Judg 9: 30), and *śarê pēlišṭîm* are the leaders of the Philistines (1 Sam 18: 30). Overall, *śar* can be taken as a generic term for leader but only receives its specialized senses when connected to a given body of people or a place. In the Greek translation of *śar*, it is reflected in the use of compound nouns to represent both the term *śar* and its specifier. Used that way, *śar šēbāō* becomes *ρ-ιστρ τηγς τς δυν μεως ατ* (Gen 21: 22), *śar hā'ōpîm* becomes *τρ ρισιτ πιν* (Gen 41: 10), and *śarê hammēōt* becomes *κατνταρι* (Num 31: 48).

2) *nāśî*, derived from the verb *nāśā*, means being lifted up, chosen, or elected. It is used 128 times in the Hebrew Bible. Its main reference is often to leaders of tribes (Num 34: 18), leaders of the community (Josh 9: 18), leaders of Israel (1 Kgs 8: 1), and other offices related to the governing of a people. In some instances, it is translated as chieftain or prince, especially when it is used in a technical way to refer to communal leadership, whether that be current (Josh 22: 32), or the promised Davidic ruler (Ezek 34: 24). The term is consistently translated by the Greek *ρων*, which has slightly more range in that it can be tied to institutions, but is also focused primarily on popular governance.

3) *nāgîd*, from the verb *nāgad*, carries the connotation of “the one who is elevated.” The term has been used in three primary ways throughout the Old Testament. First, in reference to generic leadership, whether within the military (1 Chr 13: 1), or the temple staff (1 Chr 9: 20). Second, together with a noun to denote a specific office, as is the case with such phrases as *nāgîd habāyit* which refers to the leader of the palace (2 Chr 28: 7), *nāgîd bêt hā'ēlōhîm* which denotes the leader of the house of God (Neh 11: 11), and *nāgîd berît* which refers to the leader of the covenant (Dan 11: 22).

Third, in association with national leadership. So, *nāgîd šōr*, the prince of Tyre, appears in Ezek 28: 2. Rather frequently, especially in the books of Samuel and Kings, phrases like *nāgîd al amî yiśrā'ēl*, which means ruler over my people Israel (1 Sam 9: 16; 1 Kgs 14: 7; 16: 2), and similar terms like *nēgîd amî*, meaning ruler of my people (2 Kgs 20: 5), are seen. Although variously used, it is essentially a generic term for leader. Its translation equivalence in Greek is the term *μενν*, which reflects the generic sense of leader.

4) *Měnaššēḥa* is a Hebrew term frequently found in the Psalms (4–6, 8, 9, 11–14, 18–22, 31, 36, 40–42, 44–47, 49, 51–62, 64–70, 75–77, 80, 81, 84, 85, 88, 109, 139, 140) and once in Habakkuk (3:19) as part of the superscription *lamnaššēḥa*. When translated in this context of musical performance, the translation is “chief choirmaster.” However, this specialised sense of usage of the term is shed off when the term is used with the stative verb *nāṣaḥ*, which means to be eternal or to be overseer, and used in 2 Chr 2: 1, 17, and 34: 13. In the former the *měnaššēḥîm* are supervisors of the construction work on the temple from among the resident aliens in Israel while the latter the *měnaššēḥîm* are again supervisors over a range of tasks within the temple.

Thus, the term is not restricted in meaning to the leader of musical performance, but is broader and should more generally be understood as a leader. Its equivalent translation in the Greek of the Psalms is $\tau\text{-}\lambda\varsigma$, which, often denote the highest official in a given line of work. In the examples from 2 Chronicles, however, the plural term is translated several different ways, including $\rho\gamma\delta\iota\kappa\tau\alpha\varsigma$ and $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\tau\alpha\iota$ specifically indicating supervisory status.

The discussion above shows that there is a vast array of ways of conceiving the terms “leader” and “leadership” in the Old Testament. The terms are used in varied ways, sometimes in generic terms and other times they take a specific meaning according to the context. They are used as leader, elevated, supervisor, choir master, ruler, overseer, to mention but a few.

To avoid artificial understanding and conversely misapplication of these terms to the contemporary context, care must be given to the usage of these terms in their original context. “To uncover anything of substance about the nature or presentation of leadership one really needs to either present an etic propositional definition for leadership and find those cases where figures fit such descriptions, or adhere to the emic terms for leadership discussed above, being careful to aggregate information only with the knowledge that such categorization is a contemporary construct” (Borchardt 2017:1124).

However, regardless of the usage of the terms in any context, being a leader in Hebrew is not just a concept, it is a responsibility that comes with one’s persistent character. And that character is godly character.

4.1.2 In the New Testament

According to Clarke (2017:1124), the word “leader” in the New Testament is mostly used in a generic sense, whilst a collective noun “leadership” is not found in the Greek New Testament.

In Luke-Acts and Hebrews, the term ἡγέομαι (ἡγεμῶν, ἡγεμονεύω) typically carries the sense of “govern” or “rule” in an overall capacity, whether in regard to a Roman province or a local church (cf. Luke 2: 2; 3: 1; 22: 26; Acts 14 :12; 15 : 22; Heb 13 : 7, 17, 24).

The other terms, ἄρχων and πῶ are widely applied in reference to gentile, civic, Jewish religious, or demonic rulers; and, except when in reference to Jesus Christ, typically carry negative connotations (cf. Matt 9 : 18, 23, 34; 12 : 24; 20 : 25; Mark 3 : 22; 10 : 42; Lk 8 : 41; 11 : 15; 12 : 58; 14 : 1; 18 : 18; 23 : 13, 35; 24 : 20; John 3 : 1; 7 : 26, 48; 12 : 31, 42; 14 : 30; 16 : 11; Acts 3 : 17; 4 : 5, 8, 26; 7 : 27, 35; 13 : 27; 14 : 5; 16 : 19; 23 : 5; Rom 13 : 3; 15 : 12; 1 Cor 2 : 6, 8; Eph 2 : 2; Rev 1 : 5).

Negative connotations also apply to the term φιλοπρωτεύω, with the implication that it is not necessarily appropriate to be “one who desires to be preeminent” (3 John 9; Mark 9: 35; 10: 31, 44; Luke 13: 30).

It may be deduced that the usage of the term “leader” in the New Testament, just as in the Old Testament, is varied and therefore can only be rightly understood within the context in which it is being applied. “The New Testament authors often distinguish between the nature of leadership appropriate within the Christian communities and that widely exercised in other contexts, reframing the characteristics of those who lead. In this sense Jesus’ statement, “It shall not be so among you” (Mark 10: 43) and his servant-like acts are not an argument for egalitarianism nor for disdaining office, but for the kind of leading that is characterised by service and sacrifice” (Clarke 2017:1126).

4.2 Narratives of some leadership characteristics in the Bible

So far, we have looked at the philological discussion on biblical leadership both from the Old Testament and the New Testament. To further enhance our understanding of leaders and leadership in the Bible, we now turn to consider some narratives of biblical leaders. Scripture is replete with examples of human leadership portrayed by leaders throughout biblical narrative account - good and bad; religious and political; godly and pagan.

By observing the various functions and social roles played by these leaders and how they interacted with those they led within the narratives, we will be able to glean valuable insights on what ought and ought not characterize a leader. For the purposes and in line with this research which is guided by OLC, we will select leaders in different epochs of the life of the

nation of Israel. This is with the view to discern both principles and structures of biblical leadership.

4.2.1 In the Old Testament

4.2.1.1 Joseph: Joseph came to power when there was famine in the whole land and he, Joseph, was in charge of the only food centre available to save the people from starvation. Joseph rose to prominence in Egypt after 13 years of enslavement there (Genesis 37-39). Prior to that, when he was only 17 years old his brothers sold him and he finally found himself in Egypt as a slave of a man named Potiphar. But before long, Potiphar noticed the moral and spiritual strength in all the vicissitudes of Joseph's life and elevated him to be in charge of his entire house except his wife.

But Potiphar's wife was sexually drawn to the young man and attempted to seduce Joseph to sleep with her but he refused because he neither wanted to betray Potiphar's trust nor sin against God. He said to her: "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her (Genesis 39:8-10). As a way of hitting back at him, she lied that Joseph had attempted to force himself on her. This false accusation landed Joseph in prison where he stayed for many years, until one day Pharaoh summoned him to his palace to interpret his special dream.

Apparently, Pharaoh had come to learn about Joseph and his preternatural ability to interpret dreams after he had a dream which all his wise men failed to interpret. True to what Pharaoh had heard, Joseph did not only interpret Pharaoh's dream but also advised him how to solve the problem of the seven-year famine to which that dream pointed. "Now therefore let Pharaoh seek out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint overseers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance." (Genesis 41:33-34). Pharaoh immediately recognized that "discreet and wise man" in Joseph and so appointed him to a high office which was only second in hierarchy to himself (Genesis 41:41-45).

Finally, the lean years of famine came upon all the land and there was no food in the whole land except Egypt. Joseph's brothers who had wronged him terribly by selling him as a slave,

also came to Egypt to buy food. This was Joseph's grand chance for revenge, but he didn't. Instead, he simply established whether his brothers' hearts had changed by testing how their response would be if they were to lose his young brother Benjamin. When Judah stood in defence of Benjamin by offering himself to take his place as a slave, Joseph was greatly touched and openly made himself known to his brothers. "He kissed all of his brothers and wept on them" (Genesis 45:15).

Joseph had every reason to take revenge with his brothers, now that he was in position of power, but he had no interest in vengeance. The driving force behind this non-retaliation spirit was manifested later after his father died and the brothers were afraid that now Joseph would seek revenge against them. They pleaded: "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you. And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him" (Gen 50:17).

But Joseph assured them: "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones. Thus, he comforted them and spoke kindly to them" (Genesis 50:19-21). Joseph interpreted all events of life in light of the providential workings of God, therefore was able to forgive his brothers' wrongs.

There are a number of leadership characteristics exhibited by Joseph in this account. In line with this research's focus on OLC, it can be said that Joseph rose to leadership in Egypt during a crisis period and applied crisis leadership skills to avert a world-wide hunger crisis. By choosing Joseph, Pharaoh identified an appropriate leader for the stage his nation and the whole world was at. The times needed a competent leader who was discreet and wise, one who could effectively handle the situation. Joseph, through his preternatural ability to interpret dreams, was identified as that visionary and problem-solving leader needed at that hour to avert the looming world-wide famine catastrophe. Using these managerial skills and competencies, Joseph did not only interpret Pharaoh's dream but also advised him how to solve the problem of the seven-year famine to which that dream pointed.

Joseph was a transformational leader too. He stands out as a leader who was concerned and consumed by the big picture – that is, the welfare of the people and the health of the organization God entrusted him to lead. This right focus may explain in part why he was not bent at settling scores with his enemies. He knew he was a leader expected to deliver to the

expectations of the people and appointing authorities. Thus, in order to avoid wasting time and being distracted with settling scores with his enemies, Joseph chose rather to quickly forgive the wrongs of those who wronged him as soon as they asked for it. As a leader, his focus was not to appease his honour but what would build up the people and improve the national performance.

Furthermore, Joseph was an ethical and moral leader. He was tolerant and forgiving, whilst focusing on the main reason God has elevated him to that position. The interest of people and the organization preceded self-interest or gain. He was morally upright and feared God. He told Potiphar's wife: "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Proverbs says, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10; 11:10). Wisdom is an indispensable ingredient to being a good leader.

4.2.1.2 Moses: Moses rose to power at a time when the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt and were in desperate need of a saviour from the Egyptian yoke. Even though he later rose to great prominence as a great leader of Israel, Moses had a very rough beginning. He was born during the 400 years when the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt (Gen 15:13; Exod 12:40–42), from Hebrew slave parents, Amram and Jochebed, both from the tribe of Levi (Exod 2:1; 6:16–20; 7:7; Num 26:59; 1 Chr 6:3; 23:12–14). He had an older sister named Miriam, and an older brother named Aaron. Moses was born at the time Pharaoh had decreed that all male Hebrew children were to be killed.

Providentially, however, Moses was preserved when Pharaoh's daughter adopted him as her own son. Thus, Moses grew up in Pharaoh's palace. But when he had grown up, he got affected by the sufferings he saw the Hebrew slaves were exposed to. A sense of justice overwhelmed his soul and compelled him to resolve not to remain indifferent to these injustices. One day he saw an Egyptian taskmaster beating a Hebrew slave. Moses intervened by killing the Egyptian and hiding him in the sand (Exodus 2:11-12). The following day, Moses saw two Hebrews fighting each other and tried to reason with the stronger of the two: "Why do you strike your companion?" (Exodus 2:13). In the meantime, news had reached Pharaoh that Moses had killed an Egyptian. Out of fear, Moses fled to Midian.

No sooner had he arrived in Midian, than he witnessed another incidence of injustice being committed. It triggered his sense of Justice and once again he intervened by siding with the victims, who were the seven daughters of Jethro, the priest of Midian. "The shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and saved them, and watered their flock" (Exodus

2:17). Balogh (1916) rightly observes that “These incidents make clear what was unique about Moses: a strong sense of justice and little interest in power and wealth.”

Earlier, he left Egypt because though a prince, he never cared about losing the prestige of being a son of Pharaoh’s daughter but gave it up all for the inhumane way the Hebrew slaves were treated by their Egyptian masters. He didn’t want to be associated with evil. Even when a fugitive in Midian, Moses’ character of the dislike for dehumanization of people made him forget his own plight and concentrated of the miseries of the weak.

Many years later, after he had accepted God’s call as a leader of the Israelites, these traits of desiring the welfare of all people continued to manifest at different times in his leadership life. One time, Jethro his father-in-law visited him and found that he was overwhelmed with pressure from handling God’s people’s matters as a sole leader. He advised Moses to consider delegating some of his authority and responsibilities to others so that only weighty matters could be referred to him (Exodus 18). Moses humbly and gladly accepted and implemented the advice given him by his father-in-law. Thus, besides his traits of loving people and sharing power, Moses had a listening ear, too. He took advice from others.

Another time, Moses personally asked God to find more leaders because the burden of taking care of the Israelites was too much for one person (Numbers 11:16-17). God approved his request and seventy elders were appointed to help Moses with the governance issues of God’s people. Here again is an indicator that Moses was not a power-hungry leader but one that believed in shared leadership.

Moses was never jealousy or envious of the newly appointed leaders upon whom God had poured his spirit to empower them. When Joshua found two of these seventy men, Eldad and Medad prophesying in the camp, he asked Moses to stop them. But Moses responded in a godly way: “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!” (Numbers 11:29).

Towards the end of his life, it was again Moses who demanded that God provides the children of Israel with a suitable successor so that the people of God should not be like sheep without a shepherd once he was gone (Numbers 27:15–17), and God chose Joshua to be his successor. Moses’ heart was closely bound-up with the people God gave him to lead and therefore sought nothing for them but the very best.

Moses was a good leader who was not afraid to share power or be jealous of other people's achievements. In fact, his desire was the welfare, progress and prosperity of others. This trait was manifested in his mediatory appeal to God to forgive the people's sins after they had angered God by erecting and worshipping a Golden Calf and God wanted to destroy them. Moses pleaded with God on their behalf: "But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." (Exodus 32:32). Here again, Moses as a leader, demonstrated that he loved and cared more for the people God gave him to lead than for himself. No wonder Scripture regards Moses as a "servant of God" (Numbers 12:7).

If Moses had not been endowed with these leadership qualities of servanthood, humility and love for the people, it would have been very difficult for him to lead such stubborn and ever complaining people as the Israelites were (Exodus 14:11; Number 11:4- 5; Numbers 14:3; Numbers 21:5). Yet, with all their unending complaints and sometimes even open rebellion Moses still interceded on their behalf and pleaded with God not to punish the entire nation (Exodus 32: 31-33; Numbers 14: 13-16; Numbers 16:21-22).

Moses even turned down an offer from God to make him into a great nation, if only he would let God destroy the sinful Israelites (Exodus 32:10). But Moses understood his leadership role as being for the benefit of the people God had given him to lead. He deemed it a failure of leadership to accept personal benefit from God. So, he refused the offer (Numbers 14:12). "Moses gave his entire life serving those he led, and it was a difficult, dangerous, and largely unfulfilling experience, but one he counted as a reward consistent with his Saviour's suffering" (Johnson 2020:25).

From the OLC perspective, two aspects stand out in Moses' leadership style – Justice and proper use of power. Moses believed that the governing rules of the organization must be just and fair across the board for the people to be happy. This is why he advanced his justice leadership style in which he sought fairness and fought any form of discrimination. Moses knew that when laws and regulations are fairly drafted and implemented, they instil a sense of security in people, an aspect which is crucial to the wellbeing of the organization.

But Moses also grasped well the proper use of power – not as a status but as a functional responsibility. This is clearly demonstrated in his readiness to sacrifice himself for the good of his people, his lack of jealousy and envy of other leaders' success as well as his humility and willingness to take advice from others. His leadership was both a servant and assertive,

characterized by authoritative truthfulness, confrontational honesty, and clarity of purpose, familial winsomeness, and reasonableness which reflects a didactic approach to leadership.

4.2.1.3 Joshua: After Moses died, Joshua became his Successor. He had worked with Moses as his helper and had been assigned to carry out a number of missions by Moses. So, Joshua had learnt much from Moses with regard to leadership. And just as God had spoken directly to Moses his predecessor, so he spoke to Joshua in the same way and instructed him on how he was going to be a good leader of his people, the Israelites.

The summary of the instructions of God to Joshua of a good leader are given in Joshua 1: 7–9, and they are concise and instructive to make one a good leader: “Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go”.

The significance of these instructions by God to Joshua concerning the qualities of good leadership, was to show the centrality of spiritual values in a life of a leader. A leader must have a godly character if he is to succeed in his work. He should not be driven by power, wealth, or fame but primarily by spiritual values. After all, good leadership is godly leadership which is God’s leadership.

That Joshua did not depart from the spiritual values given him by God is seen in how even as an old man he was able to exhort the people to be careful to serve the Lord (Josh 23:6), and to emulate him and his household in their commitment to God: “Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:15).

The people had observed Joshua’s consistent godly life and leadership style that he was a good model of a leader worth emulating, they unanimously fully committed themselves to serving only the Lord (Josh 24:21-25). They answered him: “The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey” (Joshua 24:24). “With Joshua at the end of his leadership tenure, the

children of Israel's commitment and covenant to God affirmed Joshua in his life's service to the people and to God the Father" (Johnson 2020:26). He was a model leader of all the people.

The OLC link to Joshua's leadership is the significance of having a transitional leadership plan in an organization. Prior to Joshua taking over power from Moses he had already been serving under Moses. That exposure of serving under an experienced leader adequately prepared Joshua for leading God's people after Moses. Joshua must have received such good training from Moses that when he took over power, he knew exactly what a leader needed to do. It is not surprising then that with this good preparation and transition of leadership from Moses, Joshua served God's people as a model of a leader to emulate. He was able to influence the people with the quality of his own life and challenge to imitate him. Good leadership transition plan is crucial for the future wellbeing of an organization.

4.2.1.4 Gideon: Before Israel became a monarch, it was ruled by leaders called judges. Judges governed Israel for four hundred years. One of the great leaders God raised during this period was Gideon. He was a great warrior and at one point defeated the Midianites who had constantly attacked Israel with only three hundred soldiers (Judges 7). After his triumphant victory, the people wanted him to be their king but he refused: 'I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you' (Judges 8:23).

From this statement, it would appear that Gideon did not believe in a monarch; instead, he believed that God and not man should be the ruler of his people. For Gideon, it is not right for a leader to seek credit for his success because God was the ultimate leader that brings success and therefore deserves all honour. The leader's role should be to guide the people in the ways of the Lord so that God may continue to grant them success.

Gideon led Israel as a judge for forty years but died without identifying a successor, even though he had Seventy sons. Part of the reason for not choosing a successor was that he never believed in the monarch. This omission created a leadership vacuum. Abimelech, the son whom Gideon bore from a female servant (Judges 9:18) saw an opportunity in this leadership vacuum to rule Israel as a king. He managed to manipulate the people of Shechem, a home town of his mother, to his side. With their support he massacred all of Gideon's sons except Jotham, the youngest (Judges 9:5).

But Abimelech's reign lasted only three years because the same people that had earlier supported him turned against him later. He met his fate while he was trying to take over the city of Thebez when "a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and

crushed his skull” (Judges 9:53). But this was God’s doing to punish him for his evil deeds. “Thus, God returned the evil of Abimelech, which he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers. And God also made all the evil of the men of Shechem return on their heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal” (Judges 9:56-57).

From the OLC point of view, Gideon’s leadership is the opposite of Moses and Joshua when it comes to leadership transitional preparations. It stands as an illustration to warn against the neglect or failure of organizations to plan for leadership transition. As ably shown from Gideon’s account, the consequences of not ensuring that a competent leader remained in authority were dire. The leadership vacuum created by his death led to the untold miseries that this unqualified leader, Abimelech, brought upon the family and the entire nation of Israel. Now, none of these evils would have happened had Gideon groomed a successor. Similarly, failure to have a leadership transition plan in place can lead to the closure of an organization, as there might arise a leadership vacuum to steer an organization forward. Succession plan must be part and parcel of all organizations if they are to guarantee continuity of their good legacy and the safety of the people and the organization itself.

4.2.1.5 Saul: When the prophet Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. But, unlike their father, they did not walk in the ways of the Lord. “Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations” (1 Samuel 8:4-5). This was the beginning of the monarch in Israel and Saul was appointed as the first king of Israel. He would have become a great leader but for one weakness, which also led to his down fall.

Saul had envy and jealousy against David which culminated into a strong hatred for him. The king felt threatened because David, his subordinate, had outstanding abilities and achievements which attracted more praise from the populace than the king. This came to the fore when David killed Goliath. In their praise, the women ascribed greater accomplishment to David than to the King Saul. They sang: “Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands” (1 Samuel 18:7). From that point on, Saul was furious and determined to kill David.

Saul was so obsessed and determined to Kill David that once he massacred all the priests in the city of Nob because they gave David food while he was running away from him. “Then the king said to Doeg, “You turn and strike the priests.” And Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five persons who wore the linen ephod. And

Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; both man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep, he put to the sword” (1 Samuel 22:18-19).

Because of his envy, jealousy and hatred Saul pushed away David, one of his best fighting commanders. So, when war broke out with the philistines, Saul and his three sons were killed in battle. This was unnecessary loss and would have been easily avoided had the king supported and celebrated the great abilities and achievements of one of his loyal subordinates and accomplished military commanders, David.

What is captured from Saul’s leadership from the OLC perspective is his lack of team work. The fact that Saul was jealousy and envious of David’s success means that he had a wrong view of what leadership was. He regarded it more of a position than a function and responsibility. If someone does not correctly understand what leadership is, he is unlikely to use the power of that leadership correctly. And inappropriate use of power ends badly as it often turns dictatorial and therefore abusive. Saul’s dictatorship led to killing eighty-five priests at Nob. This happened because he hated David who interpreted to be a threat for sharing in the glory of leadership more than him.

But transformational leaders are not threatened by the accomplishments of their juniors, but rather, they support and celebrate their achievements as a way to encourage their growth and enhance their productivity. They are aware of the consequences of jealousy and envy, and that these evils easily breed hatred which eventually leads to many other atrocities. This is one reason why they choose to share power and celebrate the successes of their subordinates. In another way, it is a recognition that leadership is from God. Hence, they put trust and confidence in the God who elevated them to protect and sustain their rule.

4.2.1.6 David: Prior to becoming King of Israel, David served King Saul as “a counselor, musician (I Sam 16:23), soldier (I Sam 16:18), military leader (I Sam 18:5), son-in-law (I Sam 18:21) and even as a government representative (I Sam 21:2) all of which prepared David to serve Israel as king himself. David gave his entire life in service to his people, and thus fulfilled God’s plan for David and the children of Israel. This servanthood led David to become Israel’s greatest leader” (Johnson 2020: 27)

In his encounter with Goliath, David demonstrated the source of his strength and success – which was his faith and dependence on God. He told Goliath, “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied” (1 Samuel 17:45). This is probably why even

though he committed heinous sins of adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah (II Samuel 11-12), he sincerely repented (Psalm 51) and God forgave him and his kingdom remained intact. He was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14).

But despite all his great achievements and forgiveness from God after his sorrowful repentance for his sins of adultery and murder, there is one case that David mishandled whose damages became irreversible and irreparable and brought great misery on himself, his family and the entire nation. This is the case of Amnon and Tamar where David ignored to give justice to the victim and allowed the perpetrator of wrong go uncensured or unpunished. Apparently, Amnon, David's eldest son raped his half-sister Tamar (II Samuel 13). David heard about the matter and he was very angry (II Samuel 13:21) but he did nothing more. Absalom, Tamar's brother, was infuriated by both Amnon's act against his sister and his father's lack of action against such an injustice done to her sister. He held a grudge against his father and his brother and looked for an opportunity to avenge his sister's aborted justice.

Two years passed and then one day Absalom organized a party to which he invited all his brothers including Amnon. After they were drunk, he instructed one of his servants: "Strike Amnon, then kill him. Do not fear; have I not commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant" (2 Samuel 13:28). And so, Amnon was killed and Absalom fled to Geshur. After some time, Absalom was allowed to return home. But he still held a grudge against his father.

In the passage of time, he mobilized himself and took his father's throne by force (2 Samuel 15). To break his father's heart more, he slept with his concubines (2 Samuel 16:21-22). Even though in the end David defeated Absalom, it came at a great cost and heart breaks (II Samuel 18).

To link this account to OLC, we observe that this incidence in David's life as a King shows how important the dispensing of Justice and fair play is by those who hold power in organizations. Consequences of unfair treatment may not always come immediately but may be long term and often comes with serious repercussions. If David had not ignored the injustice done to Tamar by Amnon, the chain reaction in the incidences that followed would have been avoided. Absalom would not have taken to revenge and caused all the damages and sufferings that happened. By acting in fairness and justice, David would have maintained the love and respect from all his children. Absalom would not have murdered his brother, forcefully taken his father's throne nor slept with his father's concubines. But failure by David to punish Amnon for his wrong doing led to a chain of untold suffering and misery in the home of David and in

the nation of Israel as a whole. Similarly, organizational justice is crucial to the wellbeing of the organization because when an employee views that the rewards distributed by the organization are fair and the processes by which the organization decides to distribute rewards are fair, he is likely to perform well. Additionally, Emotional Intelligence (EI) urges leaders to take care of workers' emotions by removing anything that affects them emotionally. Regulating workers' emotions in turn improves company performance. Organizational leaders should be committed to justice and to applying the laws fairly without discriminating anyone. Delayed or ignored justices can disturb emotions and lead to poor input performance by the affected workers.

4.2.1.7 Solomon: Solomon was David's son born to him by Bathsheba, Uriah's wife. He came to power when he was still young and inexperienced. When God appeared to him in a dream and asked him anything he wanted, the young king's choice was impressive. He asked for wisdom so he could gain a heart of understanding to rule the people of God. He said, "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?" (I Kings 3: 9). So, instead of asking for wealth, firm or long life, Solomon asked for wisdom so he could well discern matters and judge rightly as he superintended over the affairs of the nation.

Like his farther David before him, Solomon's desire was to please God by doing the best for the people, helping them achieve their potential. He was interested in seeing justice prevail and not so much the accumulation of wealth and attainment of firm. In his early years, Solomon lived up to this standard. But things changed in his later years when he could not be guided by his own wisdom and consciously went against clear instructions of God's law that guided the behaviour and character of Kings: "Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, 'You shall never return that way again.' And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold." (Deuteronomy 17:16-20).

To the contrary, Solomom married Seven hundred wives with an additional of three hundred concubines (I Kings 11:3). True to God's word, these many women turned his heart away from God to idols. But he also accumulated much wealth (silver and gold) as well as many horses for himself (I Kings 10: 23–29). Again, just as the Lord God had anticipated, this put a burden

on the people who were to be heavily taxed in order for the King to sustain his excessive luxurious life.

Thus, instead of being a servant of the people, serving their interests by focusing on upholding their social welfare and justice, Solomon became self-centred and self-enriching. Therefore, the Lord was displeased with him: “Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant” (1 Kings 11:11).

Because Solomon ignored to abide by the law of the Lord that regulated how leaders were to behave, he was the last king to rule a United Kingdom of Israel. The punishment was the breakup of his kingdom which came to pass during the reign of his son Rehoboam. God punished Solomon this way because of his love for excessive pleasure and selfish ambitions. He became preoccupied with serving self, rather than serving the people whom God had called him to serve.

From the OLC point of view, Solomon’s leadership challenge is an integrity issue. Solomon lacked integrity in his leadership. In an organization, workers expect their leader to model morality too. Workers who perceive their team leader to have high integrity are less likely to commit unethical acts that impact the team itself and the organization. Moral character of a leader is, therefore, very important as it helps in improved worker-leader relations.

4.2.1.8 Rehoboam: After the death of his father Solomon, Rehoboam became King. The people had great hopes and high expectations of the new King. They were hopeful that he would be considerate and more lenient to taxation than his father was. So, the people approached him and asked to lighten the huge tax burden placed on their shoulders by his father (I Kings 12:4). The King promised to get back to the people after he made consultations. He began by getting counsel from the elders who agreed with the people’s sentiments and advised the King to consider reducing the burden of the people. They assured him that by considering their plight and acting in their favour, he would win their love and loyalty to him (I Kings 12:7).

He then went to seek counsel from his young friends also. They advised him to be even tougher than his father was with the people (I Kings 12:14). They gave him these words to say to the people and he was happy to repeat them: “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.”

This was too much for the people and they could not take any more oppression. The father had served the people as a boss but they hoped the son will have a servanthood spirit of listening to their plight and relieving them of their burdens, but he didn't. So, there was a split of the kingdom. Ten tribes followed Jeroboam and only two remained loyal to King Rehoboam. McKinley (1917:194) says, "because the Kings of Israel did not obey God, God caused the nation to be split into two (1 Kings 12): the larger northern kingdom (sometimes called "Israel") and the smaller southern kingdom (sometimes called "Judah"), where Jerusalem was located." Jeroboam ruled the northern Kingdom of (Israel), while Rehoboam ruled the southern Kingdom (Judah).

Worse consequences followed after the split as both nations became idolatrous. "Once the kingdom split, worship of Baal occurred in both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah" (Corduan, 2016)

Viewed from the OLC perspective, Rehoboam's leadership style was autocratic leadership style. It is the opposite of relational leadership. Having good relations with subjects unlocks many channels to smooth leadership which otherwise would be littered with obstacles. Health relations help regulate the use of power or authority by leaders. Relational leadership promotes a spirit and attitude of mutual respect and admiration for the parties involved, that is, the leaders and their subjects. This creates a sense of partnership which reinforces the idea of inclusiveness and equality, and ultimately promotes a sense of ownership, responsibility and accountability among all the parties involved.

To the contrary, Rehoboam's leadership reveals some of the possible consequences that a wrong leadership style approach can bring. A time comes when people can no longer withstand oppressive rules and so they are likely to rebel. But this can easily be avoided by simply being a relational leader that listens to the needs of the people and responds with kind and inspiring words rather than harsh and uncaring words. Threatening words do not build subject's confidence and loyalty to their leaders but instead distances them further away from them. Therefore, leaders must have a listening ear for the people they lead.

Overall, what made a major difference between leaders that performed well and those who did not in Israel can be traced to their willingness and readiness to be guided or controlled by spiritual values. There are many spiritual values we have encountered in the leadership styles of Israel's leaders such as courage, listening responsively, appreciating others, honest and truthfulness, passion for righteousness and justice, humility, dedication to the people,

compassionate, a forgiving and none retaliation spirit, incorruptible mindset, integrity, treating others with respect and fairness, expressing care and concern, a willingness to sacrifice one's life for followers, training or raising a proper successor, among many others. In OLC terms, Hal (2017) captures this idea well and puts the tenor of Old Testament leadership in its rightful perspective when he says: "The biblical system of leadership is predicated upon a realization that no leader or crown can do it all (Exod 18: 13–16) and that powers are best exercised when they are circumscribed (2 Chr 26: 16–18) ... Leadership strength lies in aggregating a diversity of talents, perspectives, and skill sets. In such a system, arrogance has no place (Num 12: 3; Deut 17: 20) and collaboration is key to leading effectively" (Hal, 2017:1133).

Summary

The narration of leadership in the Old Testament above confirms the Hebrew's description and understanding of leadership that being a leader in Hebrew is not just a concept, it is a responsibility that comes with your persistent character. This assertion is observed in the many examples of the leaders of Israel discussed. From the OLC perspective, we see that in the life circle of the nation of Israel, different leaders with different leadership styles have emerged at different stages of the nation. From these, we have been able to see which ones effectively managed the affairs of the nation appropriately by deploying appropriate leadership that corresponded to the needs at the stage of the nation's growth phase and which ones did not.

We have also seen that some were flexible in their leadership approaches while others were rigid. Some were humble leaders who saw themselves as servants of the people, and as such, were able to tolerate abuse and disrespect. They worked for the greater good of the people and the nation as a whole. These were transformational leaders who led their people and nation towards prosperity. They demonstrated a unifier spirit and relational leadership. But others saw leadership as a way to feed their ego. They neither cared for the justice of the people they led nor did they pay attention to the plight of the disadvantaged in their society. These were retrogressive leaders who plunged their people and nation in chaos and trouble.

We now turn to the New Testament examples.

4.2.2 In the New Testament

4.2.2.1 Jesus: Just as God was the main model character figure of leadership in the Old Testament, in the New Testament it was Jesus. His life was a life of service for others – "the word became flesh" (John 1:14). "The New Testament is very clear that leadership is servant-

hood. Jesus had no shadow of doubt that God had sent him to serve and not to be served. (Mathew 20:25-28). It was only by being a servant leader that he was able to accomplish the mission, which had brought him to the world. This is the reason why in Christianity service is considered the hallmark of true leadership.” (Katola & Nyabwari 2013:2)

Scripture records that though Jesus was eternally rich, glorious and exalted, yet for his people’s sake he became poor, "so that through His poverty we might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). Paul further says this about him: “who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:5–8).

For the sake of seeking the welfare of others, Jesus was willing to become a curse himself: “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith (Gal 3:13–14).

The incarnate son of God’s life was of service and sacrifice. He was an embodiment of servant leadership. That is why when his disciples began to dispute over who was the greatest, Jesus was quick to correct their wrong view of authority by telling them that “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant” (Mt 23:11), indeed “...for he that is least among you all, the same is great (Lk 9:48b). “Fundamentally, the greatness of a leader is not found in the leader’s self-gain, but instead in the advancement of his or her followers” (Johnson 2020:4).

In the gospel of John, this account is broadened with Jesus depicted practically demonstrating an unbelievable act of washing his disciples’ feet (John 13:1-17) to which Peter violently reacted (John 13:8) because he could not conceive the thought of Jesus, his master, humiliating himself in such a way. But Jesus said to him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me” (John 13:8).

By willingly embracing his own humiliation to wash his disciples’ feet, Jesus was giving a practical example of how he expected them to use their authority after he had gone. He asked them after he had washed their feet: “Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than

his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them” (Jn 13:12–17). Leadership is about serving and loving those one has been called to lead.

Jesus attracted followers, both individuals and large crowds (Matt. 4:18–25; 8:18–23; 9:9; 16:24), and sets an example for his disciples to follow (John 13:15). The godly leader is also one whose lifestyle provides an example appropriate for others to emulate.

Servanthood is one of the greatest burdens of leadership, for even Jesus’s disciples struggled with it and its implications. This was observed in the propensity of his disciples to compete with one another rather than co-operating as a team that continued to the very last hours before Jesus’ death. Luke records: “A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves” (Lk 22:24–27).

From Jesus’ perspective, servanthood is what constitutes true leadership. “Leader-servants will be those who prove especially adept at taking on their servant and slave roles appropriately, event by event, from the strength that God supplies (1 Pet 4:11) and in imitation of Jesus’ own practice. Like him, they will lay down their lives freely, when the time is right, give them voluntarily for the upbuilding of the church” (Koenigt 1993:29).

To be a leader in the New Testament, therefore, meant that one was to be an obedient follower of Jesus who not only obeys his instructions but practices his servant leadership style as well. For Jesus, leadership was service or servanthood, even a sacrificial one. “Jesus left an indelible mark in his leadership. Every leader is therefore challenged to look at Jesus Christ and learn from him” (Katola & Nyabwari 2013: 2). Sacrificial service is imbedded in the discipleship concept and Jesus wanted all members of his new family (the disciples) to be characterized by it. Jacobs (2015) is of this view when he contends that the church is “formed in the Gospel, informed and transformed by the Gospel and therefore it has to exist and operate by the principles of that Gospel” (2015:74). This makes Jesus not only the head of the church but his gospel of grace (Act 20:24) is the gospel of the heavenly kingdom he came to establish (Mat 24:14) (Lau, 2016: 48).

From the account in Acts 2:44-47, Shekhar (2017:1228) argues that although the early believer's conception of the nature of the Church may not have been very clear, nonetheless, Jesus' selection of the Apostles indicates the early formation of a carefully organized and structured system of strong group relationships known as members of the family of God - Oikos. The term *Oikos*, generally translated as 'household' is the most commonly used word for family that encompasses the extended family, housemates and servants, in the New Testament (Flores, 2020:12; Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015:556; Wendt, 2018:2; Brown, 2010:1; Cress, 2018:10).

Activities in the *oikos* include all the economic and social dispositions and caring activities that help sustain the livelihood and maintain the well-being of the members of the household. In short, "the *oikos* is the original pattern and the general form of a structure of care and of organized conduct of life" (Wendt, 2018:2; Nortjé-Meyer & Very, 2016:57). Its verb *oikeios* (Belonging to the house) "refer to persons who are related by kinship or circumstances and form a closely knit group, with focus on association in common cause or belief." Arndt *et al.* (2000). In the technical sense, this term 'household' was used to describe both the natural and the spiritual family (the church).

Jesus wanted his new family to live as a caring community. Thus, in the same way that parents of a natural family do govern their homes with a form of structure, Jesus put safeguards to authority over his followers' relationships and service of one another by an example of washing his disciple's feet. "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." The objective was to record and put in biblical perspective the new family members selfish outlook and priorities in life based on Jesus' model of self-sacrificing love and holiness as the head of the family (Lau, 2016: 46).

This was clearly demonstrated in his paradox cross-centred loving and sacrificial life whereby he declared that weakness is power, loss is gain, death is life and servant-hood is greatness (Mat 16:24-26; Mk 9:33-37). This is the same point Merkle and Shriner (2014) are advancing when they argue for the 'suffering righteous shepherd' as the Old Testament contribution to the understanding of the New Testament leadership. Quoting Matt. 23:34-35 and Luke 11:49-51 they write: "Here Jesus not only summarizes the theme of the righteous sufferer from Abel to Zechariah, he says that this theme will continue to be enacted by those whom he himself will send. Jesus himself is the ultimate fulfillment of the typological pattern of the suffering righteous shepherd" (2014: 31).

Magezi (2015) too highlights this self-sacrifice principle on leaders' use of power: "Jesus as Servant King, who portrays a paradoxical mix of king with power but vulnerable and serving" (2015: 7). The depth of the strength of this leadership style of Jesus is only made possible in the power of the cross, as one becomes a disciple of Jesus (Jacobs 2015:55). The disciples' perception of themselves as the righteous suffering servants became a mark of obedience to Jesus as they emulated his sacrificial life of service for others, thereby setting a standard of the right use of delegated power.

For the faith community of the New Testament, standards for leaders and the followers of Jesus, were well articulated by the Lord himself and those exercising leadership inappropriately could be challenged for doing so (Rom 12: 6–8; 1 Cor 12: 27–31; 16: 15–16; Gal 6: 1–6; 1 Thess 5: 12–13). For that reason, even though the apostles' authority was established by Jesus Christ, it was not executive. "Similarly, local church leaders can neither compel, coerce, nor impose their will. Rather, as for the apostles, their influence has to be negotiated with the communities within which they lead" (Clarke 2017:1125). All this was in order to measure up with leading that is characterised by service and sacrifice as Jesus instructed. His leadership style deserves to be emulated by all leaders.

Jesus revealed three important spiritual values regarding leadership: 1) servanthood, 2) love and 3) example. This is especially captured in the New Testament by his phrase "It shall not be so with you", which clearly shows that the leadership traits of the church do not always conform to that of other organizations. When Jesus emphasized the servanthood and sacrificial love in leadership, he stressed the significance of the function element over the power element in leadership. "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you (John 15:15).

Jesus' approach to leadership was in direct conflict with the other organization's emphasis of hierarchy and authority against the function element in leadership. It was in direct conflict with both the religious and the political leaders of his day (Matt. 23; Mark 15:1–15). But it is Jesus distinctive conception of leadership that should guide in discerning a leadership style in the New Testament. New Testament church leaders need to adapt the leadership style of Jesus. In the New Testament, then, a leader must be someone whose desire is continually to seek and respond to the revealed will God (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

From the OLC point of view, we see Jesus' leadership combining all the organizational managerial elements of a leader such as integrity leadership, unifier spirit, relational leadership, model leadership, justice and fairness as well as demonstrating the right use of power. It is not surprising then, that after his departure, his disciples endeavoured to teach and practice Jesus' servanthood life and leadership style of love and sacrifice well captured in the church leadership metaphors of servanthood, shepherd and father of a household. These metaphors emphasise more the function of leaders than the office. Leaders are supposed to be enablers that create an environment of safety, love, care, unity, happiness, responsibility and accountability. Below are some of these men who could speak and act with the authority of Jesus, while at the same time modelling his life of servanthood (1 Pet 5:1-5).

We start with the apostle Peter.

4.2.2.2 Peter: Peter, a disciple and one of the leading men of the church at Jerusalem, introduces himself in one of his letters as "a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:1). This is the same Peter that had denied Jesus three times. But after the resurrection, Jesus restored him and tasked him afresh to care for, tend and serve his church. "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep". He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep (John 21:15–17).

This encounter of Peter and his Lord must have left a strong impression on his life. One incident in which Peter demonstrated his obedience to his master and practiced servant leadership was when he went into a house of a gentile named Cornelius' against the standing Jewish tradition that forbade Jewish associations with the gentiles. Peter went because in a vision (Acts 10:9-16) the Lord had made it clear to him that "What God has made clean, do not call common" (Acts 10:15).

He understood clearly that Jesus was telling him to break the racial biases that stood between the Jews and gentiles regarding the gospel. As he himself rightly confessed "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34), and neither should the leaders of his church. Everyone that the Lord accepts ought also to be accepted, loved and served by the leaders of

his church. Thus, in obedience to the Lord's instructions Peter went into Cornelius' house and boldly proclaimed the gospel to the gentiles and they believed.

“While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days (Acts 10:44-48).

News spread that the gentiles had received the word of God. Instead of rejoicing, Some Jews were not happy and accused Peter of breaking the long-standing tradition for Jews not to associate with the gentiles. They said: “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them” (Acts 11:3). But Peter, not taking offence of the accusations, explained to them how the Lord had made him to take the action he took and then concluded by saying: “If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?” When they heard these things, they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life” (Acts 11:17–18).

In this account, Peter clearly demonstrated a strong servant leadership as he followed his Master's example and gave his life in service and sacrifice, against the Jewish traditions, to go after God's sheep, the church. The accusers of Peter were silenced because they realized it was the Lord's doing, therefore it must be upheld as truth. All traditions and cultural biases must bow down to the authority of the head of the church, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

From Peter's leadership style, we deduce at least three OLC leadership elements from the way he dealt with those who accused him of wrong doing because he “went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” The first is the right use of authority. He did not use his apostleship authority to silence his accusers. Rather he humbled himself and sought to exculpate himself for the action he took, which he said was done in obedience to the vision that he had. Second is the unifier spirit exhibited. He sought the peaceful way of sitting and talking over an issue at hand in order to maintain unity in a bond of peace. He was concerned about the welfare of the fellowship's unity and brotherhood. Third is ‘situational-adaptation leadership’ that ensures a balance is maintained whenever change is being effected in the church. By explaining to his

accusers his action, he made plain the core business of the Christian faith and made them realize that it broke the long standing Jewish cultural traditions biases against the gentiles. The importance of this is that it preserves the sense of community and healthy relationships of the church.

The next leader to be considered is Paul.

4.2.2.3 Paul: Like Peter, Paul knew that Jesus expected his followers to be humble and to exercise servant leadership. So, Paul taught and practiced servant leadership, emphasizing humility and the need to consider the interests of others (Phil 2:3-8). He too referred to himself as a servant: “For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Corinthians 4:5).

When Paul gathered together the church elders at Ephesus in Acts 20, it was this life and character of servanthood in leaders that he emphasized. He challenged them to emulate how he had served the Lord with humility (20:19) and proclaimed the whole counsel of God boldly and fearlessly (20:20-24, 27). He charged them to “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (20:28), to be alert and protect God’s sheep, the church, from wolves (20:29-31) and to work hard so as to “help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (20:35).

In all this Paul was ensuring the continuity of the Lord’s legacy of servant leadership that included elements such sacrificial service and love of the led as the church continued to expand. Ministry was not primarily for the leaders’ sake but for the for the advancement of what Christ wanted for the church to be. This single focus is what drove the life and ministry of the apostle Paul. This came to be clearly portrayed in his encounter with some opponents to his ministry in Philippians 1:12-18.

Paul had been put in prison for proclaiming the gospel. But some of his opponents took advantage of his situation to malign him. Paul gave a remarkable response, one that was consistent with a servant leader in Verse 18: “What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.” Lawson (2017) comments: “Throughout this painful ordeal, Paul continues to concentrate upon Christ. This is the third time in these few verses that Paul speaks of Christ being proclaimed.

The priority for Paul is always the magnification of his Master. He is not preoccupied with escaping his suffering, nor with rebutting his foes. Paul has a much higher agenda. He is concerned about the name of Christ going forward. For Paul, it matters little what happens to him or what is said about him—as long as the Lord Jesus is glorified. The advancement of the gospel is everything to the apostle. In spite of his fiery trial, Paul can rejoice because Christ is being preached” (2017:56).

As a servant leader Paul was a man of one business – the glory of his Master even if that meant at his own personal or ministry humiliation. This goes to show that church leadership requires highest moral character to be able to rightly serve the [led](#). This is nothing short of a humble and a servanthood spirit.

Assessed from the OLC considerations, Paul’s leadership, just like Peter’s, reveals a number of managerial leadership elements. These can be seen in his address to the Ephesian elders as well as in his response to his opponents in ministry. In his address to the Ephesian elders, he presented himself as a model leader for them to emulate and to adopt his integrity both in life and ministry. He also presented before them the servant leadership model of Jesus as the right use of authority to exercise over their congregants. In regard to his opponents in ministry, he dealt with them graciously whilst focused on the core of ministry which is the centrality of Christ and his gospel in order to maintain the ‘sense of community’. Having a clear understanding and vision of the organization helps greatly to remain steadfast and focused to the ideals of the organization and serves as a deterrent from many detractors. Paul knew what was central to the ministry and he kept to it allowing nothing to detract him from not even his opponents.

Another leader to consider is Barnabas.

4.2.2.4 Barnabas: Another prominent leader in the New Testament, though not an Apostle himself, is Barnabas. He is another man that can be said to have modelled Jesus’ servant leadership style. According to the Lexham Bible Dictionary (Tresham 2016), “Barnabas (“son of encouragement”) was the nickname that the apostles gave to Joseph, a prominent member of the early church (Acts 4:36),” probably because of his observable godly traits. Otherwise, he was born Joseph, a Levite and he was from Cyprus. Myers (1987:126) adds that “Barnabas became a Christian early in life, and one of his first acts as a believer was to sell a parcel of land and give the money he received to the apostles for distribution to the poor (v. 37).”

This is the same Barnabas who helped Paul to be accepted by the disciples who were afraid of him at first. “But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus” (Acts 9:27). Later Paul and Barnabas were chosen by the Holy Spirit and set apart by the church at Jerusalem for the missionary work.

Barnabas must have been a very trusted man by the church because when prophet Agabus prophesied that there would be a famine and the church mobilized relief funds for the church in Judea they sent it through Barnabas and Paul. “So, the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:29-30).

But perhaps the one most outstanding leadership character about Barnabas was when the church at Antioch started. It had been established through the preaching of the scattered believers (Acts 11:19–21; 8:1–3). When the church at Jerusalem heard about it, they sent Barnabas. “When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord” (Acts 11:23-24).

Interestingly enough, even though through his labours many people were added to the Lord, Barnabas sought the partnership of Paul. “So, Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians” (Acts 11:25-26).

Barnabas was not a lone player but a team player who never sought his own glory in ministry. Combining his gifts with those of Paul, there was great success in the work at Antioch. It is most likely that Paul’s later ministry of desiring strong partnerships with and grooming others in ministry could have been influenced by his early years of partnership with Barnabas. He believed in identifying and developing potential in others as clearly shown in his involvement with Paul and John Mark.

Not only did he help Paul to be accepted by the church at Jerusalem but he was willing to sacrifice his friendship with his close ally and ministry partner Paul just to give John Mark a second chance in ministry. “Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and

had not gone with them to the work. And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other.

Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches (Acts 15:37-41). Barnabas' exercise of servant leadership contributed greatly to passing on Jesus' instructions of servanthood to future leaders. His practical life of helping others as a son of encouragement helped in grooming upcoming leaders to become servant leaders themselves.

Some OLC leadership elements that can be picked from Barnabas' leadership style include shared leadership and a team player. He had a right view of leadership as a function and not a title or status. He was therefore not selfish but freely and readily shared his leadership with others. May be this is why he saw leadership potential in others and sought to develop them as he did with Paul and John Mark. This act seem to have left a great impact on Paul who also later developed the leadership potential in Timothy and Titus. He was a visionary leader who saw the continuation of today's church as lying in the leaders that are groomed today for tomorrow's church. The other leadership elements present in Barnabas were a unifier spirit and relational leadership. This is ably noticed in his very nickname – the son of encouragement.

The church today needs transformational servant leaders that possess leadership qualities as those found in Barnabas that will focus at grooming leaders who “will help the church grow and mature throughout the subsequent ages, becoming a sustaining and vibrant means of God's work here on earth” (Johnson 2020:36). In the New Testament, “Leaders, as portrayed by the apostolic writers, seem to be those led into prominence as servants of Christ with gifts of discernment and boldness” (Koenig 1993:27).

Summary

Linking OLC to Biblical leadership, we have observed that the patterns of leadership we have seen in the Bible are guided by spiritual values therefore are in some ways similar and in others different from those widely practiced by business organizations (1 Sam. 8:5; Mark 10:42–44; 1 Cor. 1:20). However, the significant role that the OLC plays is that it serves as a framework that can be applied to analyse an organization's structure and develop insights that can inform a relevant responsive leadership change approach as the organization continues on its growth path. From the discussion the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, shows that a nation is an organization and leadership is an indispensable element to guide God's people. As such,

God always raises leaders to lead his people at the different stages of life to meet their contemporary needs. The main role of leaders is guidance of the people in the knowledge of God and the fulfilment of his plans and purposes on earth. Since leadership is God's idea, it can only be successfully done when it is carried with a high moral character by leaders as summarised by the spiritual values prescribed in the Old Testament and as demonstrated in the life and leadership of Jesus, which is, servanthood, love and example.

This mindset on leadership helps leaders to serve not out of a sense of obligation but out of a heart of sincere love as the Lord himself expected them to: "A new commandment I give you that you love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-5). The apostle Paul makes it clear that leadership void of love is unprofitable. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have no love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1-2). Leaders are also supposed to emulate Jesus's life of example - living what he taught. They, too, should be role models to their people.

Conclusion

Human beings cannot do without leaders. This fact is established both by the OLC theories and the Scriptures. History is in fact a record of the leaders and the led. Good leaders are required in order to safeguard the well-being of their societies. The Bible is very clear that a nation will fall if it has no guidance (Proverbs 11:14). From the discussion on leadership above, it is clear that the source of all authority and power is God. The overarching context in which leadership is couched in the Bible is God's divine sovereignty. This means that all human leadership is derivative of God's sovereign rule. The implications are that as the overall leader, God appoints all other leaders (Dan. 2:37-38; 4:31-32; Rom. 13:1) as well as disposes of them as he wills (Ps. 2; 75:6-7). Ultimately, therefore, all leaders are accountable to him. "God neither abdicates his position of supremacy nor completely delegates that authority to human leaders, but desires that the world be governed through human beings in accordance with his will (Gen. 1:28)" (Clarke 2000:636).

It is on the basis of spiritual values and godly virtues that leadership characteristic traits were to be discerned. Requirements of what the leader was expected to do or not do were clearly spelt out in the Torah (Deuteronomy 17:16-20) for the Old Testament and in Jesus' servanthood leadership style in the New Testament - "But it shall not be so among you" (Mark 10:43). Both

Testaments required standards that were in accord with the Master's will. The measure of leadership was then tied to the degree of obedience of a leader to God. Does the leader abide by the laws which God has prescribed for Leaders or does he depart from them? Where is his focus, is it on the welfare of the people and the church he leads or on self? How healthy are the relationships between the leader and the led? Does he show signs of servant leadership, love for the led and practically models the virtues of God and his son the Lord Jesus Christ? OLC provides a framework that can be applied to analyse and develop insights for a relevant responsive leadership change approach as the nation continues on its growth path, whilst the Bible provides the detailed context and content in which this leadership is exercised.

Now that we have sufficient information on leadership from management literature, RBmZ literature and empirical data as well as from the scriptures, we shall, in the next chapter, endeavour to do a critical analysis of this information with the goal to normatively understand church leadership within OLC and leadership principles.

Chapter 5 - Understanding church leadership within OLC and leadership principles

This is a critical analysis chapter that comprises the gleanings from the foregoing chapters (particularly the biblical-theological analysis of leadership in chapter 4) in order to develop a sound theological-ecclesiological church leadership model as a response to the challenges of the RBmZ. It normatively brings into light the harmonious relationship between biblical tradition leadership and church (RBmZ) leadership. This chapter, therefore, serves as a lens in analysing the church's response to leadership.

5.1 Perspectives and observations on RBmZ challenges as understood within organisational framework.

The protection of the autonomy of the local church is the core issue upon which the conceptualization, the formulation of organization structure and the leadership system of the RBmZ has been based. It was done in the interest of protecting the autonomy of the local church. The priority put on the autonomy of the local church is so high that sometimes it creates a confusion as to what the end of the doctrine of the church is, that is, whether it is the church itself or Jesus Christ who is its head. Using the material gathered from chapter 1 to 4, we now proceed to argue how leadership in RBmZ has been compromised as well as the factors that have led to that compromise.

5.1.1 Not conceiving the RBmZ as an organization

5.1.1.1 A Gnostic dualism concept

“The RBmZ is not an organization”. This way of thinking perceives church largely as a spiritual entity. It elevates the spiritual origin of the church over its earthly existence and functioning. But this view is in sharp contrast with some ecclesiological theologians who champion the view that church must be conceived in a balanced manner that simultaneously acknowledges both its spiritual and physical components. Austin-Roberson (2009:29) argues that “Churches are characterized by both human (organizational) and godly (spiritual) attributes. The church is at once the body of Christ and a human institution.” Oosthuizen & Lategan (2015) further point out that “Granting the uniqueness of the church as an organization, churches also have much in common with the structure, function and organization of other organizations. Although there are some distinct characteristics that differentiate the church from any other organization, the church is still an organization, sharing some common

principles with other enterprises and therefore crying out to be managed effectively and efficiently” (2015: 554).

The view that the RBmZ is not an organization is a representative view held by the majority pioneers and pioneer pastors. Due to their influence and admiration this view is also the most commonly held among the reformed Baptist member churches in Zambia. While the view may be applauded for the seemingly high regard for the spirituality of the church, it nonetheless is not based on sound Christian thinking but on erroneous gnostic dualism²³ way of thinking which creates dualistic distinction in every area of life.

In this particular case, this way of thinking exalts the church’s spiritual side and disregards its complimentary physical/human side. It therefore leads to a hyper/super spiritual way of conceiving the church that misrepresents the right Christian thinking. It fails to maintain the health dualistic tension created by conceptualization the church simultaneously as a spiritual and physical/human entity, where Christians are conceived to be already saved but yet to be saved, to be raised and seated with Christ in the heaven and yet still on earth (Col. 3:1-4). Therefore, on face-value this way of thinking appears very spiritual but in reality, it imbibes this gnostic dualism tendency of conceiving church wrongly. However, the main reason behind conceptualizing the RBmZ as not an organization is mainly to prevent the formalizing of the RBmZ into an autonomous body so as to protect the autonomy of the local church. But by so doing it created a problem in regards to finding a suitable forum that ably meets the requirements of inter-church fellowship and cooperation among churches with common doctrinal convictions and faith.

5.1.1.2 Created ambiguity

If RBmZ is not conceptualized as an organization, this creates a confusion in the proper way of conceiving it. Scripture allows for none such ambiguity. Both in the Old and New Testaments, God’s movements have been clearly understood as organizations. In the Old Testament, when God began a movement to make a special people for himself, he called out Israel as an organized entity under his rule. Israel was not one but an organization of twelve

²³ Gnostic dualism: A belief that the world was divided into the physical and spiritual realms. The created, material world (matter) is evil, and therefore in opposition to the world of the spirit, and that only the spirit is good. It was a teaching of Gnosticism, a prominent heretical movement of the 2nd-century Christian Church.

(12) different tribes. Each tribe had its own autonomous leadership but still under the united banner of Israel and Israel's king. Similarly in the New Testament, Jesus began a movement within Judaism in which he mobilized and organized his followers under his rule.

He began by mobilizing the twelve (12) whom he designated apostles. This movement expanded into different Churches and spread all over the earth but still remained one organization with the same banner of the people of "the way" (Acts 24:14) or "Christians" (Acts 11:26) under Christ's rule as well as under their local leaders. There was absolutely no ambiguity in the way people conceived the movement/organization of God in both Testaments. They understood it as a movement/organization of God with clear organization structure and leadership in place.

5.1.1.3 Lacked clarity

One of the advantages of planning and having a clear road map for an organization is that it is easy to tell where the organization is at and what kind of interventions are needed at a particular time. Clarity makes execution of plans easier and predictable. If an organization is facing challenges, because of clarity, it is easy to determine what kind of solution may be required to either prevent the crisis or, if it is already in one, take it out of the crisis. Scripture reminds us that God is a God of order and not confusion. Paul wrote: "Let everything be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40). He also said, "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (1 Corinthians 14:33). And he even went further and condemned those who "live in a totally unstructured way" (2 Thessalonians 3:11).

Informal structure obscures both clarity of thought and purpose thereby creating, if not confusion, then certainly distrust in organizational life, uncertainty of the future and toxic emotions in people. All these aspects will remain true of the RBmZ of Zambia for as long as it remains informally structured and functioning. In keeping with the conception of the RBmZ as not an organization, its structure had to be informal so as to prevent it from having a formal organisation structure which might disrupt the autonomy of the local church.

5.1.2 Informal organization structure

The way a movement or organization is conceptualized determines the outcome of the organization's structure it will take. Since the RBmZ was conceived not as an organization, it therefore could not be structured in the organizational structure manner. This is why the RBmZ was deliberately made informal in nature by placing it under a local church so it could operate

as a ministry of that particular church. The idea was that it should not have its own organizational structure but derive it from the local church under which it was placed. From the OLC approach, this meant that the RBmZ was emptied of the special and specific tools needed for it to help stakeholder churches with proper planning and clarifying goals, managing growth, predicting crisis and change situations, flexibility, human resource management, among others. The RBmZ in its current informal structured manner has no capacity to offer any of these important organizational aspects for its own effective functioning.

5.1.2.1 Works against its own goals and objectives

Since it lacks the important organizational components which enhance the effectiveness of organization operations, it then follows that the RBmZ also lacks the capacity to effectively support the objectives and goals intended for it to achieve on behalf of the stakeholder churches such as, to enhance fellowship and inter-church collaboration among all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia.

Mbewe (2011) makes an emotional appeal urging churches to improve the flow of information among churches as one way of working towards forming deepened collaboration and strong bonds of fellowship that have remained loose and weak among the Reformed Baptist Churches in Zambia for a long time. “So it is people we know, people with whom we share our mutual woes, people with whom we’ve cooperated in various ventures – those are the people we trust when we need spiritual counsel and advice” (Mbewe 2011:273).

Now this appeal is ironic because these are the goals and objectives the RBmZ should have been delivering but it cannot because its informal nature under which it operates cannot bring about these results that Mbewe so much desires to see happen. This is supposed to be the main purpose and reason for the existence of the RBmZ and yet it has been crippled. If anything, it works against those same goals and objectives.

The real cause and at the core of the problem of this poor communication is the informal structure of the RBmZ which does not have the capacity to support inter-church relationships nor church interdependence so as to build friendships among churches that would cause them in turn to communicate freely with each other. No manner of appeal for improved communication can effectively work until the organizational structure of the RBmZ is changed for the better.

It is sad that in an effort to protect the autonomy of the local church, the RBmZ in its current informal state works against its own anticipated objectives and goals which it fails to deliver to the expectations and satisfaction of all member churches. Instead of being a unifying force it has become a dividing force because it has been emptied of the necessary organizational tools for bringing member churches together.

The RBmZ has no calendar of activities indicating structured programs (Apart from the conferences which are held annually in August), co-ordination or cohesion of churches. And with no proper organization structure, there is no platform to launch complaints or to make contributions and suggestions that would improve the effectiveness of the RBmZ. One is tempted to ask the question, what then does the RBmZ exist for if not for the common good and benefit of all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia? But this obscurity and contradiction in function is all due to the informal structure system of the RBmZ.

5.1.2.2 Possible reason for challenges surrounding the hosting of national conferences

The controversies that surround the running and hosting of the annual national conferences has been caused by the informal structure of the RBmZ, which demands that all activities and projects must be run as local church-based ministries in order to protect the autonomy of the local church. Any activity, including the national conferences were to come under the authority of the local church. The rest of the sister churches were to be simply invited to participate as guests and not as stakeholders or equal partners.

It is the informal structure that has put all authority of the otherwise national-wide authority of the RBmZ in the hands of one local church, which local church then dispenses of that power as it pleases. It decides who it would like to partner with and who not to. In recent years, when the number of people attending the national conferences exceeded capacity of one church's ability to sponsor it, it invited a few more churches to join in co-hosting and co-sponsoring the national conferences. The others remained just as before – invited guests. This situation perpetuates the feelings of exclusion and being unwanted.

This is the reason behind the perennial question as to whether hosting the national conferences should be done as a local church owned venture or as a RBmZ collectively owned venture. The existing informal organization structure favours the conference to be a local church owned project or activity for purposes of protecting the autonomy of the local church. Technically under the current informal system arrangement there is nothing collectively owned, run or superintended over by the RBmZ as a national body on behalf of all the reformed Baptist

movement in Zambia. It is the individual local church (with a few other added ones recently) that run the conferences and simply invite others to participate. It is that local church (s) that has the right to organize, select themes, invite speakers and just invite other sister churches to come and participate. So, while the conference has a national character, and runs under the banner of the Zambia national reformed conferences, nonetheless, it is a local church-driven venture.

This is important to note because this is the context in which Kabwata Baptist church (KBC) began to run the national conferences as their own conferences and simply invited others to attend as opposed to it being run as a co-owned venture by all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. This also explains why just after two rotations of hosting the national conferences, KBC decided to withdraw it from the Copperbelt back to Lusaka. Going by this informal arrangement system that currently pertains in the RBmZ, KBC is the rightful owner of the national conferences and therefore she has the right to decide how she wants them run or hosted. She also has a right to choose conference themes and speakers with or without the involvement of others.

But it is also this same arrangement and context that led to the first crack in the league of friends when some protested and wanted the national conferences to be co-owned and co-managed by all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. But they were reminded that such a move would not work in the interest of the autonomy of the local church. The same explanation goes for the parson's diet, and why it was always Chingola Baptist church that hosted it, found themes and speakers and invited the other pastors to attend this national pastors' fraternal simply as guests. In all these, the concern was that allowing independent operation of these activities might undermine the autonomy of the local church.

It is for this reason too, that over the years, there have always been those who maintained that national conferences and other inter-church ventures should not be a preserve of one or a few local churches, rather that all ventures with a national character and of inter-church nature should be exempted from the concept of the church driven ministries to allow for true inter-church participation by all member churches. But there has been no consensus reached on the matter and therefore no change in the functioning of RBmZ as an informal structure. As a result, it has led to more frustration, disappointments and increased feelings of exclusion and not being treated as equal partners in the RBmZ.

In its current informal form, therefore, the RBmZ cannot serve the interests of all its representative churches as there is nothing in its structure and function that focuses on inclusively achieving those objectives and goals. It has neither the organizational structure nor the leadership authority tailored for such. On its own, there is very little if any, that can sustain the movement as a whole and push its members towards strong ties and a common agenda.

Moreover, the continued basing of unity of the RBmZ on the main men of the movement possess a serious challenge to its future survival, especially in the event of these men's demise. A sustainably inclusive method that could maintain unity, meaningful fellowship and collaboration among these sister churches that share common doctrinal faith, would be ideal to find.

5.1.2.3 Optional and not obligatory inter-church relationships

Insistence on the RBmZ informal functioning in order to protect the autonomy of the local church has led to an inculcation into the minds of people of a faulty biblical ecclesiology that creates an unnecessary confusion in conceptualizing how an independent local church practices interdependence with other sister churches. Churches are sceptical of forming close relationships with others. They don't consider inter-church fellowship as a biblical requirement. As such, this scepticism has caused serious distortion in practicing biblical ecclesiology.

5.1.2.3.1 Christian unity of the church is violated

Instead of understanding inter-church fellowship and collaboration as an obligation, informal structure makes it an 'if desirable' option. It creates a notion that there is nothing wrong for a church to dwell alone, especially if it is self-sufficient. The result of this way of thinking has been the preference of loose and optional relationships among the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. Apart from the selective and exclusive admittance of the churches who should co-host and co-sponsor the conference (which is a preserve of the host church), individual churches are sceptical to forge strong ties with other churches.

But this is contrary to how God desired and intended his church to relate one with the other. Both the Old and New Testaments reveal that God has only one family – Israel/the church - his household. The church that Jesus promised to build in Matt. 6:18 is one universal church. Paul affirms this same idea of the church being one in Eph. 4:1-6 with the emphasis that 'there is only one body' (4:4). He further practically demonstrated his care and concern for the churches

by constantly praying for them; ‘I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches’ (2 Cor. 11:28).

We also see the significance of this oneness in the lord Jesus’ priestly prayer where he prayed for the unity of all believers (John 17:20-22). This prayer was an injunction to all believers who are members of his body, that they too should have a desire to promote unity, not only with those in one’s local church but all those in other congregations who are equally united to their Saviour. This principle illustrates the analogy between the doctrine of the membership in a local church and membership in inter-church fellowships.

Since churches are members of one body, they have an obligation to walk together in doctrine and practice (Col. 2:6, 9; 4:14). This ought to be the right way of perceiving the church of Christ in local and universal terms—simultaneously as one. And this oneness of the church of Christ ought to be reflected in visible oneness among the autonomous local churches, especially those who are like-minded. The RBmZ comprises like-minded churches, therefore, they are one. They should have strong inter-church relationships.

This understanding of the oneness of the church suggests that all believers, without exception, are members of this one church by virtue of their union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether as an individual believer, a local church or the universal church, the body of Christ is one. Since believers by oneness in Christ are organically connected to each other, emphasis must be put on the mutual benefit of the relational functioning of the inter-church associations as something occurring between the different churches, over time, to ensure that the system is self-maintaining to protect the destabilization of purpose for which the RBmZ exists. Healthy inter-church relationships are therefore inevitable among independent local churches.

The New Testament is replete with examples of brotherly care through inter-church association and cooperation over a wide range of issues:

1. In mutual benevolence to alleviate the needs of sister churches (1 Cor. 16:1-42; Cor. 8:1, 4),
2. In cooperative action where churches (plural) chose a representative to accompany Paul (2 Cor. 8:19) to distribute gifts gathered by churches. to
3. In doctrinal issues. Paul wrote one circular letter to all the churches in association. We see an example of this in Galatians 1:2, 22; Colosians 4:13-18. Similarly, the apostle John’s letter of revelation was one circular letter for seven local churches (Revelation 1:11)

4. In common teaching centered on doctrine and ethics (1 Cor. 4:17; 14:33, 36; 2 Thess. 2:15; 3: 6)
5. In conflict resolution and clearing difficult questions (Acts 15:22-35)

Blackburn (2001: 35) observes: “We see from New Testament evidence that churches were united in fellowship and association with one another and their own mutual benefit and blessing, and that they laboured together in biblical bonds, rather than each church independently ‘doing its own thing.’”

The Confession also encourages that churches are not only obliged to be concerned about problems facing other churches but they are to “enjoy the opportunity and advantage of fellowship by seeking fellowship among themselves to promote peace, increase love and mutual edification” (Chapter 26:14,15).

The evidence revealed above shows that there was care and concern, interaction and accountability that could only come from churches associating with one another. Yet, this joint cooperation and co-acting is absent in the RBmZ as the informal structural system it espouses does not support strong inter-church fellowships and partnerships.

5.1.2.3.2 Christian brotherly love violated

Since the informal structure system has no capacity to resolve issues or unify the churches, many relationships break and remain broken for a long time. With no available official leaders to address these issues, brethren love is often injured. Sharp differences are possible and many members and churches could easily find themselves breaking this brotherly love.

One possible danger area in the RBmZ is the regionalism in which two centres of church power have arisen; one on the Copperbelt province and another in Lusaka province because the two provinces have the highest concentration of reformed Baptist churches. Regionalism can easily lead to the two provinces breaking brotherly love especially in RBmZ where there is no arbitration platform in cases where there are differences in opinion over some matters. It can cause the brethren involved to stop dealing with each other in brotherly love, speaking the truth in love to each other. For believers, the two virtues must always go hand in hand all the time.

Scripture teaches that love is the fulfilment of the law (Rom. 13:8-10) and the mark of true discipleship (Mark 10:19). Therefore, believers must love one another. “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever

loves God must also love his brother” (1 John 4:20-21). The reason the Scriptures take serious exception to the command for the brethren to love one another is that love is proof of knowing and obeying God (1 John 2:3-6) and a clear distinctive mark of believers’ separation to God.

By sheer observing how believers love one another, unbelievers are convinced of the believers’ union to Christ. This makes love a powerful evangelistic tool that draws the unsaved to the Christian faith. The RBmZ must therefore, take this commandment seriously and work at diffusing the tensions and normalizing brotherly relationships as the scriptures prescribe. Love must, therefore, be the ground for Christian unity and the driving force behind inter-church fellowships. What Jesus, the head of the church, desires and expects is practical propriety from the local churches as they relate one with another because ‘God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.... let all things be done decently and orderly’ (1 Cor. 14:33, 40; see also Rom 13:13; 1 Thess 4:12).

Paul’s example provides the generous attitude that believers should exhibit when dealing with each other:

“I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach the Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defence of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of rivalry, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed and in this I rejoice” (Philippians 1:12-18).

Christian oneness compels believers to have gracious attitudes such as is found both in the apostle Paul and the Lord, Jesus Christ. The RBmZ brethren must demonstrate brotherly love when dealing with each other despite theological differences or difference in opinions. They must do it graciously with meekness of heart and a humble spirit, bearing in mind that their Lord, Jesus Christ was ever full of truth and grace (John 1:14) and therefore, should emulate him. They must do this for the sake of maintaining unity (Eph 4:2-7) as they are one body united to one head: “one faith, one baptism one Lord, one father of all” (Eph. 4:5).

Another reason for dealing graciously with each other is because sometimes differences that arise among believers belong to the area of things indifferent in the regulative principle of

worship and not the substance (essential doctrines). Other times, it is because as people grow older and become more experienced in dealing with issues, they make adjustments. Sometimes still, adjustments may be perceived as compromise when in fact people are just being gracious. The example of Peter's indictment by the circumcision party for going to the gentile Cornelius' home is a case in point. After giving him an opportunity to exculpate himself and hearing him out, the matter he was accused of turned out not to belong to the essentials but to the non-essential of the Christian faith (Acts 11). There is need to be patient with each other and slow to judge.

But forfeiture of organization structure entails forfeiture of its leadership too. When there is no clarity in the organization structure it affects the leadership system as well. Therefore, because the RBmZ organization structure has been compromised, its leadership has been compromised too.

5.1.3 Informal leadership system

5.1.3.1 No official leaders to take responsibility

In this informal system of running the RBmZ, not only was the organization structure compromised but its leadership too. We saw in our discussion on leadership in the Old Testament that the Hebrew word designated for leadership is מְנַהִיגִית (manhigut). Its verb לְנַהֵג (linhog) in modern Hebrew is actually used for driving a car. This gives an idea of the meaning of leadership that being a leader in Hebrew is not just a concept, it is actually a responsibility that comes with your persistent character. So, leadership is about taking responsibility. And that is what leaders do – they take responsibility.

This is ably demonstrated by all the good leaders of Israel, but most especially by Moses. He took responsibility of his leadership role so seriously that even when Israel had angered God by erecting and worshipping a Golden Calf and God wanted to destroy them, Moses pleaded with God on their behalf: “But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written” (Exodus 32:32). As a leader Moses saw himself as mediator between the Israelites and God and therefore saw it as his responsibility to appeal to God to forgive the people's sins. Moses as a leader, demonstrated that he loved and cared more for the people God gave him to lead than for himself. No wonder Scripture regards Moses as a “servant of God” (Numbers 12:7).

We see this responsibility fully demonstrated in the life, work and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his life on earth, "... He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). Regarding his work of redeeming humanity from sin, Jesus said: "even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). Patterned after his own life of sacrificial service, Jesus taught his disciples servant leadership that weakness is power, loss is gain, death is life and servant-hood is greatness (Mat 16:24-26; Mk 9:33-37).

But the informal setting system espoused by the RBmZ cannot provide such responsibility leadership because both technically and practically it lacks officially recognized leaders. There is no official leader to take responsibility over the affairs that affect all the member churches of the RBmZ.

5.1.3.2 No official leaders to render guidance

People need guidance. That is why God raises up leaders. In the Old Testament God raised up leaders and gave them rules of what was expected of the behaviour and character of Kings: "Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, 'You shall never return that way again.' And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold." (Deuteronomy 17:16-20). But others, like King Solomon, failed to live up to God's standards and were severely punished. "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant" (1 Kings 11:11).

The same was the case in the New Testament. Jesus raised leaders to lead his movement but he also gave them rules of what they were to be themselves, which was, to be self-less and servant leaders. They were to be willing to maintain their commitment even to the point of death. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves" (Luke 22:25-27).

It is therefore unthinkable that an informal structure system that may be perhaps only effective for a small group at the initial commencement of the work and sustained by a bond of friendships, should be so trusted and relied on to remain effective over the years to govern a

movement that has exponentially grown and still expanding without expecting problems to arise! What was expected to fill up the gaps of no organization structure and leadership left or created by running the RBmZ informally? Maybe the supernatural beginnings of the movement or the inexperience of the pioneers may account for this anomaly as the high spirituality atmosphere that characterised those early years may have been expected to continue unabated for unforeseeable future by those who settled for this informal structure and leadership system for the RBmZ.

But in the Bible, as alluded to earlier, God put in place lasting measures to guide the leaders and the people of Israel. These measures were known by all. As such, it gave both the leaders and the people a sense of responsibility and accountability to each other but much more to God himself. The same was true with Jesus. When he instituted the New Testament church, he gave clear and lasting instructions to his apostles (leaders) which they in turn continued to pass on to the church leaders and the people in the churches they planted.

For this reason, the RBmZ with its current informal organization structure and leadership system cannot be effective. It has neither the organization capacity nor leadership style to guide all the stakeholder churches and strengthen their collective capabilities to achieve great things for God's cause and honour. Despite acknowledging the many advantages of inter-church relationships and collaboration and visibly seeing that the RBmZ in its current functioning is not delivering to the satisfaction of all member churches as per intended purpose of this movement, there is insistence on perpetuating its function system simply to safeguard the autonomy of the local church.

It could be that the sentiments expressed by KII 8 would fit well here: "In my view autonomy and independence of the local church has been pushed to an extreme of selfishness and self-centeredness by the emphasis of self in its current description as, self-governing, self-propagating and self-sustaining. The self must be replaced with Christ, as in Christ-governing, Christ propagating and Christ sustaining." The most plausible reason reformed Baptist churches in Zambia could accept and support an informal structure system of the RBmZ despite all its visible weaknesses could be that it was the most taught and therefore popularly held position to this day.

5.1.3.3 No official leaders to solve problems

It is the role of leaders to solve problems. They have leadership skills and competencies to do so. Yet there are no official leaders in the RBmZ to assist in addressing matters of differing

opinions and even open quarrels and differences. The reason many problems have remained unresolved in the RBmZ is that there are no leaders to handle them. We see from scripture that one of the many reasons God raises leaders is so they can help resolve issues that are faced by his people. Solomon as a young king asked God for wisdom because he wanted to rightly give counsel to the people: “Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?” (I Kings 3: 9). God granted him his request and we see him demonstrating his newly granted wisdom in Kings 3:16–28 in the story of two women who asked Solomon to settle their dispute over who the rightful mother of the baby was.

Another example of leaders being problem solvers is Moses. In Exodus 18 we have an account of Moses sitting from morning to evening solving people’s problems. His father-in-law advised him to appoint other leaders to help him with the work. “When Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, “What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning till evening?” And Moses said to his father-in-law, “Because the people come to me to inquire of God; when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of God and his laws” (Exodus 18:14-16).

It was the leaders who helped calm the tribal wrangles that erupted between the Greeks and the Hebrew speaking groups in Acts 6, leading to a solution of creating the office of the deaconate. Similarly, it was the leaders who called for the meeting to debate the circumcision issue raised by the Jewish believers in relation to the gentile believers in Acts 15, which ended in a solution not to burden gentiles with Jewish cultural issues as prerequisite for them to become members of the household of God. At that meeting, it was resolved that essentials of salvation are repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus.

An informal structure system does not have such capacity to help solve problems of the people because it has no leaders to carry out this duty. It offers neither an official platform to take matters of grievances for arbitration nor officially recognized leaders to handle them and make necessary recommendations. Had the RBmZ not been informally structured, it would have had official leaders with leadership competencies to officially engage the differing parties to try and resolve the matters at hand in a God honouring way and thereby help in uniting this family of Baptist churches in Zambia.

This also partly explains why despite there being many issues requiring to be addressed among the stakeholders in the RBmZ, they have nevertheless remained unresolved, just piling up for a long time until finally they blew up. The boycott of the conference in 2019 by some stakeholders was a consequence of cracks that started a long time ago but remained unattended to due to lack of leadership and so kept widening until finally there was a reaction. This demonstrates that when problems are left unresolved for a long time, sometimes they can cause irreparable damages.

5.1.3.3.1 Unsolved problems may lead to chaos

Since it is expected that leaders should help in solving problems, when they are seen not to be doing so, there is usually a backlash from the grieved party. The example of David and his son Absalom in II Samuel 13 could be cited to prove this point. The account narrates how Amnon, David's eldest son raped his half-sister Tamar. David heard about the matter and he was very angry (II Samuel 13:21) but he did nothing more. Absalom, Tamar's brother, was infuriated by both Amnon's act against his sister and his father's lack of action against such an injustice done to his sister. He held a grudge against his father and his brother and looked for an opportunity to avenge his sister's aborted justice.

After two years, Absalom organized a party to which he invited all his brothers but specifically meant to use it as an occasion of revenge to kill Amnon (2 Samuel 13:28). With Amnon killed, he turned his grudge against his father and took his father's throne by force (2 Samuel 15). To break his father's heart more, he slept with his concubines (2 Samuel 16:21-22). Even though in the end David defeated Absalom, it came at a great cost and heart breaks (II Samuel 18).

If David had played his role as a leader and solved the problem that occurred between Tamar and Amnon, the chain reaction in the incidences that followed would have been avoided. Absalom would not have resorted to take revenge on behalf of her sister Tamar and caused all the damages and sufferings that happened. David would have maintained the love and respect from all his children. But because David, as a leader failed to provide leadership by his failure to punish Amnon for his wrong doing, it led to a chain of untold suffering and misery in the home of David and in the nation of Israel as a whole.

The leadership tragedy that has happened in the RBmZ is that the pioneer Pastors, though recognized by many as *de facto* leaders have maintained that they are only leaders of their respective local churches but not of the movement and as such cannot play the role of leaders in the RBmZ. They argue that their stance is in accordance with the principle of the autonomy

of the local church, which they have no intentions to violate in any way. This leaves the RBmZ like sheep without a shepherd and open to wolves.

5.1.3.4 No official leaders to groom others and pass on the leadership button

Informal organization structure means that the RBmZ has no official leaders who can pass on their leadership mantle to the next generation for the continued smooth operations. Scripture narrative in Judges 9 gives a serious warning to organizations that run without a leadership succession plan. It is a story of Gideon who led Israel as a judge for forty years but died without identifying a successor, even though he had Seventy sons. This omission created a leadership vacuum. An opportunist and unqualified Abimelech, the son whom Gideon bore from a female servant (Judges 9:18) saw an opportunity in this leadership vacuum to rule Israel as a king. As a way to safeguard his throne from being taken away by his brothers, he killed all of them except Jotham, the youngest (Judges 9:5).

It is this kind of danger that the RBmZ is exposed to by its informal organization structure and leadership vacuum. It has opened wide doors for opportunists who may have no leadership qualities and abilities but who may possess strong personalities to fill the gap of leadership. The end result could be disastrous. With no official leaders to raise the next generation of leaders and pass a button of leadership of the RBmZ to, the movement is most likely headed towards a demise. The ideals, values, aspirations of the RBmZ will die as soon as the pioneers, who are *de facto* leaders of the movement but deny being leaders of the movement except of their local churches, die.

In its current informally structured way, with no official leadership in place, the RBmZ can only last for as long as these influential pioneer pastors are still alive and keep the movement intact by their friendships and influence. For as long the RBmZ lacks both the official leaders and the leadership succession plan, it is a temporary project with no long-lasting future.

5.1.3.5 Possible reason for the failure of ReBCAZ

The absence of leadership in the RBmZ may be one of the possible reasons why the proposed establishment of a formal association (ReBCAZ) could not materialize even though it had overwhelming support and participation from all the reformed Baptist churches of Zambia. Of the total KIIs interviewed, only about 7% felt that the RBmZ does not need an association. How then could a proposal which had such an overwhelming support fail to materialize? The answer may lie in what KII 15 observed; that “the Reformation in Zambia was around

individuals and not churches”. He was referring to the pioneer pastors. These are the *de facto* leaders who also happen to be the initiators and drivers of the informal organization structure and leadership system of the RBmZ.

They may be few in number but they command great respect, admiration and influence in the movement. Idealistically, these (together with their churches) may be very unlikely to support the move for an association because this would appear like they are going back on their own teachings. Doing so could also be interpreted as to undermine their main principle of defending the autonomy of the local church, which made them settle for the informal system in the first place. It could then be that while the majority of the people may be for the idea of the formalization of the RBmZ through a formal association, some of the pioneer pastors may not. This could be noted from the fact that none of the pioneers was found on the newly constituted executive for the ReBCAZ.

The missing from the executive of these men was an underestimation of the influence and authority these main men who, together as friends, have kept the movement going for decades. These are the men whom the majority regard to be their leaders and the leading men of the movement. So, if even one of them does not buy into the idea of such a change, realizing an active association among reformed Baptist churches in Zambia would be difficult. If, however, their influence had been recognized and capitalized on by asking them to officially lead the RBmZ in its transitioning period from informal system to a formal one (ReBCAZ), that move would most likely have produced positive results.

Pioneers hold a key to this transitional change because it is a major conviction shift which only influential and trusted people can convincingly advance. Only pioneers, who formulated the informal system that is currently in place could use their country-wide earned influence to advocate for such great conviction shift and bring most, if not all, stakeholders on board. Without them and their input, no tangible change can happen to the current informal organization structure and leadership system of the RBmZ.

By them taking a leading role to advocate for change of the organizational structure and leadership system of the RBmZ from the informal to the formal one, the pioneers would have used their influence to advocate for this change as a necessary transition to accommodate the needs of this fast-growing movement so as to make it more effective in serving the interests of all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. Convinced that the current informal system has

failed to live up to its intended purpose, which many have already acknowledged, member churches would have easily bought into the idea of the need for change.

The move calls for great humility and true leadership on the part of the *de facto* leaders (pioneer pastors) to accept the challenge of change to lead and guide the movement on the right and better path towards a more fruitful future of the RBmZ. But it also calls for humility and respect by those who want to see this change effected. It is important to realize that the Pioneer pastors did not adopt this informal methodology out of ill motives or selfish ambitions but were driven by a pure and sincere desire to protect the autonomy of the local church, which is considered one of the pillar doctrines of the Baptist belief systems. Both parties' focus and interest must, therefore, be driven by the welfare and good of the RBmZ going forward, as this is of common interest to either party. Below is a diagram illustrating the informal nature and interactive functions of the RBmZ.

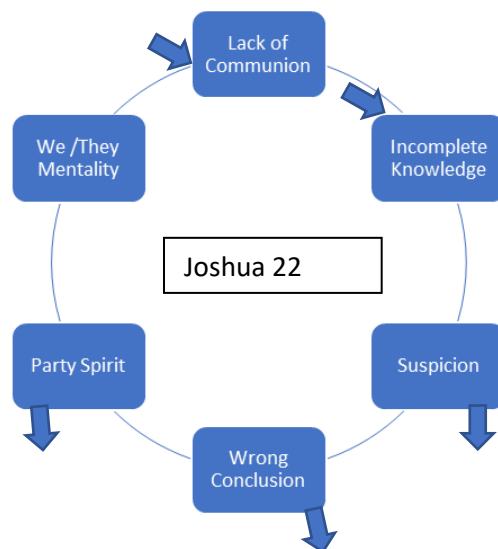
Figure 8: RBmZ informal nature and interactive functions

ISSUE	RBmZ CURRENT	REASON	CHALLENGE	BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION
Conceptualization	Not an organization	To protect the Autonomy of the local church	Gnostic dualism tendencies (Erroneous Christian thinking)	None
Organization structure	Local church-driven Ministry	To protect the autonomy of the local church	Informal	None
Leadership	Friendships and influence	To protect the autonomy of	Informal	None

	of pioneer pastors	the local church		
Inter-church relationships/ interdependence	Loose/ Optional	To protect the autonomy of the local church	Informal	None
Goals and Objectives	Informal	To protect the autonomy of the local church	Informal	None
Local church- driven ministries	National conferences/ all other inter- church ventures	To protect the autonomy of the local church	Exclusive	None
Autonomy of the local church	Exclusively practiced	Core/ Main/ Centre	Exclusive/ Isolationism	None

Below is a diagram illustrating the practical outcomes of a fully-fledged informally run organization:

Figure 9: Practical outcomes of a fully-fledged informal organization



Destructive Cycle: Diagram adapted from 'Denominations or Association, Essays on reformed Baptist Associations,' edited by James M. Renihan (2001:161)

5.2 Understanding of the observations and challenges within OLC

Under this section, we will discuss how the issues discussed above relate and apply to OLC. These shall be discussed under three themes: 1) Link between organisational structure and conception as organisation, 2) Organisational growth processes and the vacuum that existed, and 3) OLC as a framework and diagnosis of RBmZ issues

5.2.1 Link between organisational structure and conception as organisation

It has been observed that the informal organization structure of the RBmZ that has ultimately rendered it to be conceived not as an organization has created serious conceptual confusion. The informal nature of the organization structure of the RBmZ technically renders it structureless. The challenge that this presents is the fact that for leadership to apply the relevant approach, it's imperative to conceive the formation as a structure/organisation. Thus, the formation status and state of the structure would then dictate the leadership skills, competencies and the kind of people required to lead it. Unfortunately, this has never been the case with the

RBmZ. It was never conceived as a structure and yet it was supposed or expected to function as a unified structure. That is the confusion created. The ideal thing was to have the RBmZ as a bound and constituted structure recognised as an organisation of united churches. This would have helped to address the prevailing challenges. This conceptualisation of the RBmZ as an organisation would have resulted in forming an organisation with structure, constitution, leadership guidelines, etc. This seems non-existent or just assumed, being led through a comradery approach.

5.2.2 Organisational growth processes and the vacuum that existed

The issue here is that the church efforts that have resulted in phenomenal growth and other impactful developments are not matched by relevant leadership and management changes to ensure the church developments are equally matched by relevant leadership changes. It is notable that despite RBmZ's maturity (progress in years), increasing numerical numbers and increasing congregational assemblies, the leadership approach has not substantially changed to adapt itself to these changes. As a result, a number of growth processes have been affected. Among them are the disagreements on the hosting, choosing themes and speakers for the national conferences, hosting of the national youth conference (NARBYC), hosting of the Parson's diet, the inter-church fellowship and collaboration - for example - the mode of participating and supporting the inter-church projects such as the ministerial colleges, African Christian University, Reformed Baptist Churches of Zambia Building Trust Fund (RBCZBTF), etc, among many others. This vacuum that has been created in all these growth processes mentioned above would have been averted had the RBmZ adopted the relevant leadership and management changes that ensured the church developments were equally matched by relevant leadership changes. Therefore, despite the evident impact that the church has made over the last 30 years, the organizational growth processes and the factors that have contributed to the current problems and decline in RBmZ need to be addressed. This change is necessary despite so much success thus far achieved by RBmZ in order to fill up the leadership vacuum that exists.

We now turn to consider how the OLC can help in filling up this vacuum.

5.2.3 OLC as a framework and diagnosis of RBmZ issues

Here we describe how OLC highlights, amplifies the leadership gaps and challenges in RBmZ, which could have been closed through this analytic framework. We will consider some of the organizational growth processes and the vacuum created.

5.2.3.1 Disagreements on the hosting, choosing themes and speakers for the national conferences.

The underlying issue to this problem is the organization structure of the RBmZ as to who is in charge of this church movement. Had the RBmZ structure been recognised as an organisation of united churches, it would have helped to address this challenge. It would have become clear to all that the RBmZ was supposed or expected to function as a unified structure for the united churches. This would have resulted in forming an organisation with structure, constitution, leadership guidelines, etc. In turn, the status and state of the structure would then have dictated the leadership skills, competencies and kind of people required to lead it. The result would have given clarity and an answer to the perennial question of who is / supposed to be in charge of the RBmZ and why, thereby eliminated the current wrangles that surround it over this matter. This is the same issue that surrounds the Parson's diet and so the remedy is the same.

5.2.3.1 Loose inter-church fellowship and inter-church collaborations

The issue here is that the RBmZ has a number of projects deemed to be of inter-church collaboration nature such as the African Christian University, the Ministerial Colleges, a Building Trust Fund, a common doctrinal heritage, among others. How effectively can churches work together in implementing such works when there is no official structure or documents or leadership that guide the operations of these projects? The situation affects commitment, involvement, contribution and even the sense of ownership. As such projects are likely to suffer from lack of support. And yet, if these same projects were conceived to be projects co-owned and therefore requiring cooperate effort and support of all reformed Baptist churches in Zambia under the RBmZ, inter-church fellowship and inter-church collaboration would have been strengthened. But both inter-church fellowship and inter-church cooperation suffer and will continue to suffer because the RBmZ lacks both the right conception of the organization structure and the appropriate leadership to achieve this. This problem also goes to explain the failure of the national youth conference (NARBYC) as a collaborative effort towards improving inter-church fellowship among youths in the RBmZ. This initiative can only work when there a recognition of the importance of formalization of structures, plans, official documentations of functional processes and effective leadership in an organizations.

5.2.3.3 Ongoing unresolved wrangles in the RBmZ

One of the problems faced by the RBmZ is that there are wrangles that have been going on unabated for a long time. The reason many problems have remained unresolved in the RBmZ

is that there are no leaders to handle them. The organization has no official structure or leadership system in place to take matters of arbitration to. If the RBmZ had adopted the OLC system of running the organization, the approach would have assisted in the formulation of the structure that suits and meets the requirement of this particular need in the organization. A competent leadership system would have been forged which would have assisted in addressing matters of differing opinions and even open quarrels and differences. This is possible because general principles of management systems specify the structure, strategy, style and the critical conditions for development and environment according to the phases of the past and experienced by an organization.

5.2.3.4 Comraderies' leadership

The problem here is that the current leadership system of the RBmZ is based on friendships and not on an officially documented system that can stand the test of time. In such a system, there are higher chances of biasness than objectivity towards friends when making choices and decisions. Worse still, there is the danger of the uncertainty of the organization's continuity once those friends die. With no official documents in place and no transition plan and structure, there is neither a road map of the organizational future nor future leaders to drive the organization forward. OLC models can assist with some of these, since they are tools to guide the operations of an organizing. Agreeably, OLC systems don't always provide organizations with deterministic ways that can predict their operations and the future course to take, but they can show the changes organizations experience as they grow and mature. Knowing the life cycle stage an organization is at is helpful as it helps to assess what best policies indicating its growth and operations to adopt. An organization leadership based on a well-documented system has higher chances of smooth operations and lasting longer than the one based on comraderies' leadership, as is the case with the RBmZ.

Summary

In this discussion above three major areas of the RBmZ are analysed – its conception, organization structure and leadership. The blanket protection and defence of the autonomy of the local church through an informal organization structure system is seen here to be at the centre of why it is not conceived as an organization, the weakened inter-church fellowship, lack of leadership as well as the many other challenges that the RBmZ has grappled and continue to grapple with even now.

And the situation is likely to continue because the informal methodology adopted to run the RBmZ makes both its organization structure and leadership unclear, unpredictable and simply ineffective. It does not promote the much-desired inter-church fellowship and collaboration. It neither has the capacity nor a robust and effective mechanism to manage a crisis and promote inter-church communion, love, unity and care among all the stakeholder churches. It therefore needs to undergo transformation. That change can come by drawing insights from the issues highlighted so far.

Conclusion

From the critical analysis of the material of this research discussed above, we can deduce that there is a direct link between the organizational structure and its management (OLC approach). In the RBmZ case, we have seen that the informal organizational structure adopted has failed to provide appropriate leadership with right leadership competencies to drive the church movement towards achieving its goals, objectives and aspirations on behalf of all the 63 reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. The major problem revealed by this research is that the RBmZ functions with an inappropriate organization structure system, that is, the informal organization structure system. The informal organization structure has been born out of the extreme emphasis and concern to protect the autonomy of the local church. This is the core problem that needs to be addressed and addressed well and quickly if the RBmZ is going to survive and to be sustained. It is hoped that once this anomaly is corrected, it would simultaneously help to resolve even the other issues that have persistently negatively affected the RBmZ since its inception over thirty years ago.

This raises the question: How does this understanding of leadership apply/relate to the notion adaptive leadership to our argument for OLC where leaders need to be able to respond/address the issues arising from the challenges linked to its life cycle of stage? In the next chapter we will answer this question by proposing a remedy model design that could help address this problem and restore leadership in the RBmZ.

Chapter 6 - Proposed model of church (RBmZ) leadership

6.0 Introduction

This chapter answers the main research question: What model could be proposed that integrates biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change? It proposes a model design for the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. This family of like-minded churches can have an unambiguous theology that puts into clear perspective the way of conceptualizing, organization and leadership systems of the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia and how they ought to relate with each other. The results of this research have highlighted both the areas of ambiguity that have led to current misunderstandings and the clarity needed on the conception, understanding of the functions and relationships of these churches. The proposed operative theological-ecclesiological church leadership model is transformative both in action and service at different levels of church functions: personal, ecclesial and societal. The following are some areas of ambiguity and the proposed clarity:

6.1 Conceptualization of the nature of the church

What is the nature of the church?

6.1.1 Ambiguity: Church is purely organic (Spiritual)

Research has shown that when the church is perceived as a physical entity, it loses its spiritual nature. Some stakeholders have gone to another extreme of conceptualizing church only in organic (spiritual) terms. Indeed, there is much biblical support for conceiving church in organic (spiritual) terms. However, when conceived purely in a spiritual sense, church becomes a unique entity from all other physical/human institutions. The challenge this poses is that it makes it hard to properly conceive church in physical organizational terms. This raises a conceptual ambiguity question of what would be the best representation form that the church would take in the world when conceived in purely organic sense?

6.1.2 Clarity: Church is both organic (spiritual) and physical/human

The findings of the research reveal that the church is not just a spiritual (organic) entity, rather, it is at once organic (the body of Christ) and a human institution. The church is a spiritual entity, but at the same time it comprises physical beings who have been placed in a physical world to be a visible representation of the spiritual body of Christ. This is so because in its

functioning and organization, the church has both visible and invisible dimensions. This brings into play a physical element to the conception of church in terms of its physical needs, organisation, administration and governance. A point of connection exists between the divine and the mortal, of the spiritual and the physical, one that is not easy to determine but clear enough to know. Although there are some distinct characteristics that differentiate the church from any other organization because it is spiritual, the church is still an organization, sharing some common principles with other enterprises and therefore crying out to be conceived in physical/human terms too. There is an undeniable physical sense in which the church can be conceived in terms of an organization. The paradox nature of the church and the tension thereof speaks against the presumptuous attitude that totally rejects conceiving the church in organizational terms that insists only on its spiritual nature, and calls for a spirit of discernment, openness, flexibility and humility in approaching this hybrid-like institution.

6.1.2.1 dualistic nature supported by Scripture

This dualistic conceptualization of church is supported by Scripture. Both in the Old and New Testaments, God's movements have been clearly understood as organizations. In the Old Testament, when God began a movement to make a special people for himself, he called out Israel as an organized entity under his rule. Israel was not one but an organization of twelve (12) different tribes. Each tribe had its own autonomous leadership but still under the united banner of Israel and Israel's king (This demonstrates the local church's independence and interdependence, simultaneously). Similarly in the New Testament, Jesus began a movement within Judaism in which he mobilized and organized his followers under his rule. He began by mobilizing the twelve (12) whom he designated apostles. This movement expanded into different Churches and spread all over the earth but still remained one organization with the same banner of the people of "the way" (Acts 24:4) or "Christians" (Acts 11:26) under Christ's rule as well as under their local leaders (This demonstrates an aspect of fellowship and cooperation among like-minded churches).

Scripture further affirms this dual nature of the church where Christians are conceived to be already saved but yet to be saved, to be raised and seated with Christ in heaven and yet still on earth (Col. 3:1-4). Clearly, the life and fruition of the church is primarily done and sustained by God himself. And yet, it has pleased God to call members of the church to co-operate freely in this divine work. Paradoxically, even when they do actively participate, success of the church primarily depends on the divine will and power. There is therefore, a tension that need always

to be recognized and maintained, and which should not to be downplayed or broken whenever the church is being conceptualized. Both in the New and Old Testaments there was clarity in the way people conceived the movement/organization of God. They understood it as a movement/organization of God with clear organization structure and leadership in place.

6.1.2.2 dualistic nature supported by church history

The reformers also held this dualistic view of conceiving the church in dualistic terms. They opposed the Roman catholic view that totally reduced the conception of the church to purely a physical institution by insisting and clarifying that it was both organic and physical/human. They taught that the church is essentially invisible at present, though it has a relative and imperfect embodiment in the visible Church and is destined to have a perfect visible embodiment at the end of the ages. To make it clearer, they asserted that the church has never been without a government, either in the invisible realm in which Christ is its head, or in the visible in which it always possessed some form of organization.

Conceptualizing church in dualistic terms as shown above, brings clarity in the way the church of Christ needs to be properly understood. The dual conception of the nature of the church makes it organizationally possible as a spiritual organization.

6.2 Conceptualization of the local church

What is the scope of the church?

6.2.1 Ambiguity: Local Church is independent (autonomous)

It was highlighted in the research that the autonomy or independence of the local church is a key doctrine among all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. This doctrine maintains the idea of the local church's self-sufficiency and reliance as in self-governing, self-sustaining and self-propagating. It puts strong emphasis on protecting the power and authority of the local church from being usurped by any outside body. The notion this view creates is that there is nothing wrong for a church to dwell alone, especially if it is self-sufficient. The most noticeable practical results of this thought pattern is the seemingly unreconcilable tension between the autonomy of the local church and the inter-church cooperation with other like-minded churches, even though these relationships are clearly commanded by the Lord to be practiced by all local churches. It creates an artificial dichotomy in conception between the independence of the local church and the local church interdependence, both issues which the scripture and the Confession urge churches to practice side by side. Not only does this notion cause the local

church to lean towards isolationism, but it also makes interdependence with like-minded churches a desirable option and not an obligation as the scriptures require. This creates ambiguity and sometimes even confusion among local churches in finding a proper balance between the practice of autonomy and the forging of relationships with others sister churches, both of which are clearly taught in scripture.

6.2.2 Clarity: Local church is independent (autonomous) and interdependent

Research results show that the right way of conceiving a local church is in both independent (autonomous) and interdependent terms. The reason for this is that the church is a household of Christ. It is one though scattered all-over the world and has one mission. Its expansion all over the world has not in any way affected its oneness. All believers are organically connected as members to this one family and for this one mission. But they also physically meet in local churches. Jesus commanded the unity of this family and the early church practiced it (Acts 15:2,23; 16: 4; Romans 15:25-27; 2Cor. 8:1-12; 16-24; 9:12-15; 3 John 8-10). Their autonomy did not blind them to the need to have fellowship with a wider body of God's people. And neither were they intoxicated with their independency that they lost sight of their mystical connection with the "catholic" church.

Since churches are members of one body, they have an obligation to walk together in doctrine and practice (Col. 2:6, 9; 4:14). When local churches visibly cooperate, they are displaying the Lord's desire for unity in his universal body (John 17:11, 20-23). This ought to be the right way of perceiving the church of Christ in local and universal terms—simultaneously. And this oneness of the church of Christ ought to be reflected in visible oneness among the autonomous local churches' cooperation, especially those who are like-minded. Scripture, history and the 1689 Confession all combine to affirm this way of conceiving the local church both as independent (autonomous) and interdependent.

6.2.2.1 Interdependence demonstrates brotherly love

Practicing inter-church fellowship and cooperation does not only show the idea of the church's oneness but it is also an expression of Christian love for the brethren. Brotherly love is very important as it covers a multitude of sins. Sharp differences are possible and many members and churches could easily find themselves breaking this brotherly love. Scripture teaches that love is the fulfilment of the law (Rom. 13:8-10) and the mark of true discipleship (Mark 10:19). Therefore, believers ought to love one another. Christian oneness compels believers to have gracious attitudes such as is found both in the apostle Paul and the Lord, Jesus Christ. Brethren

love maybe demonstrated when dealing with each other despite differences in opinions or theological differences. They are to deal with each other graciously with meekness of heart and a humble spirit, bearing in mind that their Lord, Jesus Christ was ever full of truth and grace (John 1:14) and therefore, the need to emulate him. They are to do this for the sake of maintaining unity (Eph 4:2-7) as they are one body united to one head: “one faith, one baptism one Lord, one father of all” (Eph. 4:5).

6.2.2.2 Interdependence supported by reformed Baptist history

The history of reformed Baptists inter-church association go as far back as 1688 – 1707 (using the Philadelphia Baptist Association in America as an example). These churches were independent and autonomous and yet they never thought inter-church relations when appropriately practiced violate the principle of the autonomy of the local church. Their example ought to be emulated in forging strong inter-church relations.

6.2.2.3 Interdependence taught by the 1689 London Baptist confession of Faith

The 1689 London Baptist confession of faith itself, which is an official document of all Reformed Baptist churches in Zambia, advocates for both independence and interdependence of local churches. It lays down the theology of inter-church association in Chapter 26:14, 15 that churches are not only obliged to be concerned about problems facing other churches but they are to “enjoy the opportunity and advantage of fellowship by seeking fellowship among themselves to promote peace, increase love and mutual edification”

Like-minded churches may, therefore, physically express this organic union by formal inter-church fellowships and cooperations. Holding communion with like-minded churches is one practical physical way of acknowledging this spiritual reality of the unity of the church. It recognizes the oneness of the family members of God who are near and far (inside and outside the local church). Independent local churches have an obligation to practice church interdependence by seeking and finding like-minded churches that they can forge fellowship and cooperation with locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Since all churches involved are like-minded and desire to protect the autonomy of the local church, concern of violating the autonomy of the local principle would not be an issue. Rather, concern would be to identify specific common areas of interest in which these local churches can collectively express interdependence while at the same time promoting their individual welfare. These common areas of fellowship and cooperation would be specific and the kind that would be based on issues that most honour Christ when collectively undertaken such as, the celebration

of the common faith (fellowship), church planting, training institutions, government engagements, running of the national conferences, among others.

6.3 Conceptualization of the RBmZ's leadership

What leadership and leadership competencies are needed to drive the RBmZ to success?

6.3.1 Ambiguity: Informal leadership (Local Church-driven ministry concept)

Who are the leaders of the RBmZ?

It has been pointed out in the research that leaders play a very vital role in any institution. Without leaders, an institution cannot survive. But the RBmZ leadership is informal with no leadership system of its own but operates under the local church-driven ministry concept. It is controlled by the local leadership system under which it is placed. The difficulty is that without a formalized leadership system to help understand how the RBmZ functions, it is natural for those who are joining the movement later on to assume that the pioneers of the movement are the leaders when technically they are not. The question, who are the leaders of the RBmZ? presupposes structure and leadership. Because of this presupposition, many wrongly equate Pioneers to leaders of the movement.

But Pioneers are not leaders of the movement. This creates confusion in the way the leadership of the RBmZ is conceived, especially to new comers and others who assume that pioneers are the leaders of the RBmZ. Despite the significant role of leaders in an organization, the RBmZ has no formally recognized leaders. Without a formally recognized leadership in place, the movement lacks the important organizational components which enhance the effectiveness of organization operations. It has no capacity to effectively support the objectives and goals intended for it to achieve on behalf of the stakeholder churches such as, to enhance fellowship and inter-church collaboration among all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia

6.3.2 Clarity: formal leadership (Local Church-driven ministry concept)

Research results reveal that every progressive organization need to have an organized structure and leadership system formally and clearly spelt out. Without a properly formalized structure and recognized leadership, as the case is with the RBmZ, the organization is unlikely to succeed. Success of an organization depends on how it is organized and managed. There is a link between the organizational structure and the leadership of an organization. The way an institution is organized determines its leadership style or how it would be led. The advantage

of formal structuring is that it also takes into account the important role of leaders in an institution. In the similar way, the RBmZ leadership is influenced by the organizational structure and leadership style of the church government system practiced by the local church it has been placed under. This has rendered it ineffective and needs to change.

To change a leadership system, you have first to change the organization structure. Therefore, other structural alternative approaches are required that do not threaten the core values of the local church such as the autonomy of the local church and the local church-driven ministry concept but simply works towards its enhancement and effective operations. In the case of the RBmZ, this would mean changing the structure from its current informal setting to a formal one. Leaders are supposed to be flexible to discern such alternative methods and not just end at defending the already existing values of the church. An appropriate formal leadership to drive the RBmZ now and in the future is needed. Comraderies leadership cannot sustain large scale collaboration of churches, and certainly not the rate of scale of growth that the reformed Baptist churches are growing at. That kind of exponential growth requires a formalized system that brings every stakeholder together in common interest.

Human beings cannot do without leaders. This fact is established by the Scriptures. History is in fact a record of the leaders and the led. Leaders are required in order to safeguard the well-being of their societies. The Bible is very clear that a nation will fall if it has no guidance (Proverbs 11:14).

6.4 Conceptualization of the RBmZ's Structure

What organizational structure is appropriate for the RBmZ? And how may it be appropriately applied so it does not interfere with the core values of the local church?

6.4.1 Ambiguity: Informal structure (Local Church ministry-driven concept)

It was highlighted in the research that the current informal association system under which the RBmZ operates has neither a formal structure nor a formally recognised leadership. The reason for the adoption of this system being the strong feelings and assumption by some stakeholders that autonomy and interchurch cooperation are contradictory concepts and therefore cannot be practiced together. Doing so might disrupt the autonomy of the local church. Based on these feelings and assumption, the structure of the RBmZ has been informal firstly, in keeping with the conceptualization of the church as organic therefore not an organization, but secondly and most importantly, to prevent it from having its own independent parallel authoritative structure

to protect the autonomy of the local church. Additionally, it had to be made informal in keeping with the concept of the local church-driven ministry concept. This arrangement automatically made the RBmZ assume the structure of the local church it had fallen under. In this informal set up, it is difficult for it to operate in a manner that would render service to the satisfaction of all stakeholder churches. One is tempted to ask, what then does the RBmZ exist for if not for the common good and benefit of all the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia? But this obscurity and contradiction in function is all due to its informal structure system.

6.4.2 Clarity: formal structure

Whilst there is a strong feeling and assumption by many that autonomy and interchurch fellowship and cooperation are contradictory and therefore cannot be practiced together by independent churches, the research results reveal that to the contrary these two concepts are in fact parallel truths that can be practiced side by side. They reveal that while there is a real tension that exists between them and which need to be well managed, there is absolutely no contradiction. The alleged contradiction arises out of the wrong conceptualization of church as not an organization but purely as an organic entity. As earlier observed, this view downplays the human side of the nature of the church thereby robbing it of its physical/human component. But when rightly conceptualized in its dual nature, which also highlights its organizational side, the church allows for interchurch fellowship and cooperation without any contradiction.

This is another importance of formalization besides its biblical backing - it brings about organizational clarity. It allows for planning and having a clear road map for an organization, knowing where it is at and what kind of interventions are needed at a particular time. It makes execution of plans easier and if an organization is facing challenges, because of clarity, it is easy to determine what kind of solution may be required to either prevent the crisis or, if it is already in one, take it out of the crisis. Scripture reminds us that God is a God of order and not confusion. Paul wrote: "Let everything be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 15:40). He also said, "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (1 Corinthians 14:33). And he even went further and condemned those who "live in a totally unstructured way" (2 Thessalonians 3:11).

The reasons and concerns for making RBmZ informally structured are weak and unjustifiable. At best, they are based on feelings and assumptions. A mindset shift is needed that understands and appreciates the fact that it is a tension and not a contradiction that exists between the autonomy of the local church and the inter-church communion. The tension can be managed

by local churches' right handling of their independence and interdependence as stipulated by Jesus' household codes for his household.

Local churches need not shun to formalize the RBmZ. By formalizing it, like-minded churches would be expressing their recognition of the oneness of the church and their desire to promote love, cooperation and the church's unity that Jesus prayed for and commanded to be preserved. Caution, however, is needed to protect the autonomy of the local church from being violated by inter church cooperation but at the same time to protect interchurch fellowship and cooperation from being inhibited by extreme local church autonomy tendencies. Keeping this balance in check is key to managing the tension that exist between these two important truths.

Churches need to critically and satisfactorily think through the dynamics of inter-church associations in relation to local church autonomy. Collaboration anchored on clear principles is ideal if a sustainably inclusive method that could maintain unity, meaningful fellowship and collaboration among these sister churches that share common doctrinal faith would be achieved. Ultimately, there must be clearly laid out oversight and accountability arrangements to each local church through the body of its elders.

There are many advantages to formal associations of like-minded churches.

6.4.2.1 It promotes unity of stakeholders

Formal association offer a platform that meaningfully unites and encourages inter-church relations to the satisfaction of the Scriptures. Whilst in the informal setting fellowship and much of the information that flow happens and ends mainly at leadership level, with just a little trickling down to an ordinary church member, there is meaningful inter-church fellowship that directly involves ordinary church members in formal setting thereby making fellowship among like-minded believers impactful. Everyone knows what is happening, what is expected of them and why, through reports by representatives of their local churches and through church business meetings' reports. It allows the general membership of the local church to interact with the others directly and not through their leaders. In this way, it brings about meaningful practical fellowship, true partnership, cooperation and co-action among all stakeholder churches, without necessarily tampering with the autonomy and independence of the local church.

6.4.2.2 Promotes dialogue among stakeholders

There will always be differing opinions over a number of issues by God's people. But, like the marriage institution, differences do not amount to or end in divorce. Differences offer an

opportunity for the parties involved to understand each other better by talking things over. Even when the apostles were still around, differences arose among the brethren (Acts 6 and Acts 15), but they had mastered the art of dialogue and talking things over as an important way of dealing with differences. A formalized forum that is generally acknowledged by all stakeholders would offer that opportunity and space for dialogue. It would not only provide opportunities and space for the differed parties to dialogue and resolve issues, but would also have the ability itself to offer advice to the parties involved that would go a long way in resolving some of the differences and suspicions that may have arisen or have remained unresolved for a long time.

6.4.2.3 It promotes growth of the movement

Informal system may have worked well in small settings and when pioneers were friends. But there has been an exponential growth in the movement. This growth brings up unique challenges that require a formalized way of doing things. Formalization triggers new approaches to doing church, especially re-looking into its structure. It is very difficult to manage growth without a formalized structure. It gives room to speculations, inconsistencies, gossip, misunderstandings and eventually splits. A formal structure system also helps to look into vices such as doctrinal deviation and friendship building among like-minded churches.

6.4.2.4 It promotes responsibility and accountability

This is more so important because, although the reformed movement practices autonomy and local-church driven ministries, nonetheless stakeholders volunteer or decide to join inter-church fellowship or association (RBmZ). This voluntary joining necessitates the establishing of an effectual, recognized and accepted authoritative executive body structure to coordinate inter-church relations and interests, which do not infringe on the independence of the local church. It must be a censuring and accountability body that is recognized and accepted by all volunteer parties involved, and able to recommend the findings or rulings to local churches for their considerations. This body should have power to discipline or deal with erring members in the same way the local church does - something to the effect of Presbyterian or episcopal system that allows for hearing out the grieved parties and recommend (pass a ruling). Thus, it will be a body with clear channels of accountability but which nonetheless respects and upholds the autonomy of the local church. And the idea is not difficult to conceive or practice, when based on this simple assessment - “If the association has the tendency to usurp the power of the local Church, then no! If it is to support the local churches, then yes!” This understanding

rules out the unfounded concern that the local church will be contaminated in formal associations and compromise its autonomy.

6.4.2.5 promotes strength in numbers

Governments through politicians survive on the support of the people. Sometimes, when the number of churches is big, it works out for their good as the government tries to create a good working relationship with them. In Zambia, the government offers incentives to churches, especially those that belong to church mother bodies. These come in various forms such as free registration, certification, tax liberties, among others. The RBmZ, if formalized, could benefit a great deal from these government incentives and save a lot of money that can be channelled into the work of ministry. The movement and indeed its affiliate member churches could utilize this window of opportunity offered by the government to procure church assets easily and cheaply such as furniture, conference materials, motor vehicles, TV/Radio equipment, education materials, and many others, which may be used in ministry projects and the ongoing church planting works. All this can easily be achieved simply by formalizing the movement so that it acts as a mother body of the reformed Baptist Churches in Zambia.

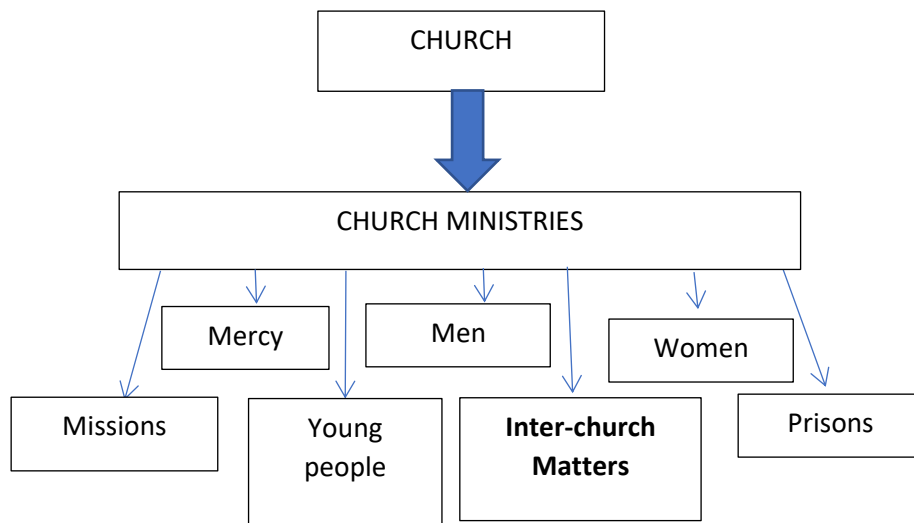
6.4.3 Proposed RBmZ structure

Below are some proposed diagrams of possible ways of a formalized inter-church forum. It does not matter which of the three models a church might adopt; what is most important is to make the inter-church associations forum a ministry of each local church that works in collaboration with similar ministry in other churches. In this way it will maintain the church's core values of the local church-driven ministry and the autonomy of the local church while at the same time fully involved in inter-church fellowship and cooperation.

6.4.3.1 As a ministry on its own

The advantage of making inter-church associations as a ministry on its own is that it will receive adequate attention from the church similar to that given to any other ministry. And with full attention given, it will be established quickly and remain fully focused on its objectives.

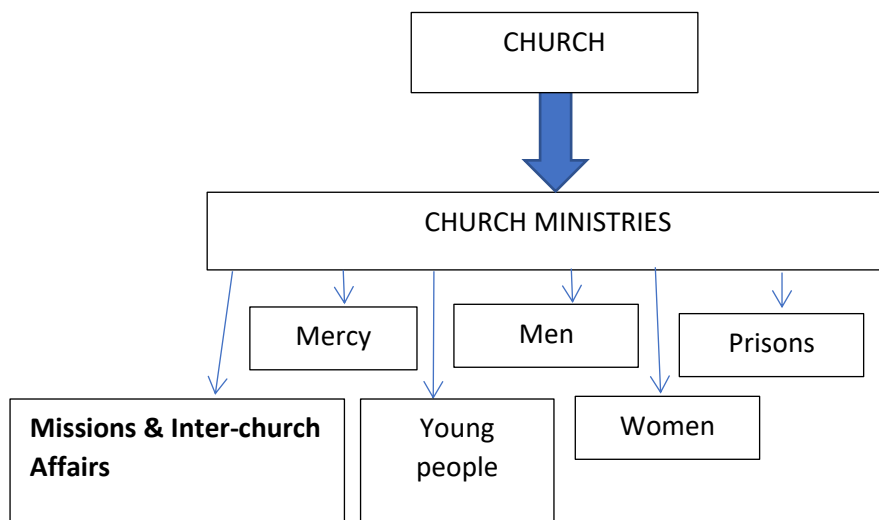
Figure 10: Inter-church Associations as a stand-alone ministry



6.4.3.2 As a ministry integrated with the mission's ministry

The inter-church affairs ministry may be placed together with the mission's ministry by virtue of its outward-looking nature. In this case, its name may change to "Missions and inter-church affairs ministry." The name is meant to emphasize both major components and objectives of the ministry to avoid one receiving more attention than the other. The advantage it has is that it would reduce the work of establishing a totally new ministry. However, by being integrated with another ministry, it may not quickly blossom and reach its full potential as compared to if it stood on its own.

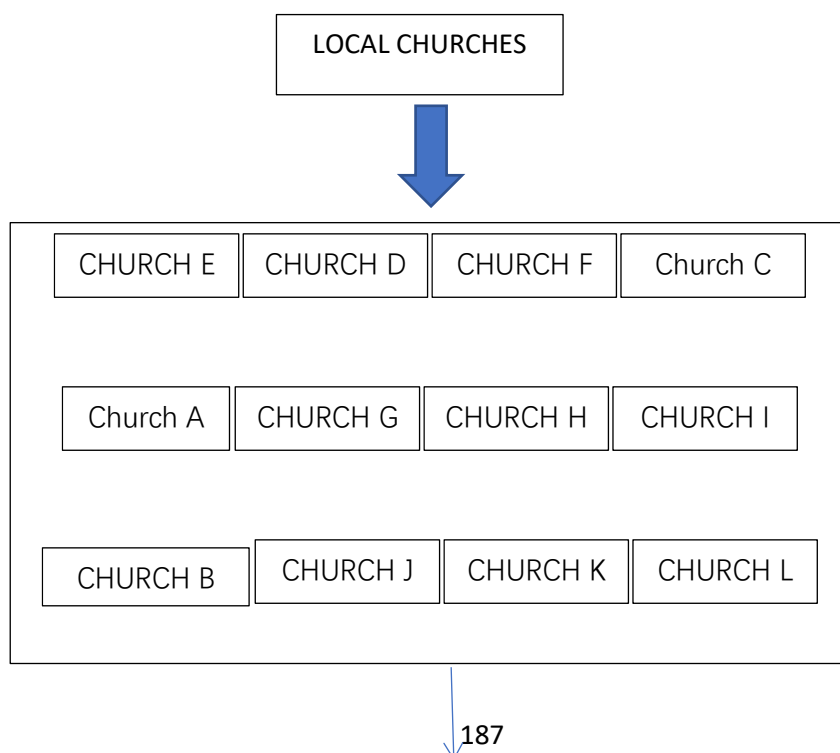
Figure 11: Inter-church Affairs ministry as an integrated ministry with the mission's ministry

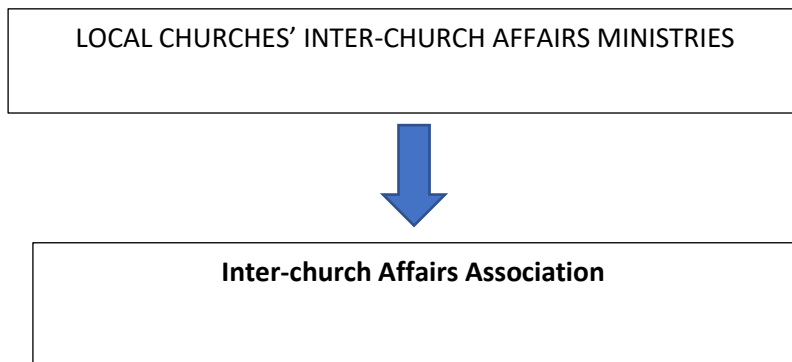


6.4.3.3 *Inter-church affairs ministry as an association of all local churches' inter-church affairs ministries*

Inter-church affairs ministry of each local congregation collaborates with inter-church affairs ministries of other like-minded congregations. Since ministries are the arms of the church through which it expresses itself, the local church find its way of relevance and contribution to inter-church fellowship and cooperation through this ministry.

Figure 12: Inter-church Association as an assembly inter-church affairs ministry



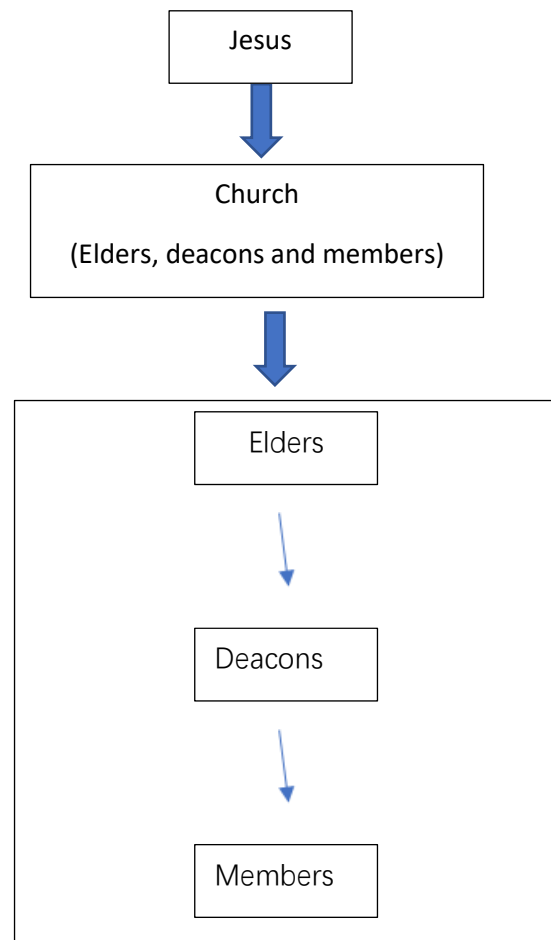


Advantages of the proposed inter-church affairs ministry and association structure

Firstly, it does not violate the principle of the autonomy and independence of the local church. Therefore, reformed Baptist churches in Zambia may continue to practice the autonomy and independence of the local church. Both historical records and the 1689 Baptist confession of faith show that the reformed Baptists have always practiced the autonomy and the independence of the local church as the correct church government system. The conviction is based on the biblical findings that each individual local church is directly superintended by its head - the Lord Jesus Christ. The church is the body and Jesus is the head. It is he that gathers (John 10:14-16), saves (John 17:6-10), governs and protects (John 10:27:30) and even sanctifies (Eph. 5:25-27) it. This means that there should be no other authoritative body to dictate the affairs of a local church. This is why the reformed Baptists have always opposed Presbyterianism and Episcopal systems of church governments.

Below is a basic diagram that illustrates an independent church government system:

Figure 13: Independent (autonomous) church government system:



Secondly, it does not violate the principle the local church ministry-driven concept. The concept of the local church driven-ministry is retained in the proposed structure. In the context of the Zambian informal situation, only the local church (and a few that have been added recently) that houses the RBmZ has an inter-church affairs ministry. But in the formal set up, each local congregation has an inter-church affairs ministry through which it collaborates with other like-minded churches in inter-church fellowship and co-action with others. The ministry is responsible for co-ordinating and reporting on fellowships, joint ventures and projects to do with the inter-church affairs. Some benefits of this organizational structure are:

First, it routes out paternalistic tendencies. It takes away the monopoly and paternalistic tendencies, engender meaningful partnerships and ensures mutual respect and equal participation of all stakeholder churches are achieved. At the same, it protects the independence

(autonomy) of the local church from the undesirable Presbyterian and episcopal systems of church governments. All joint ventures of inter-church nature are carried out collectively under the auspices of the inter-church affairs ministries forum. Ultimately, since it is a ministry of the local church, inter-church affairs ministry is totally administered under the normal local church arrangement of eldership rule system espoused by the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia.

The whole church, not only leaders are involved in inter-church affairs

It gives an opportunity to the members to get involved in what affects them. Since it is a ministry, it will be required that reports of its activities be shared during organized church meetings and other relevant fora. Elders input is also assured since all ministries are overly superintended by an elder in charge. In this way, not only leaders but the general membership gets to be fully aware of matters affecting other sister churches. They support the inter-church cause by direct participation, financing and prayer. They may even suggest better ways of running the ministry so as to improve its functions and effectiveness. Membership involvement is what guarantees the sustainability and success of any undertaking of the church.

6.3 It guarantees planning for and financing of the ministry

Because it is a ministry like any other in the church, it will receive active attention from the leadership just like all the other ministries of the church. This will be in terms of planned for activities as well as adequate funding to match the ministry needs. The elder in charge, in collaboration with the ministry leaders and the ministry members will work together to make inter-church fellowship and cooperation a necessary and relevant part of the local church with the like-minded churches.

6.5 Conceptualization of the end of the doctrine of the church

What is the end of the doctrine of the church - Christ or the local church?

6.5.1 Ambiguity: The church (protecting the autonomy of the local church to preserve its honour)

Research has uncovered incidences where there has been uncompromisingly strong stance on the defense of the local church. One of these has been noted in the extreme stance taken to protect the autonomy of the local church at the expense of other equally important biblical teachings such as the inter-church fellowship and cooperation. Another has been expressed

through the insistence to continue using the informal system to run the RBmZ even when it has clearly been observed to have failed to deliver to the expectation of all stakeholders. Yet another has been seen in the emphasis of ‘self’ in the current description of the local church as a self-governing, self-propagating and self-sustaining entity another. The ambiguity these and other similar cases have created is that they make the local church an end of the doctrine of the church by defending its honour.

6.5.2 Clarity: Christ (doing what honours him most for his honour)

The results of the research reveals that the end of the doctrine of the church is the honour and glory of Christ. It is Jesus who inaugurated the household of God (the church) using the gospel and set it as the standard principle upon which it was to be administered and governed. The church is formed in the Gospel, informed and transformed by the Gospel and therefore it has to exist and operate by the principles of that Gospel. This makes Jesus not only the head of the church but his gospel of grace is the gospel of the heavenly kingdom he came to establish. Therefore, the end of all Christian doctrine including that of the church, is not the church but Christ.

Therefore, care is required to ensure that in trying to uphold one biblical truth, it does conflict with another clear biblical truth. One area of applying this caution is to watch against the extreme of defending the autonomy of the local church at all cost. The other is to watch the selfishness and self-centeredness by the emphasis of ‘self’ in the current description of the local church as a self-governing, self-propagating and self-sustaining entity. It creates a notion of self-reliance, that there is nothing wrong for a church to dwell alone, especially if it is self-sufficient. The result of this way of thinking has been the preference of loose and optional relationships among the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. The “self” must be replaced with “Christ,” as in Christ-governing, Christ propagating and Christ sustaining.” Context must be assessed to discern what most honours Christ in those particular situations: Is it when the independence (autonomy) of the local church is uncompromisingly upheld or when both independence and interdependence are uncompromisingly upheld and practiced simultaneously that Christ is most glorified? Balance is needed to ensure that all that Christ has commanded is appropriately obeyed and appropriately applied. Therefore, to the question, what is the end of the doctrine of the church – Christ or the local church? The answer is Christ.

Conclusion

The results of the research revealed conceptual ambiguities of theology on the doctrine of the church, in relation to its nature, its governance structure and leadership system. The model clears these conceptual ambiguities by putting into clear and proper perspective the way of conceptualizing, organization and leadership systems of the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia and how these churches ought to appropriately conduct inter-church dependence without breaking the principle of the autonomy of the local church, a vital distinguishing mark of the Baptists.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter is the conclusion to the study. It summarizes the findings of the proceeding chapters and provides some final recommendations for all stakeholders in the RBmZ.

7.1 Chapter Summaries

Here we summarise key issues/findings of each chapter

Chapter 1 - An introduction to the study

This chapter gave the direction this research has taken, which is to show what this research is all about; namely, to expose the cause of the on-going bickering and misunderstandings in the RBmZ that threatens the loss of its focus, which until now has made great impact on the Zambian society and beyond. The chapter highlighted the emerging challenges involved using insights drawn from organizational management theories for a responsive leadership. Furthermore, it highlighted Christian leadership principles from ecclesiological transformational leadership models which are required to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and life changes, just as the case is with the RBmZ.

Chapter 2 – An analysis of OLC’s and leadership theories

This chapter integrated data from the literature on the organizational life circles (OLCs) and leadership theories. The focus of the chapter was to highlight how the challenges being faced by the RBmZ should be understood from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership. The findings were that the failure of an organization depends on its leadership; that effective organisational management should be characterised by the understanding the right phase of the OLC, deploying appropriate leadership that corresponds to the needs at the stage of the organisation’s growth phase, being flexible in leadership than being rigid, and monitoring performance; that appropriate leadership style is, therefore, very important because it drives the strategic needs of an organization for all the phases it passes through; and finally that management skills and principles are not enough for effective functioning of an organization but must be complimented by good worker relations and job satisfaction.

Chapter 3 – Church leadership issues of RBmZ (literature and empirical)

This chapter integrated a descriptive and interpretive task into the organizational and leadership structure of the RBmZ. Its objective was to gain deeper insight into the leadership issues of the RBmZ as the church movement has been growing. It scanned the RBmZ environment to

recognize the trends that have affected the movement's smooth operations and which may continue to do so in the future if no intervention is done. It therefore exposed deficiencies in leadership and leadership competencies in the RBmZ. The findings were that the RBmZ lacks appropriate leadership; that leadership challenges faced by the RBmZ are directly connected to its informal organizational structure and the leadership system currently espoused; that the principle of the autonomy of the local church and the local church-driven ministry concept have negatively affected and compromised the organizational structure and the leadership system of the RBmZ; and finally that friendship leadership of pioneers cannot sustain large scale inter-church relationships and collaborations.

Chapter 4 – Leadership in the Bible

This chapter explored the leadership concept in Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments. The focus of the chapter was to discern normative church leadership elements from Scripture that could be used as guide to formulate the leadership model for the RBmZ. The findings were that leadership is an indispensable element to guide God's people and a nation would fall if it has no guidance (Proverbs 11:14); that since leadership is God's idea, it can only be successfully done when it is carried with a high moral character by leaders as summarised by the spiritual values prescribed in the Old Testament and as demonstrated in the life and leadership of Jesus, which is, servanthood, love and example; that since the source of all authority and power is God then all human leadership is derivative of God's sovereign rule therefore, all leaders are accountable to him; and finally that the measure of leadership is tied to the degree of obedience of a leader to God.

Chapter 5: Understanding Church leadership within OLC and leadership principles

This chapter normatively brought into light the harmonious relationship between biblical tradition leadership and church (RBmZ) leadership. It a lens in analysing the church's response to leadership. The findings were that there is a direct link between the organizational structure and its management; that the blanket protection and defence of the autonomy of the local church through an informal organization structure system is the core problem responsible for a wrong conceptualization of the RBmZ, the weakened inter-church fellowship as well as the absence of effective leadership in the church movement; that the informal methodology adopted to run the RBmZ makes both its organization structure and leadership unclear, unpredictable and simply ineffective for it neither has the capacity nor mechanism to manage

a crisis and promote inter-church communion, love, unity and care among all the stakeholder churches.

Chapter 6 – Proposed model of church (RBmZ) leadership

This chapter proposed a model design for the RBmZ to help mitigate the current infightings and propel the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia towards a successful future. The findings were that there was no clarity on the understanding of the whole subject of the reformed Baptist church as a church and how as an autonomous local congregation it ought to relate with other churches of common convictions and faith—the RBmZ; that this obscurity was the reason for employing an inappropriate system (informal system) to govern the RBmZ thereby weakening its organization structure and ultimately curtailing its leadership; that as a remedy to both this problem of lack of clarity on the reformed Baptist church and as well as finding appropriate governance structure and leadership style for the RBmZ, guidelines of clarity have been proposed as the right model design for addressing these issues.

7.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, we give brief answers to the research questions, which speaks to the research objectives too.

7.2.1 What are the challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organisation has been growing?

Evidence from the research review a number of challenges being experienced by the RBmZ as the organization has been growing. One of them is that it lacks leadership and yet success or the failure of an organization depends on its leadership. The other challenge is that the RBmZ organization structure is informal and therefore is not conceived as an organization. As such it lacks effective organisational management which is characterised by the understanding the right phase of the OLC, deploying appropriate leadership that corresponds to the needs at the stage of the organisation's growth phase, being flexible in leadership than being rigid, and monitoring performance. It lacks an appropriate leadership style which is crucial to drive the strategic needs of an organization for all the phases it passes through. Another notable challenge is the extreme view by which the principle of the autonomy of the local church and the local church-driven ministry concept have been practiced by the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia. These have negatively affected and compromised the organizational structure and the leadership system of the RBmZ. The overall challenge of the RBmZ, however, is that there

is no clarity of understanding, by the stakeholders, regarding how the RBmZ ought to be properly conceived, what the reformed Baptist church itself is or supposed to be, the right organization structures and leadership systems that ought to be employed to run them and how independent local churches are supposed to exercise church interdependence. This has not only created a confusion but extremes too in the way things are done in the RBmZ.

7.2.2 How should these challenges be understood from a church organisational life cycle perspective and leadership?

These challenges have arisen because the RBmZ church is not perceived as an organization, thus the informal nature of its organization structure and leadership system. However, these challenges should be understood by the link of OLCs to church life, which qualifies the church to be conceived as an organization despite it being a spiritual entity, thus formalizing its organization structure and leadership system. The church is characterized by both human (organizational) and godly (spiritual) attributes. This makes the church to be at once the body of Christ and a human institution. It must, therefore, simultaneously respond to both; spiritually to spiritual challenges and managerially to organizational challenges. The uniqueness of the church as a faith-based organization does not exempt it from basic managerial principles of an organization. Its unique character, mission, source and culture was, is and always will be a real human organization pleading for sound management. Not only is organizational design relevant to churches, but understanding the principles of organizational design is as essential and beneficial to church executives as they are to their corporate counterparts. This is most important when it is recognized that management skills and principles are universally applicable to the management of all organizations. Conceiving church in this way, opens up the avenue of setting up a formal organization structure that would then dictate the leadership skills, competencies and the kind of people required to lead that particular organization. That is what the RBmZ requires in order to deal with its current challenges.

7.2.3 What Christian leadership principles could be discerned from Scriptures that could be employed to foster responsive church leadership in situations of church growth and life changes?

One of the leadership principles discerned from the scriptures is that leadership is an indispensable element to guide God's people and a nation would fall if it has no guidance (Proverbs 11:14). In Hebrew Bible, a leader is not just a concept, it is a responsibility that comes with one's persistent character, while in the New Testament, leadership is servant-hood.

This is the reason why in Christianity service is considered the hallmark of true leadership. Another leadership principle is that since leadership is God's idea, it can only be successfully done when it is carried with a high moral character by leaders as summarised by the spiritual values prescribed in the Old Testament and also as demonstrated in the life and leadership of Jesus, which is, servanthood, love and example. Requirements of what the leader was expected to do or not do were clearly spelt out in the Torah (Deuteronomy 17:16-20) for the Old Testament and in Jesus' servanthood leadership style in the New Testament – "But it shall not be so among you" (Mark 10:43). The measure of leadership was then tied to the degree of obedience of a leader to God. The other principle of leadership is that since the source of all authority and power is God then all human leadership is derivative of God's sovereign rule. By implication, therefore, all leaders are accountable to him. In the final analysis, the measure of leadership is tied to the degree of obedience of a leader to God; that no leader or crown can do it all and that powers are best exercised when they are circumscribed. It further follows that leadership strength lies in aggregating a diversity of talents, perspectives, and skill sets. In such a system, arrogance has no place and collaboration is key to leading effectively.

7.2.4 What model of Christian leadership could be proposed that integrates biblical principles and management principles drawn from organizational management theories to encourage effective church leadership in times of organisational growth and change?

One proposed by this research (Chapter 6) that ensures that this family of Baptist churches have an unambiguous theology on the doctrine of the church, its governance structure and leadership system; that puts into clear and proper perspective the way of conceptualizing, organization and leadership systems of the reformed Baptist churches in Zambia and how these churches ought to appropriately conduct inter-church dependence without breaking the principle of the autonomy of the local church, a vital distinguishing mark of the Baptists. This operative theological-ecclesiological church leadership model is transformative both in action and service at different levels of church functions: personal, ecclesial and societal.

7.2.5 Overall conclusion

How could the organisational life cycle approach (OLC) be conceived and applied to provide an understanding of RBmZ challenges to inform a church leadership approach that ensures organisation survival?

There is no evident work targeting the organization structure and leadership of the RBmZ churches. A review of previous works in organizational life circles (OLC), ecclesiological and management leadership review that problems organizations face are related to leadership. This research has identified some issues related to leadership that largely contributed to issues that the RBmZ is facing today. Since this phenomenon is not unique to the Zambian context but affects newly developing organizations and churches in general, this conceptual framework compared previous works to see what makes the leadership problems in the RBmZ different. It has provided the foundation that has allowed this research to produce material that can remedy some, if not all, pertinent issues the RBmZ is currently grappling with.

7.3 Recommendations

- **To the pioneers:** It has been observed in this research that the RBmZ was not influenced by churches but by individuals, pioneer pastors, whose gifting in preaching and writing made a great impact on the people, attracting them and winning their respect, trust, confidence and giving them full support for their work. The words of wisdom from the church father, St. Augustine of Hippo, when he was asked to mention three main virtues of a Christian, are here implored on the pioneer pastors: “The way to Christ is first through humility, second through humility, and third through humility. If humility does not precede and accompany and follow every good work we do, if it is not before us to focus on, if it is not beside us to lean upon, if it is behind us to fence us in, pride will wrench from our hand any good deed we do at the very moment we do it”²⁴
- **To the reformed Baptist local church leaders:** Church leaders of the RBmZ should support the proposed restructuring process by making the information of the proposed hybrid model of this research available to their church members through seminars and other relevant fora.
- **To the whole RBmZ fraternity:** RBmZ stakeholder churches must hold a national conference where this newly proposed hybrid plan would be introduced and explained in detail for purposes of common understanding. The conference would serve as a dawn of new beginnings for the RBmZ fraternity, but would also be a grand opportunity of

²⁴ (Saint Augustine Quotes about humility/A-Z Quotes: www.azquotes.com/author/663-Saint_Augustine/tag/humility, visited 14/01/2022).

unity and reconciliation of all stakeholder churches. Further, this conference period would also be the best time and place to officially formalize and launch the national body of like-minded churches - the Reformed Baptists Association of Zambia (ReBCAZ). Thus, the conference would serve as a celebration of God's goodness to the RBmZ fraternity for restoring its fortunes which are currently at the brink of being lost, for many years to come. That is what *Ekklesia Semper Reformanda* entails - The church must always be reforming. Let us not give Satan a foothold to divide us. But as we have moved together in the past three decades and achieved much together for God's glory, let us remain united still for the good of the Christ's church and the glory of God. We are one family.

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