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Governance, Leadership and Ethics in the Church: Literature Based Review

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Abstract

The issue of governance, leadership and ethics is at the center of the biggest challenges Africa is facing today. Bad governance, including corruption has become a cancerous growth in many African countries. It has seen proceeds from natural resources and revenue from taxation being diverted to serve a few individuals to the detriment of the many, instead of developing common goods such as education, health services and infrastructure. The World Bank report on sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, characterized the crisis in the region as a “crisis of governance.” Therefore, the question of governance becomes one of African most important needs. Even though Africa is not one country, many countries in the continent have common problems related to governance coupled with a startling lack of accountability among politicians, church leaders, civil servants and other individuals, amounting to widespread moral decay. However, the details, nuances and practical dynamics of the problem can vary from place to place. The Church cannot afford to be quiet on the issues of governance. Both church leaders and the congregations are citizens who are affected directly or indirectly by those responsible with governance. This paper examines the concept of good governance, leadership and ethics in the context of churches and their role in promoting or hindering it. What ought to be the role of African churches in the realm of good governance?

Keywords; *Governance, Leadership & Ethics*

1.1 Introduction

African churches can serve as role models of best practice of good governance if they adhere to its principles. They should intervene in political and economic matters and advocate human rights protection, human freedom, dignity and socio-economic justice. Once they practice the principles of good governance themselves, they can have the moral authority to offer viable opposition to oppressive and corrupt governments while emphasizing values of good governance, servant leadership, transparency, responsibility, honesty, accountability, justice, love, integrity, generosity, industriousness and self-giving even amidst intimidation (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2015).

In many parts of Africa, Christianity has always been a factor in Africa's democratic processes. African churches have a moral duty to contribute to the development of a social, economic, political and cultural order that facilitates the growth and fulfilment of every person (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). This order should be extended to the natural environment so that humans are to exercise responsible and caring stewardship of the earth and its resources. The view that the church can have no authority in the operation of the state is contrary to the objectives and vision of progressive society. It is clear in the Bible that besides Joseph being a man of God, he also served as a prime minister in Egypt; Moses was a liberator who led the people out of bondage to their Promised Land; and Daniel played a role in politics while in exile (Johnson, 2012).

Although Christianity cannot be equated with any system of government, it must remain critical of all social orders. It is part of Christian witness within the political sphere to evaluate all the political systems prophetically from the perspective of the reign of God." It is the prophetic duty of African churches to discern whether the systems that govern a country are in alignment with that of the kingdom of God. The establishment of a democratic order will not usher in the kingdom of God, but it is considered the best form of government that human beings are able to construct given the constraints of our ability and the extent of our fallibility (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2015). Larry Diamond emphasizes that Africa will not develop economically unless it develops institutionally a capacity for democratic governance. In situations where democracy is limited and civil society is underdeveloped, the churches are sometimes the only civil organisations that can inspire and support a movement towards true democracy and development of a civil society which can counteract and change a monopolising one-party system which usually abuses power (Thiel, Bagdasarov, Harkrider, Johnson & Mumford, 2012).

It is the duty of the church to be committed to holistic mission of combining preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments with a deep commitment to social justice. The church has always embraced a theological position for social justice but it should refrain from delving into partisan politics which divide rather than unite. "The church must be the unifier not divider, to shepherd the flock despite different political orientations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

The role of the church in the promotion of social justice is quite biblical as evidenced by the whole credo of the book of Prophet Amos, and even by the generality of the teaching of Jesus Christ himself. However, "neither justice nor freedom can flourish without the development of

appropriate social structures.” The role of African churches in enabling this to happen is part of the church’s mission. African churches must therefore develop appropriate strategies based on a sound theological reflection to promote democracy and good governance, first among themselves and second in particular contexts and Africa in general. This role places the church as “the conscience of society and the heartbeat of morality”. African churches must emphasize and promote the kingdom values for democracy and good governance through seminars, training, workshops, sermons, press release, sensitization and community mobilization (Melé, 2016).

Nevertheless, African churches themselves face challenges in democracy and good governance. First, there is the problem of contradiction. African Church leaders have often been told by secular leaders to clean the huge backlog of injustices, corruption, leadership struggles, poor succession plans, tribalism and mismanagement of resources before they dare to speak against the issues in politics and governance. The African Churches therefore ought to demonstrate good example of principles of good governance so that they can have the moral authority to challenge bad governance in other sectors. Second, we live in religiously pluralistic societies. Modern democracy began with the rejection of the church’s temporal power and the affirmation of religious tolerance. This does not mean that churches do not have a vital contribution to make to the renewal of democracy both at the level of values and functionality. Third, “the affinity of Christian faith to democratic values’ has been severely compromised by the ‘historical distance of churches towards democracy.’” The church has too often been ambivalent about human equality, freedom, rights and justice. Theological reflection must of necessity critically examine the extent to which Christian belief has become perverted, and the extent to which the praxis of the church has been unfaithful to the gospel. At the same time, theological reflection needs to exercise a critique of democracy and the democratisation process in terms of the norms of justice, equality and freedom (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

Although there are diverse approaches to Christian ethics, generally they have in common that they take the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth (Christ) and the Apostles contained in the Christian Bible (Old and New Testaments) as the main source for its developments, along with the living Christian Tradition and some outstanding developments of Jesus’ followers (Melé 2008). Within the Catholic Church, the Magisterium, or teachings of the Pope and Bishops in communion with the Pope (Ratzinger 1975), is highly relevant. This provides an authoritative interpretation of biblical revelation and the Christian Tradition. This teaching considers too the changing circumstances of social reality. In Christian ethics, the double commandment of love (agape, in Greek)—love to God and neighbor—and the imitation of Jesus’ love are central (Melé 2012), but other virtues, principles and norms are also relevant Melé (2016).

1.2 Objective of the Study

The objective of the paper was to assess the governance, leadership and ethics in the church.

3.0 Literature Review

3.2 Theoretical Review

3.2.1 Cultural theory

The cultural claim by Heady (2001) is noticeable especially in its approach in investigating semi-feudalistic arrangement of an association. This theory acquires some of its occasions from Rigg's theory of prismatic culture and Parens (1951), who depicted a 'traditional way of life' and debilitated independence and stressed on power by birth as opposed to justify. Therefore, it is until leaders can give up the traditional way of life that they can significantly improve the living and governing states of an organization.

3.2.2 Stewardship theory

Stewardship theory argues that the leaders of an organization are simply stewards of the organization's stakeholders; however, the two groups possess some similar objectives (Davis, Schoorman & Donaldson, 1997). Consequently, the executive ought not to practice excessive controlling rather, assume a steady job and enable other leaders to execute duties freely and this will result to higher performance in the organization (Shen, 2005). Further, the stewardship theory contends for the associations between the leaders and the board that will include, coaching, preparing and inclusion in decision making.

3.2.3 Stakeholder's theories

These theories argue that not only the direct stakeholders and people with a stake in an organization has an exclusive the rights of the organization but also the customers, suppliers and the surrounding communities have a stake too in an organization (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). This is also because the success or failure of the organization will affect them in one way or another. Hence, the leaders have a special obligation to make sure that all stakeholders get a fair return from their stake in the organization. (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Further, these theories advocate for some sort of corporate social responsibility which happens to be the duty to operate in ethical ways (Committee, 2016). In this context, the board has got a responsibility of being the guardian of the interest of all stakeholders by making sure that the organizational practices take into account the principles of sustainability for the communities surrounding them (Sims, 2003).

According to Romeo (2013), a stakeholder can be any entity either external or internal that affect the organization or is affected directly or indirectly by the organization. This clearly means that any organization or person that can impact an organization's actions in either a positive or negative manner. They can be people with shares in the organization or those that are involved in the decision making and control of the organization. These stakeholders can be grouped into the following types; 1) Primary stakeholders – these are those people who are ultimately affected by the organization's actions either in a positive or negative way; 2) Secondary stakeholders – these

are the organization's intermediaries in the sense that they are those people or entities that are indirectly affected by the organization's actions; 3) Key stakeholders – these are people who've got significant influence in the organization and can belong in either of the two groups above.

Further, Baldwin (2003) postulates that internal stakeholders – these are those that are within the organization, running its operations like the employees and management while the external stakeholders are those people who impact or benefit the organization or also benefit from the organization from outside. They are part of the organization but are not directly linked to its operations. In East Kenya Union Conference context, the internal stakeholders are the employees and leaders of this organization with its entities and organizations (Fields/Conferences) employees and leaders. On the other hand, the external stakeholders are those people who support in the existence and running of this organization and may include but not limited to; church members, the General Conference and the community where in it operates and ministers. This is due to the nature of this organization purely run on tithe based, being the tithes and offerings that church members give and some donations that are mission oriented given by members.

4.1 Empirical review

Fukuyama (2013) proposes that governance is the procedure of basic leadership and the procedure by which choices are actualized or not executed. Further, it is the manner in which control is practiced in the administration of social and financial assets for development. Hence, governance is the activity of monetary, political, and managerial specialist to oversee issues at all dimensions of either a nation, organization or a venture. The analysis of the governance centers around the formal and informal activities associated with basic leadership and embedding the choices made; and the formal and informal structures that have been set up to land at the choice and actualizing it (Steinberg, 2011).

According to Aguilera and Cuervo (2004), the standards of good governance constitute of: cooperation, principle of law, straightforwardness, responsiveness, adequacy and productivity and responsibility. There is a direct connection between great governance, moral authority and thriving. The two parts of morals and governance are the opposite sides of a similar coin since they share numerous components practically speaking. Without good morals, it is difficult to imagine great governance in its totality (Johnson, 2012). Taking an example of a chief accountant in an organization, it is very important to fully understand what governance and ethics entail. It is by him/her having this knowledge that he/she will choose to be ethical in handling all the finances of an organization and mentoring his/her accounting staff to be equally ethical. Doornbos (2001), outlined the aspect of accountability, transparency, effective and efficient is very relevant in the leadership sector that such a leader needs to highly uphold and mentor his followers too. This is the only way an organization can attain the success it is endeavoring to achieve and by doing so, this leader with his/her followers will be reputable.

Additionally, according to Kraut (2009), ethics is a philosophical term that starts from the Greek work "ethos" which implies custom or character. Ethics is concerned about describing and

recommending moral prerequisites and practices which propose that there are satisfactory and unsatisfactory methods for carrying on in this manner; fill in as a component of philosophical standards (Minkes, Small & Chatterjee, 1999). Further, ethics is the code of qualities and good rules that control people or gathering practices concerning what is correct or wrong. Ethics can be viewed as a persistent revelation, reaffirmation and assessment of claim esteems and standards (Freeman, Moriarty & Stewart, 2009). A moral leader satisfies standards of direct that are essential for him/her, clinging to an increasingly all inclusive standard of good conduct (Mihelic, Lipicnik & Tekavcic, 2010).

The church models are more value arranged as opposed to frameworks and structures. The key components that establish this model are; 1) selection – leaders are picked by attitude and qualities instead of just qualifications; 2) socialization – this perspective guarantees that individuals are committed to an incorporated social framework; 3) guidance – this is by acknowledged standards as opposed to by forced plans, by dreams as opposed to targets; 4) responsibility – under this component, all individuals share duty and they feel trusted and upheld by the pioneers who practice an art style of authority and the board that is grounded in involvement; 5) judgement – the execution is made a decision by individuals with the required experience who may incorporate experienced beneficiaries and some might sit in the association's different uncommon sheets (Mintzberg|& Mintzberg, 1983).

4.1 Expectations of the Internal Stakeholders

Internal stakeholders are fundamentally workers, stakeholders and leaders who are straightforwardly engaged with the activities and satisfying the procedures and the strategies of the organization (Matlay, 2009). They assume a characterizing job in the tasks, system and strategies that the association completes. A well run association considers the representatives' qualities, feelings and worries in molding the vision, mission and methodology of the association (Johannessen, Flak & Sæbø 2012). The leaders assume a considerable job in deciding the organizations strategy being the huge voice in operational choices. They are responsible for the choices made and for the most part are the purpose of contact between the outer partners, the board and the organization itself (Huang & Kung, 2010). In the context of the organization in discussion, the aspect of 'owners' does not apply since this is a church organization where it is believed that the leaders are given a stewardship role in running to the organization and the Lord Himself is the owner of His church on earth. Further, it is good to note that internal stakeholders behave the same whether in the church or secular set up and thus their expectations are ranging within the same parameters.

In addition, the internal stakeholders especially the employees expect adequate training and development, timely and accurate salary payment, full explanation of all the organization's policies and fair and constructive feedback from the supervisors (Post, Preston & Sauter-Sachs, 2002). For the leaders, they expect the very best results from the employees and the entities and institutions' leaders in the East Kenya Union Conference territory. Further, they expect the

employees and fellow leaders/colleagues to approach work with an open mind to enable them put in their very best without any biases (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008). Moreover, they expect that employees and other leaders to take directions and instructions as given to ease the operations. They also expect their fellow internal stakeholders to be reliable in all ways by arriving on time and leaving on time. The leaders and supervisors expect employees to be honest, conduct themselves professionally and proof responsible and trustworthy.

These employees should clearly understand the organization's expectation from them and further, the organization should offer guidance on handling some of those common ethical problems that might arise in the course of operations within the organization (Hughes & Demetrious, 2006). Moreover, the internal stakeholders, desire to know the appropriate procedures to be used in specific ethical situations such as the acceptance of gifts and conflict of interest. Knowing these parameters, will be beneficial to these people to act as a guideline to the organization's operations (Post et al., 2002). Without these, the employees plus their leaders will not be in a position to know when violations have occurred and how to report the suspected violations.

It is also the internal stakeholders' expectations to be made aware of the organization's code of practice. Remember, a code of practice is adopted to regulate a particular profession (Hughes & Demetrious, 2006). This covers common scenarios and decisions and it further provides a guide to what behavior is considered correct, right or ethical in certain circumstances. For example, in East Kenya Union Conference, smoking is not allowed in the compound and in the offices, hawking is prohibited and no use of any kind of drug is acceptable at all. No vulgar language is acceptable in the process of operations with fellow colleagues or even to the clients.

4.2 Expectations of External stakeholders

According to O'Shannassy (2003), the interests of external stakeholders may take several forms like, expectations, values, needs, resources and demands. Tellez et al. (2016) takes values to also imply interests, needs, goals, benefits, principles and beliefs. The expectations are expressed in terms of political, environmental, social-cultural, technical and economic dimensions (Ezejimofor et al., 2016). The differences in political, social and educational profiles of the external stakeholders contribute to the varying nature of the interests of the stakeholders.

The external stakeholders for this organization show great concerns to the use of their tithes and offerings and even donations. They are keen to know if this money is being put into proper use and accountability is mandatory. For that reason, the head office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church globally (General Conference) annually sends their auditors to run not only the financial audits but the entire organization's operations including; recruitment, retirement, employee bursaries and many more. Therefore, it is the expectation of these external stakeholders to have the church funds put into proper use as per the requirement.

The external stakeholders expect the internal stakeholders especially the leaders to make ethical decision (Baldwin, 2003). Ethical basic leadership is the way toward evaluating the moral

ramifications of a course of an action (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Keep in mind, all choices have an ethical and good measurement for the reason that they influence the partners somehow. The ethical choices can't be made exclusively through target investigation and thought of information and data, however should likewise depend on judgment and interpretation. This includes the decision about who ought to be associated with the procedure and how the choice ought to be touched base at (Thiel, Bagdasarov, Harkrider, Johnson & Mumford, 2012). The reason about why the board individuals should be individuals and sound personality and judgment capacities.

According to Ferrell and Fraedrich (2015), ethics are moral rules that manage a person's conduct. These ethics are formed by social practices, religious impacts and social standards. Ethical primary decision making is the way toward evaluating the ethical ramifications of any strategy (Curtin, Gallicano & Matthews, 2011). The leaders should know about their own good and moral convictions to draw from them when they face troublesome choices. Further, settling on moral choices may include a decision about who ought to be engaged with the procedure and how the choice ought to be made (Chau & Siu, 2000). For instance, if the choice to be influenced will to significantly affect the local community, the leaders may feel committed to welcome a delegate from the network to partake all the while. Therefore, this forms part of the expectation and desires of the external stakeholders.

It is the external stakeholder's desires to have their organizations execute consistence and morals programs so as to help in managing the basic leadership and the behavior of the employees. Compliance with administrative requirements and the organizations very own policies are basic segments of compelling danger the board (Steinberg, 2011). The observing and keeping up compliances isn't intended to keep the controllers happy, however is a standout amongst the best route for an association to keep maintain moral wellbeing and support its long term thriving, while at the same time protecting and advancing values (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004).

The external stakeholders need to see this occurrence in their organization. It is along these lines that consistence and morals program underpins the organization's goal, recognizing the lawful and moral conduct limits and sets up a framework to alarm the authority and the board when the organization is nearly crossing either the lawful or moral limit. The nearness of consistence and morals programs make apparent the organization's duty to designing a corporate culture and workplace that qualities doing what is great, just and right (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004).

It is the external stakeholders' expectation to have mechanisms of protecting whistle blowers. Whistle blower protection provides safeguards against retaliation of those who report suspected ethical or legal violations (Near & Miceli, 2008). A whistle blower will tell the relevant authorities about the alleged misconduct occurring in the organization. This can be observed by either the internal or external stakeholders though often times, the internal stakeholder are not quick to blow the whistle that is why the external stakeholders need protection (Liyarachchi & Newdick, 2009). In many organizations, there are established processes through which internal stakeholders can come out and say if they suspect an ethical or any legal violation has happened.

4.4 Corporate Social Responsibility

As illustrated by Armstrong and Green (2013), corporate social duty is an organization's feeling of commitment towards physical and social environments in which it works. An organization that grasps corporate social obligation consider themselves responsible to others for their activities and try to have a beneficial outcome in the networks, environment and the general public at large. This is greatly achieved by offering charitable services and products to the society. In this context, the East Kenya Union Conference social and physical environment is its entire territory in Kenya. This organization support this agenda in many great ways.

Further, Porter and Kramer (2006) define corporate social responsibility as “a process in which organizations take responsibility for the impact of their activities on customers, employees, shareholders, communities and the environment in all phases of operations” p. (58). As the globe continues to shrink due to globalization, corporate social responsibility helps organizations to acquire a high degree of relevance and scope. The organizations are continually improving their economic, environmental and social performance due to the growth expectations and increase in demand for transparency.

According to Garay and Font (2012) the following are the compelling reasons as to why organizations need to engage in the corporate social responsibility; 1) due to the moral obligation which means that stakeholders are satisfied when and only when an organization operates its business with socially responsible practices; 2) secondly, it is due to the organization's sustainability. Sustainability involves meeting the needs of the present through investing in solutions that are environmentally, financially and socially sustainable; 3) the third reason is the license to operate. In the present world, it is becoming a requirement for any organization to have an impact in the society for it to acquire certain operational permits. The government and other entities might be conditional upon this obligation; 4) lastly, corporate social responsibility initiatives can be supported due to the reputation impact. This is so, since it will improve the organization's image and even raise its value.

Remember, corporate social responsibility does play a very crucial role in change management (Garay & Font, 2012). In the current business environment, change is inevitable and for an organization to thrive in an ever-changing environment, it must be in a good position in handling and managing change. Change management refers to managing structures and people of an organization in order to fulfil the needs of the clients (Hashim, 2013). For a successful change management, organizations ought to have effective corporate social responsibility policies that will help the workforce to have a positive image of the organization (Todnem, 2005). The effective corporate social responsibility policies are very important because the personnel have different values and beliefs when change management occurs (Kim, Kim & Qian, 2018). Therefore, corporate social responsibility helps the workers to well understand the organization's culture.

Besides, it is apparent that organizations have implanted corporate social obligation in the center of their tasks making it "part of the corporate DNA" for the reason that it impacts choices over the

organization (Orlitzky, Siegel & Waldman, 2011). God is love. His rule of this depends on the ready dutifulness of His creation evoked by His wonderful kindheartedness. Just a confidence that rests in the core of man and just activities provoked by affection are worthy to God. Love, in any case, isn't liable to common guideline. It can't be evoked by feature nor continued by resolution. Along these lines, endeavors to administer faiths are by their very nature contrary to the standards of genuine religion, hence contrary to the desire of God.

The East Kenya Union Conference picks the example of Jesus Christ by advocating opportunity of inner voice as an indispensable piece of its reality. As the role of the church in the society expands, the following principles guide the world wide church East Kenya Union Conference inclusive in the contacts with the government of the land in which it operates. This is how this organization is involved;

5.1 Conclusions

The churches in have a moral obligation to address governance issues in the continent. To accomplish this task, they must first and foremost embrace the principles of good governance themselves and address their own internal governance problems if they are going to have moral authority and relevance in addressing the subject in the continent, and in their respective regions, countries and communities. African churches must be the prophetic voice to the continent. Their role in good governance can be more effective and productive, if they live what they preach by practically proclaiming and demonstrating the principle of good governance in their policies, values, processes, behaviour and institutions. They should help combat the problem of bad governance at all levels of society, perhaps by emphasizing values of good governance, transparency, responsibility, honesty, accountability, justice, industriousness and selfgiving among others. From the beginning of the Christian movement, the role of the church in society has not only been to proclaim the message of the reign of God but to seek to be a sign of that reign within its own ecclesial life and structures. Today there is much debate on whether or not the church should itself be more democratic in its own structures.

The issues are complex because for some, hierarchy is of the essence of the church whereas for others the goal is an egalitarian community. We need to recognise that from the beginning, the idea of participation has been central to all forms of church government. This is symbolised most dramatically by the sacrament of baptism which declares that all those who are baptised, irrespective of gender, social class, or ethnicity, are united as equals within one body and share together in the mission of the church in the world. However, since a human project cannot be achieved in isolation but demands collective responsibility, promoting a culture of good governance in Africa should be the collective responsibility of all stakeholders at the individual, household, community, national, regional and global levels.

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