

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF SECULARIZATION ON CHURCH LEADERSHIP  
IN SELECTED CHURCHES IN ELDORET MUNICIPALITY, KENYA**

**BY**

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**2015**

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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents Mr. Daniel and Priscillah Metto. The people who at my tender age taught me this immortal truth..... ‘The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom....’ Words that need to be written in letters of gold!

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the implications of Secularization on Church Leadership in selected churches in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya. It qualitatively and theologically analysed Church leadership models to ascertain their biblical integrity and their societal effectiveness in relation to 21<sup>st</sup> Century secularization, in response to the Church leadership crisis. The specific objectives of the study were: To trace the historical development of secularization; to examine the biblical and theological teachings on servant leadership model and church governmental structures; to investigate the effect of secularisation on the effectiveness of church leadership models within Eldoret churches and to propose a leadership replacement model in reversing any negative effect of secularisation on church leadership structure. The research was based on assumptions that the strength of the Kenyan mainstream clergy men is inversely related to the level of influence of secularization; that the ineffectiveness of Church leadership models in Kenya is a reflection of vague leadership empowerment strategy in response to secularization and that secular leadership infiltration in church related programs is depicted in the Kenyan Church today. The theoretical framework in which the study was based on is *Leadership Development Process Theory* by Robert J. Clinton and the *Secularization Theory* a theory that is be traced back to Saint-Simon. The study was carried out on three mainstream churches within Eldoret town. These being A.I.C. Fellowship, St. Matthews A.C.K. and R.C. Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral Church. A total of sixty (60) clergy, members, and deacons, were interviewed. Qualitative method of data collection was used. Purposive and simple random sampling procedures were used in getting respondents from both the clergy and the laity. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and oral interviews. Descriptive statistics were used in data analysis and interpretation. The significance of the study lies in the fact that it contributes to the continuing scholarly and objective search for Church leadership based on biblical principles by not only pointing out challenges that secularization poses for church leadership but also by proposing ways in which these challenges can be met. The study findings revealed that secularization in church leadership is exhibited. Church leaders no longer live up to their biblical expectations as church leaders. The study concludes that the people assigned leadership roles in the church should heed to the biblical call of shepherding God's people in a manner that agrees with the biblical teachings. The study recommended that that the church needs to regularly train and re-trains its leaders on biblical precepts of church leadership so that anybody taking up leadership position in the church is well aware of the expectations.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AIC	-	Africa Inland Church
ACK	-	Anglican Churches of Kenya
RC	-	Roman Catholic

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introductory Background**

People around the world are searching for the right leaders. They are in quest for leaders who can never compromise their stands and to whom they can look up to address issues affecting them. The concern to have a leader who is capable of meeting the need for objective leadership needs of the society, family units, organizations, churches and individuals is a common cry in our contemporary Kenyan society. A leader who remains a true servant of the people, one who speaks the truth clearly and boldly even in moments when everyone else is compromised.

This crisis is not only apparent in the society at large, but it is there in the church as well. The growing need for effective leadership within the church is increasingly felt because of the challenges brought about by secularization process. The confidence that the people initially had in the church seems to have been eroded because the leaders who once provided leadership from a biblical perspective seem to have compromised their ideals.

Church leaders need to realize the fact that God is today looking for people who will stand firm in the gap for the committed task of providing a biblically informed leadership in a world that is becoming increasingly secularized. Oswald Sanders puts it that, "God is frequently represented as searching for a person of a certain type. Not people, but a person. Not a group, but an individual." (Sanders, 1980)

The kind of a leader for whom God, the church and the world are constantly searching for is well illustrated by Oswald Sanders in his book *Spiritual Leadership* where he quotes George Liddell's plea. He says;

Give me a man of God - one man, whose faith is master of his mind, and I will right all wrongs and bless the name of all mankind. Give me a man of God - whose tongue is touched with heaven's fire and I will flame the darkest hearts with high resolve and clean desire. Give me a man of God - one man, one mighty prophet of the land, and I will give you peace on earth bought with a prayer and not a sword. Give me a man of God - one man, true to the vision that he sees, and I will build your broken shrines and bring the nations to their knees. (Sanders, 1980)

Liddell's plea illustrates the kind of a leader whom God and the world are looking for to provide objective leadership based on biblical principles and not influenced by secular desires and obligations.

### **1.1 Definition of Terms**

***Secularization:*** secularization is commonly understood as a condition where the society is believed to lose appreciation of religion so that the role and place of religion starts to gradually shrink and wither away. The dictionary defines it as ‘belief that morality, education among others should not be based on religion (Hornby, 2011).’ In the study however, secularization was used to refer to the social change in which church leaders move from using the biblical principles of leadership to other leadership approaches.

***Secularist:*** the term secularist in the study was used in reference to a person who is humanist in attitude and is anti-religious. He is someone selling a particular attitude

and philosophy to life and a way of life which rejects all that Christianity stands for and proclaims, proposing a counter-culture.

***Servant Leader:*** a servant leader has been used in reference to a Christian leader who is people-oriented. He looks to Jesus Christ as the model for leadership. A servant leader therefore takes leadership as a service and not as a position.

***Church leadership:*** the study uses this term in reference to persons who are at the forefront in the decision making process in the Christian church. They may also be referred to as clergy and even mentors as evident in the fundamental church organizational structures of the specified population.

***Leadership:*** is generally used with regard to a leader's act of influencing a group or person with a blending of both natural and divinely endowed capacities, authority. These are holistically and divinely shaped behavioural styles toward accomplishing certain objectives, plans and purposes for and of a group, institution or organization through interpersonal influence.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

There is a lot of discussion about the kind of leaders that are needed in the world today. Both the church and society seem to be aware of the fact that leadership is necessary if the two institutions are to survive and have a meaningful existence. But it is also apparent that the current leadership does not seem to fit the expectations of society. It therefore becomes apparent that there is some kind of leadership crisis in both the church and the society today. The Church as an institution has in the past

been held in very high regard because it was believed that its leaders could offer guidance and direction that were different from that available in the society at large. This however is no longer the case.

The Church which the Bible refers to as the salt and light of the world is seemingly no longer living up to the Biblical expectations. What are the reasons for this apparent lapse in standards? Could it be that church leadership in Kenya today has been influenced by principles other than Biblical teaching? In one of the local Kenyan Dailies for example, Juma Kwayera quotes a bishop lamenting that “we have given our ears to the state, instead of the state listening to us. We are compromised to the extent that it has become difficult for religious leaders to face their flock and preach (Kwayera, 2008).” This statement is a proof to the fact that the influence of secular ideologies is impacting on church leadership.

The servant leadership model taught by Jesus Christ in the bible, is one in which a leader is a servant of the people and not their master in contrast to the secular model in which a leader is the master and not a servant of the people. In the contemporary world, servant leadership is the exception rather than the norm even within the church itself. The questions one may be left asking are: Are the leadership crises experienced in the Church and society today as a result of the Church leadership being influenced by the secular model of leadership? Are the Church leaders aware of the effects of limitless embrace of secularism? If the church no longer provides a biblically informed leadership, to whom should the people go to for such leadership in times of uncertainty and crisis?

The study therefore qualitatively and theologically analysed Church leadership models in Kenya so as to ascertain their biblical integrity and their societal effectiveness in relation to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century secularisation process, in response to Church leadership crisis.

### **1.3 Objectives**

1. To trace the historical development of secularization.
2. To examine the biblical and theological teachings on servant leadership model and church governmental structures.
3. To investigate the effect of secularisation on the effectiveness of church leadership models within Eldoret churches.
4. To propose a leadership replacement model in reversing any negative effect of secularisation on church leadership structure.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

1. The study will contribute to the ongoing scholarship on leadership and secularization in gauging its implications on Church leadership in Kenya.
2. The subject is not only important for Kenya, but also to the world as a whole. This study will therefore contribute to the ongoing demand and quest for exemplary leadership for the church and the society as a whole.
3. The study will also prove helpful to the upcoming church leaders and the church as a whole to beware of the negative influence of secularization on

church leadership and in answer, work on providing a leadership model that reflects biblical principles for efficient yet relevant biblical leadership.

4. Religious and theological institutions of higher learning could also benefit from the information gathered from this study in the betterment of their training programs.

### **1.5 Literature Review**

The literature reviewed was in three categories: those dealing with secularization in general and those that focus on the concept of leadership both generally and in biblical perspective. The study deals with them simultaneously.

There are numerous works that deal with secularization and its influence on the life of the church especially in the area of leadership. The literature available whether dealing with the western world or Africa was nevertheless found useful as a source of background information. It also provided a framework within which the study was evaluated. This was done through giving definitions, nature as well as developing significant questions that the study addresses.

Jerald C. Brauer, in *A Handbook of Christian Theology: Definition Essays on Concepts and Movements of Thought in Contemporary Protestantism* (1958) looks at the secularist view on life. This completely puts God and spiritual realities in other domains of life that they consider as not being so necessary. Brauer's ideas on the above concept proved helpful to the study in the area of manifestations of



secularization. The study however builds more on Brauer's ideas especially in bringing out the secular view of leadership.

Mascall, E.L. in his book *The Secularization of Christianity* (1965) has shown how it is not easy in the modern society to draw a line between secularization and Christianity. He develops the idea that a Christian at a particular period in time is bound to share the intellectual climate and perspective of their time. Mascall's concept in this work seems to indicate a lack of hope for the future survival of Christianity. He seems to indicate that Christianity may finally end up to being swallowed by the negative influence of secularization a position which the researcher in this work does not lean towards.

In *The Secular City* (1965) Harvey Cox has developed a thesis that the church is primarily a people of faith and action, rather than an institution. He elaborates that "God is just as present in the secular as the religious realms of life" (Cox, 1965). He therefore strongly advocates for the church to be in the forefront of the change in the society rather than being a protective religious community. Cox work provided useful insights for the study especially in the area of secularization and its reality in the Christian church today. In his thesis, Cox however misses to show how secularization has impacted on the leadership of the Church, an area in which this study has mainly concerned itself with.

St. Augustnes book *The City of God* (1972) was also considered. In this book, St. Augustine contrasts the City of God versus the City of Man. He notes that the first,

the City of God, understands its rebellious nature and therefore submits to God and His purposes, the second city is basically the secular one which is simply trying to “rival God.” He underscores the fact that the City of God is “social” and “seeks the common welfare” while the City of Man is “selfish” and seeks “selfish control for the sake of arrogant domination.” The City of God “desires for its neighbour what it wishes for itself,” while the City of Man “desires to subjugate its neighbour” (Augustine, 1972). The information in this book proved helpful especially in looking at how the concept of secularisation came to be in Christian circles and in understanding the dualistic view of man between living in the City of God and in the City of Man. This study did not however focus much on this dualistic view of man as it is hard to compartmentalize a human person. There is no aspect of human life or action that is neutral. Health in one part affects the whole person just as physical sickness affects the whole person.

In the book *Themes and Issues in Modern Sociology: Sociologists and Religion* (1973), Susan Budd looks at secularism as it relates to the modern society. She comments on the seeming secularization of scholasticism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, where she observes that people no longer saw religious ideologies as being relevant to the society. Budd on the other hand in commenting on Max Weber's observation concluded that the elite people are no longer inclined towards accepting religious solutions as being viable.

Budd looks at the contribution of other functionalist scholars like Emil Durkheim, Malinowski and Radcliff – Brown all of who agree that the modern societies are less

“religious” in the sense and assumed either that secular ideology has replaced religion. Her work is relevant to the study because she strongly underscores the challenge of secularization to the life of the Christian church today. The idea in which by itself are in line of the area of the study.

Patrick Astor in his article *Modern Civilization and Religious life in Kenya: The impact of Secularization in Secularization in Africa* (1973) looks at secularization as spreading so unchecked in Kenya. According to him, the negative influence of secularization is not just a threat to Christianity but the human race as well. This is because secularization in practise removes God because it does not hold to the biblical teachings. This, according to Astor, leads to progressive removal of moral values and so accepting the world as simply so much a raw material for human enjoyment and exploitation without considering ultimate ends. Astor does not however address the question as to what should be done. Complaining of the reality and effect of secularization is not enough. This study has therefore pointed out the reality of the negative influence of secularization in the Christian church and has gone further into proposing an approach that the Christian church can adopt as a remedy for this.

Wolfhart Pannenberg in his book *Christianity in a Secularized World* (1988) looks at the criticism of secularization and its consequences in relation to the church and the world as it was before the modern period. He looks at the consequences of secularization by taking into account the break from the medieval model of relationship between church and society. This study has developed Pannenberg’s

ideas more on the relationship between the medieval Christian church practice leadership and how the same has been affected since the onset of the secularization.

In the article *The Church as Conscience and Voice of Society* (1997) Charles Bruno quotes Mzee Jomo Kenyatta as having said, “The church is truly the conscience of the society and today a society needs a conscience” (Bruno, 1997). Bruno agrees that the Christian church is bestowed with an enormous task of providing objective leadership in a world full of secularist influence. His contribution was found to be helpful in the study as it showed how the society views the Christian church with regard to exemplary leadership.

Moojan Momen in his book *The Phenomenon of Religion* (1999) confirms that Secularization has gradually permeated the Christian world. He looks at how by the nineteenth Century, Christianity had ceased to have much real influence on the social and political life of Europe. He also looks at Religion as no longer having a role in the shaping of political and social policy. He says that other considerations and other secular ideologies had taken over. He therefore proposes five ways of looking at secularisation. First is in the decline of popular involvement in institutionalized religion seen in the decline in church attendance, with fewer marriages, baptisms and funerals being performed under religious auspices.

Second is in the loss of prestige of religious institutions and symbols and the decline in influence of religious organisations. Third is the separation of society from the religious world, so that religion becomes purely personal matter. Fourth is seen in the

loss of the idea of the sacred. He says, "As science increases our understanding of humanity and of the world, the area of 'mystery' and the supernatural decrease" (Momen, 1999). Finally, and also very important is seen in Religious groups themselves becoming increasingly concerned with the things of this world rather than the spiritual world.

Moojan Momen's insights from this book provided very useful insights in this study. The difference however came when Momen looked at how secularization affected the western church in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century while this study focused on how the Christian leadership in the Kenyan society is responding to the influence of secularization this Century.

Stuart Fowler's book *The Christian Professional: Called to the service of Love* (2002) is also helpful in this study in that Fowler has dedicated a whole chapter to develop theme of how secularism has impacted on Christianity. Fowler points out the weakness in the church that 'there has been so little attention paid to secularism as a spiritual power or to the world view that it generates (Fowler, 2002).'

Fowler is critical of the fact that the African church has turned a blind eye on the reality of secularism which he says has strongly come out in the guise of syncretism. He looks at how the medieval Christians could readily offer themselves to die rather than acknowledge that the political authority of Rome was not an autonomous authority not subject to the Lordship of Christ. He also looks at how theological colleges across Africa have in their curriculum said nothing about secularization

which according to him, 'is the dominant spiritual force shaping the Africa of tomorrow (Fowler, 2002).' The question that Fowler does not answer in the study is whether the omission of secularization as a unit of study in theological colleges in Africa has positively served in promoting the influence of secularization in the Church leadership, granted that these institutions are the leading ones in training Church leaders.

Fowler's contribution in this book proves very helpful in the study. The difference however comes out clearly in the dimension in which this study took. Fowler's work is mainly targeted on how secularism has impacted on Christian professionals serving in different professions an angle to which the study did not focus so much. This is because the researcher in this case restricted itself to the area of Church leadership.

George Jelliss in the article *What is Secularism?* (2006), looks at the reality of secularization on today's society. He notes that the truth is that we are all too familiar with secularism like the air we breathe in our modern culture. He also points out that almost every individual could give countless examples of encountering attitudes of indifference or hostility toward God within different institutions or in the behaviour of individual persons. According to him, it is no exaggeration to say that there is *a climate of indifference to God* all around us in modern culture (Jelliss, [http://rossdouthat.theatlantic.com/archives/2007/06/what\\_is\\_secularism.php](http://rossdouthat.theatlantic.com/archives/2007/06/what_is_secularism.php)). The study has developed Jelliss's ideas on secularization more in reference to our Kenyan context which differs from Jelliss who heavily developed within a Western framework.

Robert L. Waggoner's article *The Secular face of humanism* is another helpful source in the study. Waggoner says in secularism, a person's reasoning becomes the supreme standard by which that person is guided. Having faith in one's own reason, one believes in one's assumed progress. An individual replaces with experiential thinking as sufficient guide for him or her towards the truth. He also notes that human beings also think of themselves as self-sufficient, independent, and at the centre of all things (Waggoner, 2010). The study has developed more in this area by showing how secular conception of leadership disadvantages the church. This is because the leader is only concerned with his needs without paying much consideration on what benefits others.

Having discussed the literature on the concept of secularization looking at its progression over the years, the study also goes into discussing the literature on the concept of leadership generally and in biblical perspective.

Robert K. Greenleaf in *Servant leadership* (1970) gives the essential idea of servant leadership a model that was taught by Jesus Christ. He mentions that the servant leader serves the people he leads, implying that followers are an end in themselves rather than a means to an organizational purpose or bottom line. The leader as a servant, is devoted to serving the needs of organization members, and develops employees to bring out the best in them. He facilitates personal growth in all who work with him and builds a sense of community within the organization.

Greenleaf goes on to say that servant leaders are felt to be effective because the needs of followers are so looked after that they reach their full potential and perform at their best. Servant leadership forces one away from self-serving, domineering leadership models, and makes those in charge to think harder about how to respect value and motivate people reporting to them. By emphasizing the value of the individual over and above anything else, servant leadership demonstrates the influence of existentialism in its model. In this work, Greenleaf has heavily dwelt on the Christian concept of servant leadership a principle which in the secular world is never advocated for. His work therefore, played an important contribution in this study. Greenleaf however does not point out a leadership model that the secular world advocates for which differs with servant leadership advocated by the contemporary Christian theologians. This study has therefore brought the two concepts together on a critical evaluation of each.

The *Building Leadership for Church Education* (1981) by Kenneth Gangel also provided useful insights for the study. In this book, Gangel posits that there are five essential steps in developing a biblical understanding of leadership: exegesis, hermeneutics, theology, philosophy and methodology. He defines leadership as “the exercise of one’s spiritual gifts under the call of God to serve a certain group of people in achieving the goals God has given them toward the end of glorifying Christ (Gangel K. O., 1981).” Since this definition looks at leadership purely from a biblical point of view, the study sought to compare this view with the secular perspective of leadership.



Ted E. Engstrom in *The Making of a Christian Leader* (1976) observes that the world is today divided into leaders and followers. He continues to show that a Christian leader is webbed in a very complex situation because his calling demands that he should set an example to the rest in his/her approach to leadership (Engstrom, 1976). Engstrom's work provided useful insights to the study especially in the understanding of servant leadership.

*Spiritual Leadership* (1980) by J. Oswald Sanders is another useful resource to the study. In it Sanders looks at Leadership as the capacity and will to rally men and woman to a common purpose, and the character which inspires confidence. He goes on to say we are leaders to the extent that we inspire others to follow us (Sanders, 1980). These insights are helpful to the study in the area of leadership in general. The study however compares this aspect of leadership to the servant leadership model taught by Jesus Christ. It is not just enough for a leader to inspire others to follow him leadership calls for service.

J. Robert Clinton in his book *The Making of a Leader* (1988) deals with a number of issues in regard to leadership selection and development. According to him, leadership is a dynamic process over an extended period of time in which a leader utilizing leadership resources and by specific behaviours influences the thoughts and activities of followers, toward accomplishment of aims usually mutually beneficial for leaders, followers, and the macro- context of which they are a part (Clinton, 1988).

Sanders and Clinton's work look at leadership in one angle possibly because of their Christian background. Their works are however important because their way of looking at leadership is not the way a person without a Christian background will look at it. The information in this book proved very useful especially in looking at leadership from Christian and secular understanding of the same and how the two concepts have impacted church leadership in Kenya and especially in Eldoret town.

Michael T. Mckibben and Benjamin D. Williams in '*Principles of Christian Leadership*' in *Academic Leadership Journal* (2002) will also prove significant to the proposed study. This is because Mckibben and Williams have analysed leadership from a Christian viewpoint. The proponents reiterate that "Christian leadership in action is perceiving and articulating the vision of the kingdom of God and effectively defining its incarnation, following Christ's example of service. (Michael T. Mckibben and Benjamin D. Williams, 2002)" In as much as the above material provided valuable insights on leadership that was helpful in the study, the study differs in the sense that it evaluates the current leadership in the church in the light of the social change experienced today.

The article *Team leadership model* outlines the critical function of leadership as being for the purpose of helping group to accomplish its goals by monitoring and diagnosing the group and taking requisite actions necessary to assure success (<http://fhbcstudents.wordpress.com/2008/01/14/existentialism-and-leadership-theories/>). This article looks at the study of leadership as having begun in the 1920's and 1930's with the focus of the human relations movement, which arose in

opposition to the study of individual efforts advocated by scientific management theorists. The insights from this material also provided the much needed background information that was considered in line with other materials.

Rick Sarkisian in the article '*Christian Leadership*' comments that true leaders recognize that they have the opportunity of a lifetime to make a difference in those around them: not only by recognizing their talents, but also in helping them see how to use their gifts in their home, family, and community. He goes further into saying that everyone we know, every person we meet, every soul we pray for can be real-world opportunities in our midst. As their personal vocation and mission in Christ unfolds, we must help acknowledge, affirm, and advance their God-given capabilities for His greater glory (Sarkisian, 2008).

True Christian leaders according to him affect others by believing in them and radiating Christian hope and optimism. He also proposes leadership by example. To him, leadership is optimistic and hope filled specifically because it is Christ-centred. This article came in handy in the area of integration. In this study, the researcher seeks more understanding of leadership from a Christian perspective that serves as a basis for comparison to the understanding of the same from secular standpoint.

## **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

From the many literature review on leadership, the study understands Church leadership within the framework of *Leadership Development Process Theory*. This theory was developed by Robert J. Clinton. In this theory, Clinton looks at leadership

development as having five components first looking at the sovereign foundations, secondly he talks of the inner-life growth; thirdly touches on ministry maturing; fourthly deals with life maturing and finally he talks of convergence. In this theory, Clinton states that any leadership capacity that we have comes from God. It is divinely imparted to us by the spirit of God. According to him, the objective of Christian leaders is to exercise leadership in order to influence the people of God towards the accomplishment of His plan for their lives. The followers in this theory are always to be considered as belonging to God; they are never to be regarded as belonging to the leader. The leader is expected to serve the followers and not see them as a means towards the achievement of his goals (Clinton, 1988). Secularization process on the other hand is explained on the basis of *secularization theory*. Secularization theory can be traced back to Saint-Simon (1975) who looked at the association between church and state as having gone through three stages. In ancient Greece and Rome, religion and state were ruled by the same class, which resulted in the interlocking of the two. In medieval times, these two became distinctly separate institutions, with the church being the predominant one. In recent times, the state has become the stronger of the two (Cipriani, 1987).

Casanova on the other hand looks at the secularization theory as being manifested in three ways. First is in the decline of religious beliefs and practices in modern societies, often postulated as a universal, human, developmental process. Secondly it looks at the privatization of religion and thirdly on the differentiation of the secular spheres (state, economy, science), usually understood as “emancipation” from

religious institutions and norms (Casanova J. , 1994). This theory was supported and popularised by some social scientists that included people like Karl Marx (1818-1883), Durkheim (1857-1917), Max Weber (1864-1920), the founders of sociology, and William James (<http://www.vexen.co.uk/religion/secularisation.html>). These four scholars also noted this decline. The two theories are therefore used to provide a framework through which the study is carried out in trying to understand Church leadership and the challenges posed by secularization process.

### **1.7 Assumptions**

The study set out to investigate secularization on Church leadership in Kenya and its implications. It began with the following basic assumptions:

1. That the strength of the Kenyan mainstream church clergy is inversely related to the level of influence of secularization.
2. That the ineffectiveness of Church leadership models in Kenya is a reflection of vague personnel empowerment strategy in response to secularization.
3. That secular leadership infiltration in church related programs is depicted in the Kenyan Church today.

### **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

Secularization is a process that is both broad and multifaceted. It affects every aspect of society and its institutions. It has been observed that secularization is a global process. Since secularization affects practically almost every aspect in the society, the

study restricted itself to secularization process and its implications for church leadership. Specifically, it was limited to Church leadership in Eldoret town. However it is hoped that the findings from this study can be generalised to the entire church in Kenya and possible beyond.

There were also other limitations to the study. Finance was one of them. It was a limitation since the initial plan was for the study was to take at most one year in duration which did not happen.

### **1.9 Methodology and Sources**

The study uses qualitative research technique. A total of sixty (60) clergy, deacons and members, were interviewed. The sampling for those interviewed mainly came from three the mainstream churches these were: the Africa Inland Church, St. Johns Sacred Heart Catholic and Anglican Church all being churches within Eldoret town.

Purposive sampling was used mainly to collect information from the clergy and deacons of the targeted churches in an attempt to understand their own conceptualization of Church leadership and how it differs from secular leadership. Simple random sampling was applied on church members from the selected churches.

The study was carried out in various libraries within and out of Eldoret town. The main ones being Margret Thatcher Library (Moi University), AMECEA GABA Library, Scott Christian University Library (Machakos) and AIC Missionary College Library. Other libraries visited include Kenya National Library (Eldoret) and Africa Theological Seminary (ATS) Library.

### **Oral Interviews**

Oral interviews were conducted with some clergy and deacons. Some of the members were also interviewed in order to get vital information on the manifestation of secular influence on church leadership in their various churches.

### **Questionnaires**

Questionnaires were administered to the respondents who included selected clergy, local church leaders, and the laity from the selected Churches in Eldoret. Each question in the questionnaire was structured in a way that it captured a specific objective, research question or hypothesis of the study.

#### **1.9.1 Area of Study**

The study was carried out in Eldoret town. Eldoret is the fifth largest town in Kenya after Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Nakuru. It is one of the fastest growing towns in Kenya. It was also a choice field of study because of its cosmopolitan population which is representative of the diverse people groups found in Kenya.

Geographically, Eldoret is located approximately 400 kilometres North West of Nairobi, Kenya's capital. Socially, this town is cosmopolitan with the Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luhya and Luo being the dominant communities. But there are other ethnic groups from all over the country who have settled in the town for jobs or inter marriages.

Economically, the people in Eldoret town especially, are engaged in business with some working on both the formal and the informal sectors. Some are students who came to Eldoret for the sole purpose of studying. Those outside the town in the rural areas depend on agriculture with maize and wheat being grown in large scale. There are also beans, millet, sunflower and sorghum all grown in small scale. Besides agricultural crops, others keep animals mainly cows for milk which is another source of income because of the ready market for the milk in town.

Majority of the dwellers in the region are Christians mainly from Catholic, Anglican, Africa Inland Church, Pentecostals and Seventh Day Adventist. These are the dominant groups with the highest following. There are also some Muslims and Hindus though in small number.

### **1.9.2 Presentation and Analysis**

The data collected after the field research is analyzed qualitatively. It is then presented in statistical percentages.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

Chapter one of this study has dealt with introductory matters. Here the terms used in the study are defined. It has also discussed the statement of the problem, objectives, hypotheses, significance of the study, limitation and methodology. A number of literatures reviewed in this study are also presented.



## CHAPTER TWO

### DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES OF SECULARIZATION

#### 2.1 Introduction

Secularization is one of the oldest and influential theories in the sociology of religion. It asserts that when social structures and political institutions that were once suffused with religious significance are transformed into secular entities, churches lose their public power, and people become less involved in religion.

The secularization theory was primarily based on observations of European religion and is central to the work of founding theorists like Comte and Weber (Casanova, 1994). Orthodox proponents also continue to emphasize the European case (Bruce, 2001). The traditional secularization theories have been supplanted by a "new paradigm," which holds that societies with no state church or predominant religion enjoy greater religious participation than those with government sponsored monopoly faiths. According to the new paradigm, when political and ecclesiastical institutions are separated, people become more involved in religion (Safran, 2003).

The neo-secularization discards the traditional view and essentially substitutes a definition of secularization for a theory of secularization. In short, neo-secularization is an attempt to lift the baby of differentiation from the bathwater of predicted declines in personal religiousness. Casanova writes: "the thesis of the differentiation of the religious and secular spheres is the still defensible core of the theory of secularization" (Casanova, 1994).

This means, then, that what happens in the west goes on to influence and affect the rest of the world Africa included in due course. C. A. van Peursen says “Secularization is today a worldwide phenomenon” (Cox, 1965) because it has happened in the west is now happening everywhere.

Today, the worlds’ emphasis is on the “global village.” Just as with Christianization in the past, so too with secularization today the influence extends far beyond Africa’s geographical boundaries. Writing in the context of secularization and secularism in India, Kochuthara states that, “Many see the phenomenon of secularization as the main factor behind the progress of the West and the emancipation of that society from the clutches of superstitions” (Kochuthara, 1988). Many developing nations, including the African nations, have therefore tried to emulate this separation of state from religion as a means of furthering social and human development. This has in turn affected the church leadership causing more confusion than direction.

This chapter apart from tracing the development of secularization explores the positives and the negatives of secularization. It further goes into analyzing the challenges this presents to church leadership. Finally, it proposes ways of healthy engagement and dialoguing with an increasingly secular world.

## **2.2 What is Secularization?**

The term, secularisation, as a matter of persistent interest, has been framed in many different ways throughout time, and the world of literature. Secularization is a ‘slippery word’ who’s meaning change over time and from person to person. This

term was not only used to describe the restriction in the influence of religion due to changes within modern society, but also the adaptation of religion to the changing values of society (Ayanga, 1999).

Many contemporary scholars opined that traditional religious beliefs, teachings and practices would struggle to survive in the modern world; they even went further into suggesting that they were more suited to past cultures and belief systems. They predicted a continued decline in institutionalised religion. This decline has been variously referred to as the most significant trend in religion and the ‘greatest problem facing the church,’ the ‘great contemporary crisis in religion’ and the great ‘drama of our times.’

Secularisation is used to describe the transfer of activities from the religious to the non religious, the differentiation of religious and non religious activities, the transformation of institutions from religious to less religious spheres, change in affections and loyalties and the changing roles of religious people in a modern, complex society, the change of the locus of social control from the religious sphere to the technical and bureaucratic spheres, and increasing government responsibility for traditionally religious activities including education and welfare. Religious decline has also been linked to other developments in modern society including industrialisation, urbanisation, economic and social development, loss of community, rationalisation, modernisation, bureaucratisation, professionalization, and pluralisation.

### **2.3 The Origin of Secularization**

Secularization originally meant the transfer of ecclesiastical property to civil or state ownership, and its first recorded use was apparently after the Thirty Years War in 1648 to mean the transfer of church lands to states. Christian Churches were huge landowners, and religious institutions in non-Christian countries also held or controlled very large properties, which states increasingly secularized. In England Henry VIII's dissolution of monasteries was a secularizing step. Secularization over time came rather to refer primarily to a process in which religious influence over government, institutions, ideas, and behaviour is reduced and reliance on this-worldly bases for these spheres grows.

In pre-modern time religion and religious institutions had far greater power than they did later, though Confucianism, some kinds of Buddhism and Hinduism, and rationalist philosophies in ancient Greece, the Muslim world, and Europe had strong this-worldly elements. Secularization and secularism began in Western Europe, along with the rise of capitalism and stronger states. Other secularizing forces occurring first in the West included the rise of science and the scientific outlook, over many centuries.

The Copernican revolution in astronomy and the Darwinian evolutionary revolution contradicted the creation stories in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptures, and cast doubt on these scriptures' literal infallibility. The spread of belief in this-worldly causation to ever-greater spheres, including history and social science, undermined ideas of divine intervention. In the eighteenth century, Enlightenment building on

earlier science and philosophy, the idea of the Great Watchmaker who created the universe but did not afterward intervene became widespread among intellectuals, and was later refurbished to fit evolutionary theories. The Enlightenment had important proponents in most of Western Europe and the Americas, where Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) are the main names.

Protestantism is often considered a force for secularization, though it initially increased religiosity and religious loyalties, both among Protestants and among reformed and aroused Catholics. Ultimately, the proliferation of sects, including some liberal ones, and exhaustion in religious wars, helped lead to religious toleration by governments and recognition of various religious and irreligious beliefs all elements of state secularism.

Several other intellectuals encouraged secularism with writings advocating religious toleration, like John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) and John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (1859). Enlightenment writers often stressed anticlericalism and attacked the Catholic Church. Several, including Voltaire (1694–1778), said that religion was a good thing for the lower classes, to keep them honest, diligent, and peaceful, an idea that got support from the anti-church violence during the French Revolution. This idea had wide currency in the Muslim world until the Iranian Revolution (1979) showed again that popular religiosity did not always have such orderly effects.

The rise of nation-states and of nationalism encouraged secularism. Except in countries like Poland, Ireland, and former Yugoslavia where religious and nationalist boundaries coincide, nationalism and nation-states have tended to undermine organized religion. Religious loyalties and ideologies were supranational, and religion supported hierarchical relations between genders, toward minorities, and in everyday life, which conflicted with the priorities of the nation. Nationalism provided an ideology for nonreligious loyalties. This accompanied socioeconomic modernization and industrialization, requiring similar workers, similar rules for treating people, and national markets. Nationalism was a secular force, and religion could play only a subordinate role in most nations. In many countries nation-states struggled with church control over schools, law, and social institutions, and generally nation-states won and expanded secular institutions.

Since the topic of secularization is such an important one in the world as a whole, and if secularization is negatively affecting religion, then why not discuss it. As Mbiti says, "Africans are notoriously religious (Mbiti, 1969)." Since secularization is such a broad area, this study puts emphasis on some areas that were considered relevant to the scope of the study. This is only possible through looking at its etymology and usage, finding a working definition of secularism and how it has developed over years through observing its manifestations in the Christian Church.

## **2.4 Etymology and Usage of Secularization**

### **2.4.1 Etymology**

The terms “secular,” “secularism,” and “secularization” have a range of meanings. These words are derived from the Latin, “saeculum” which means both this age and this world, and combines a spatial sense and a temporal sense.

In the middle ages, secular referred to priests who worked out in the world of local parishes, as opposed to priests who took vows of poverty and secluded themselves in monastic communities. These latter priests were called “religious.” During the Reformation, secularization denoted the seizure of Catholic ecclesiastical properties by the state and their conversion to non-religious use. In all of these instances, the secular indicates a relative opposition to the sacred, the eternal, and the otherworldly (Barry A Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, 2007).

It is important to note that the Church defined the secular domain for its own purposes. The secular did not make sense without the sacred. The distinction was routinely used to convey a two-tier image of the human being, whereby the secular corresponded to the lower needs, desires, and faculties, and the religious corresponded to the higher order of ideas and ideals. The higher tier was to govern the lower. In the centuries that followed the secular began to separate itself from religious authority. Its association with a ‘lower’ form of human existence was challenged.

#### **2.4.2 Usage of the Term ‘Secularization’**

There are two main concepts that are used in conjunction in this study: secularization and secularism. The former denotes a process whereby religion and religiosity lose importance. The concept of secularism is simply too complex and ambiguous. The same holds true for the concept of religion or the sacred, which some argue has to be understood in order to understand secularism (Demerath III, N.J., Borgatta, E.F., Montgomery, R.J.V., 2000).

The term "secularization" as is understood today was first used by one of the British writers in 1851 (Holyoake, 1996). Although the term was new, the general notions of free thought on which it was based had existed throughout history. In particular, early secular ideas involving the separation of philosophy and religion can be traced back to Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and the Averroism School of philosophy (Najjar, 1996).

Secularization draws its intellectual roots from Greek and Roman philosophers such as Marcus Aurelius and Epicurus, medieval Muslim polymaths such as Ibn Rushd, Enlightenment thinkers like Denis Diderot, Voltaire, John Locke, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Paine, and modern freethinkers, agnostics and atheists such as Bertrand Russell and Robert Ingersoll (Secularism in Catholic Encyclopedia).

Holyoake is credited as having ‘invented’ the term "secularism" to describe his views of promoting a social order separate from religion, without actively dismissing or criticizing religious belief. Holyoake argued that;



Secularism is not an argument against Christianity; it is one independent of it. It does not question the pretensions of Christianity; it advances others. Secularism does not say there is no light or guidance elsewhere, but maintains that there is light and guidance in secular truth, whose conditions and sanctions exist independently, and act forever. Secular knowledge is manifestly that kind of knowledge which is founded in this life, which relates to the conduct of this life, conduces to the welfare of this life, and is capable of being tested by the experience of this life (Holyoake, 1996).

The modern Sociologists have defined secularization as ‘the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose their social significance (Budd, 1973). According to Halman, there are three dimensions in which secularization is sought to be identifiable: the social or societal, the institutional and the individual (Halman, Loek, Veerle, Draulans, 2006). In the social level, he observes that values are of interest to many.

Inglehart on his part identifies value systems as culturally distinct and historically linked with religious traditions (Inglehart, Ronald, Norris, Pippa, 2004). While this can be seen as a very personal matter, he contends that these value systems permeate society, and in that way are transmitted to the citizens even if they never attend religious institutions, or partake in religious life. In this sense they make a distinction between secular and religious value systems. This approach via values is problematic however, since it seems that there is little chance in ever establishing a clear link between social values and any definite and exclusive origin in terms of either religion or other sources, and proving this empirically.

On the institutional level, the matter becomes a bit clearer. According to Emil Durkheim. He notes that the residual spiritual and moral roles of religious institutions would gradually waste away (Inglehart, Ronald, Norris, Pippa, 2004). A concept that Bryan Wilson agrees to. In Wilson's view, secularization means that religious institutions will soon lose their social significance (Demerath III, N.J., Borgatta, E.F., Montgomery, R.J.V., 2000). For Peter Berger it means that sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols (Berger, 1967). The tangible effects of this can be illustrated by drawing attention to the legalization or growing acceptance of gay marriage and changing public views on abortion and divorce (Inglehart, Ronald, Norris, Pippa, 2004). It can also be seen in statistical data bearing witness to falling church attendance over the last six decades (NSS, 2003). It seems as if the greatest area of concern for the discourse about secularization lies within this level.

The last focus is on the individual level. This is perhaps the least accessible and least reliable indicator of secularization. However, as Stark argues, the classical secularization theories have not just been concerned with the macro level, in other words the social and the institutional dimensions, but have made predictions about individual piety and especially belief (Stark, 1999). On this level, Max Weber's idea of rationalization is of importance (Demerath III, N.J., Borgatta, E.F., Montgomery, R.J.V., 2000). Accordingly, the irrationality of religion is seen as being replaced by a secular rationality. This has a strong relationship with science and in Weber's idea there is an absolute incompatibility of religious and scientific orientations (Remond,

1999). As Johnson summarizes: People are either scientific or religious, but not both. Also it throws up questions about the difference between atheism, the non-belief in god, and secularism (Stark, 1999).

In the 19th century, a scholar G. J. Holyoake introduced the term secularization and used it to mean the placing of emphasis on living our lives in the here and now in accordance with the evidence of our senses and our reason and not allowing ourselves to be carried away by wish-fulfilment into believing things just because they sound nice or are what we might like to be true (Stark, 1999).

Beckford says the term “secularization” therefore came to be used by sociologists, particularly in the field of the sociology of religion in regard to the process of releasing priests from their vocation (Beckford, 2003). In his book *The Sacred Canopy*, Peter Berger notes how the term "secularization" was originally employed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to denote the removal of property from ecclesiastical control. Ever since that time, the term "secularization" has been used in a much wider sense. It is used ideologically by "progressive theologians" to promote the liberation of man from religion and by "the traditionalists" to decry the paganization of society (Berger P. L., 2011).

Berger in his definition of "secularization" looks at it as: the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. When we speak of society and institutions in modern society, secularization manifests itself in the evacuation by the Christian churches of areas previously under

their control or influence (Berger P. L., 2011). These areas include the separation of church and state or in the expropriation of church lands, or in the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority.

Speaking of culture and symbols, the implication is that secularization is more than a social-structural process. It affects the totality of cultural life and of ideation, and may be observed in the decline of religious contents in the arts, in philosophy, in literature, and most important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world. Moreover, it is implied here that the process of secularization has a subjective side as well.

Beiger also observes that as there is a secularization of society and culture, so there is also a secularization of consciousness. This means that the modern society is currently producing an increasing number of individuals who look upon the world and their own lives for solutions without the benefit of religious interpretations. He goes on to say that secularization occurs in three realms: first is in the social institutions; secondly is in cultural ideas, symbols, and objects; and finally in the consciousness of individuals. The concept of "secularization" therefore describes the process how religion incrementally loses its influence over society, culture, and consciousness and is replaced by non-religious ideas and values.

As a sociologist, Berger warns us that what an individual actually believes depends, to a large degree, on the social support which he receives for those beliefs. Berger calls this phenomenon "*plausibility*" and the social institutions which support religious

beliefs "plausibility structures" (Berger P. L., 2011). In Christendom, the church, its public ministry, and the family are the most important plausibility structures. When these plausibility structures are eroded or removed from the believer, his beliefs will inevitably be secularized.

Pope John Paul II, in his Post-Synodal Exhortation after the African Synod, *Ecclesia in Africa*, says "... the rapid evolution of society has given rise to new challenges linked to the phenomena notably of family uprooting, urbanisation, unemployment, materialistic seductions of all kinds, a certain secularisation and an intellectual upheaval caused by the avalanche of insufficiently critical ideas spread by the media" (Paul, 1995). He spoke in several other passages about the intrusiveness of the media, and also about the "temptation to individualism" so alien to Africa's best traditions.

What is interesting is that the whole emphasis is placed on indifferentism and unbelief among the educated *élite*, rather than on materialism and the unsettling influences of urbanization and religious education at third level institutions (Paul, 1995).

Secularization possesses a momentum of its own, and very soon develops into "secularism", the situation in which the secular is observed to dominate or even replace the sacred. Secularism refers to a situation in which religious faith, for one reason or another is felt to be superfluous. It is a state in which organised religion loses its hold both at the level of social institutions and at the level of human consciousness. As such, secularism is a datum of modern society. It is a world view which, in theory and/or practice, denies the immanence of God.

Secularism may stem from explicit unbelief, the denial of the existence of God or of any religious dimension to human life. It is an allegiance to a popular myth of science as the ultimate theory of everything, a conviction that the only truths are those which are accessible to scientific observation and experiment. Basically, it is a faith in unlimited human progress, apparently confirmed by the spectacular achievements of Western technology.

In the modern society, the term secularization is not only used with reference to the increasing separation from religious institutions, values and roles; it can also be used with regard to increasing attention to proximate, short-term or expedient ends (Paul, 1995). As it can be seen from above, it is clear therefore that the term “secularization” and “secularism” has been defined differently by different people. We now have to consider the etymology and usage of the term secularization.

The Christian community (Church) on their part employed the term “*secular*” to designate the priest working outside the authority of religious orders. For the purpose of this study, secularization is looked at in light of the loss of the true life of the Church, the alienation of Church leaders from the genuine Church spirit. It is the rejection of the ecclesiastic ethos and the permeation of our life by worldly spirit ([http://www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/pastoral/hierotheos\\_vlachos\\_secularism.htm](http://www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/pastoral/hierotheos_vlachos_secularism.htm)). It is the accommodation of church and religion to the demands of modern twenty first century society.

### 2.4.3 The Biblical Usage of Secularization

The biblical description of the term "*secularization*" is more clearly found in the writings of Saint Paul in the New Testament. Paul in Romans 12:2 warns: "*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.*" The word "*World*" used in this passage is translated in the Latin Vulgate as *saeculo*, in the New Testament Greek it is *aion*. In this context, *aion* is best translated as the "*sphere of temporal things and concerns* (<http://www.confessionallutheran.org/papers.html>)."  
"*Secularization*" in the biblical sense therefore means to lose one's vision of and belief in the eternal things. It is "*blindness*" to the sacred things which are the proper object of religion and theology.

Originally, theistic world view was the unifying system that largely dominated the most African societies; but, this is no longer true. In our modern culture, the principal or system of thought that is being reflected in our creative arts, in the popular literature and music, on TV screens, in the educational institutions, and even in the churches, is secularism.

In secularization, all life, every human value, every human activity must be understood in view of the here and now. There are no windows into the eternal. If there is a God, He is totally irrelevant. All that matters is now. In the secular world view, human beings are not created in the image of God. They are, instead, wholly physical. Consequently, humans are the outgrowth of an evolutionary process, and are, at best, nothing more than a chance collocation of atoms. Because there is no hope of life beyond this present physical world, the secular humanist declares that

man's highest end is happiness, freedom, and progress for all mankind in this present world. To this end the secularist “assigns to man nothing less than the task of being his own saviour and redeemer” (Lamont, 2002).

In stark contrast to secularism, which says, “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die,” stands the Bible, which says, “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.” Bible teaches of something more than the here and now. While secularization takes the short view, the biblical teaching takes the long view. While secularists talk about the here and now, the bible teaches of an eternal life beyond the grave. While secularism teaches that man is the product of evolution, validates narcissism, hedonism, materialism, and pluralism, the bible on the other hand teaches that man is created in the image of God, refutes all man-made things with the admonition, “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

The Bible teaches that faith comes as a result of hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17). In Hebrews 11:3, the writer says that faith has its starting point at Genesis 1:1. Consequently, the starting point for a Biblical world view is the first verse of the Bible. Before the here and now, God, who transcends this current time-space world, existed in eternity. This means there is more to reality than the here and now. Apart from “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” there are no real ethical obligations; no such things as absolute norms of conduct—no moral absolutes. If there is no Creator who is Sovereign of the universe, then man is under no moral obligations and is absolutely free to do as he pleases. It is here then that we arrive at



the heart of the matter. Man, in his arrogant pride, does not want to do what God wants him to do. As a result, many attempts to suppress the truth about God in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). Because if man can be persuaded to believe the lie that there is no Sovereign God who lives in eternity, then he can be comfortable involving himself in all sorts of uncleanness and ungodliness (Romans 1:19-25). Secularism, of course, is the perfect vehicle for such unbelief.

### **2.5 The Working Definition of Secularization**

Secularization is an all important issue both theoretically and practically. Theoretically because if religion is disappearing in our modern society, it is possible for us to discuss what causes it and what it does by examining. Practically because its manifestation in our Christian Churches is evident to any curious seeker.

There remains an ambiguity amongst the scholars as to what secularization and secularism entails. The questions they wrestle with include the following: Is it a decline in the observance of religious rules and duties? Is it a decrease in individual piety? Is it the waning prevalence of religious institutions in society? Is it growing social differentiation and a privatization of religion? Irreligiousness is often taken as being synonymous with secularity. Is irreligiousness marked by individuals not going to church and not adhering to the religions conditions? Or are religious institutions not thoroughly trained in their religious practices? These are some of the issues the make the definition of secularization rather difficult.

Today, many problems hinge on the shifting meaning of the term “secularization.” Theo Hobson points out that the definition of the term ‘secular’ is dependent on the definition of the term ‘religious’ and that no one agrees on any one definition. He sees the entire concept of secularization as too vague as to be of any use at all (Hobson, 2006). This has therefore made definition of secularization hard to decipher. Budd in her book *Themes and Issues in Modern Sociology* (1973) says;

like many other key concepts in Sociology (defining secularism) has become so diffuse as to obscure rather than clarify,’ she clarifies this more by giving an example that, ‘both the full churches of the United States, and the empty ones of England, are pointed to as evidence of its existence (Budd, 1973).

Harvey Cox, in his introduction to *The Secular City*, quotes the Dutch theologian C.A. van Peursen as saying that secularization is the deliverance of the human person “from religious and... metaphysical control over his reason and his language (Cox, *Religion in the Secular City: Towards a postmodern Theology*, 1985)”. Cox then goes on to describe it as “the loosing of the world from religious and quasi-religious understandings of itself... the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols (Cox, 1965).”

Secularization is thus “the process by which religion is pushed out of its control of various spheres (Kochuthara, 1988)” such as human culture, education, medicine, the arts and sciences. These areas then achieve “a certain relative autonomy from religion, Christianity in its institutional form and sacral character, and a new and distinctive value in and for themselves (Clarke, 1966).”

Secularization is not an anti-religious phenomenon as such. Rather, it “bypasses and undercuts religion (Cox, *The Secular City* , 1965)”, relativizing religious world views and thereby rendering them innocuous. Subjectively, it means that religion no longer provides for the individual any inclusive and commanding value system, or any explanation for personal or cosmic mysteries, these now belonging to the realm of science.

Objectively, “the world looks less and less to religious rules and rituals for its morality or its meanings (Cox, *The Secular City* , 1965).” Humanity has become increasingly aware of its autonomy in its dealings with the world and with society in the political, social and economic spheres.

## **2.6 Secularization in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Secularization process can be best understood as a process slowly gathering momentum in western history over the past five hundred years. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century, social scientists boldly predicted the demise of religion. They quoted the declining adherence to religious institutions as evidence for this. With there being an increase in scholasticism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, people no longer saw religious ideologies as being relevant to the society.

A Sociologist and theologian Gerard Beigel used the word "secularization" with reference to a system of thought and belief that explicitly or implicitly excludes God from human affairs (Beigel, 1999). As it can be seen from the above, the term

“secularization” means different thing to different people depending on their school of thought.

Max Weber on his part looked at religious solutions as ‘no longer being accepted by intellectuals because they are too out of keeping with other kinds of knowledge (Budd, 1973).’ This perspective was also supported by other functionalist scholars like Emil Durkheim, Malinoski and Radcliffe – Brown. These functionalist scholars accepted that modern societies are “less religious” in the sense and assumed that either that secular ideologies have replaced religion, or only those who need solace and meaning acutely now need to seek religion (Budd, 1973).

The two key developments that came up with the rise of scholasticism in this process are the rise of science and the development of modern psychology. There have been many good and useful discoveries in these two areas of knowledge. At the same time modern science and modern psychology have tended to strongly propagate secularist view that negates the essentiality of the important dimensions of human life: the "word of God" in the created world around us, and "the word of God" in the depths of our hearts (Beigel, 1999). God desires to speak to us "from the heavens above" and "from the heart within." In many ways, modern science and modern psychology have walled us off from this two-fold witness of God.

Modern science has restricted our view of the world around us. In the ancient and medieval world the whole universe was seen as a manifestation of the glory of God. The heavens above were seen as a symbol of divine things to which human beings

were called to share. The created world was seen to reflect some of the attributes of God, just as a particular work of art reflects the "style" or attributes of an artist.

By contrast, modern science does not view the universe to see the destiny of man or the glory of God. The scientific method looks at the universe to see what can be measured and quantified and brought under the control of man. By design, we could say, God is completely kept out of the picture. The scientific view of the universe is not so much a false view, but rather an incomplete view. A problem arises; however, when the scientific approach to the world becomes a philosophy or ideology that denies the higher truth of morality and religion, this is the heart of secularization that this research sets out to address.

The evidence of secular ideologies in our modern society is no longer a subject of discussion. Any curious seeker needs no further search because the evidence is all around us. Secularization process in church leadership in Kenya and the world at large does not just mean a denial of God. It is more so a belief that God and other spiritual values are in other domains of life and therefore not very necessary for us in our day to day decision making process. George Jelliss in his article *what is Secularism?* Captures the reality of secularization process in our society today when he says:

The truth is that we are all too familiar with secularism it is like the air we breathe in our modern culture. Each of us could give countless examples of encountering attitudes of indifference or hostility toward God within different institutions or in the behaviour of individual persons. It is no exaggeration to say that there is a climate of indifference to God all around us in modern culture (Jelliss, 2006).

Studies have shown that over the past two centuries, secularization process has not only undermined people's belief in God and in Jesus Christ, it has also undermined morality and with it the stability of Christian faith. The philosophy of relativism that says everything is relative nothing is absolute, and the humanist philosophy that places much emphasis on what man can do more than what God does has powerfully propagated secularization. Kwame Nkurumah, the prince of African Nationalism for example, was once quoted as having said: “seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things shall be added unto you (Pobee, 1986).” Nkurumah’s words as a leader does not only contradict the biblical teaching in Matt. 6:33, they are also deeply rooted in the secular philosophy of humanism that says ‘man is everything.’ This example gives us just a glimpse of how secularist ideas have gone deep in the hearts and minds of people to the point of distorting the biblical teachings of the Christian faith.

The theologians all across history look at the process of secularization mostly as having started after the cessation of persecutions. During the persecutions, Christians believed and lived truth. Practical examples are the Christian martyrs like Polycarp, Papatia and Felicitas stood by the truth and could not compromise to death. When Christianity became the official state religion under Constantine in AD 313 with the Edict of Milan, there began an adulteration of the Christian faith and way of living and so secularization process began. These arguments are just but pointers that the whole concept of secularization cannot just be wished away. Secularization however

has both the positive and negative aspects. We will therefore consider each of them independently.

### **2.7 Positive Aspects of Secularization**

Secularization is not, in itself, negative. It has many positive values. In Africa and for the most part of the world, we people enjoy a life of relative peace, comfort and security. Education, caring for the poor and healing the sick, once seen as the natural preserve of the religious orders and of various other individual initiatives and charities, are now seen for the most part as primary responsibilities of the state. Through taxation and, with it, democratic representation in government, responsibility for the welfare of the weakest of society and the education of future generations becomes the concern of all, regardless of religion. Indeed, the whole notion of the “common good” is the fruit of secularization (Secularism in Catholic Encyclopedia).

Democracy, too, is another such fruit. The value that is placed on human autonomy and the power of human reason implies that those who govern do so not by “divine right”, nor by superiority of intellect, or by military or economic conquest, but by the mandate conferred on them by the majority of ordinary people. They can then hold their leaders to account, critique their policies and decisions through freedom of expression and the exchange of ideas in open debate, and change their leaders by the peaceful means of the ballot box when necessary.

Most of all, secularization means that there is no one particular set of values, nor is there any one religion or ideology that is imposed, either by social convention or by

state law, upon the whole community. Each person is free to practice the religion of his or her choice, and free also to practice no religion at all. Secularization, following the heritage of the Covenant on Sinai allowing for no false gods, has allowed the human mind to be freed from the shackles – the idols – of religious ideology, or, from what we would now term religious fundamentalism (Clarke, 1986). We are freed to explore, to experiment and to question.

Today, the benefits of such freedom include the advances in science and technology that have revolutionised the way we live our lives and the comforts we enjoy. One of the reasons, perhaps, that Catholics have tended to see secularization in generally negative terms has often been due in no small part to the Church's own often reactionary stance, particularly during the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries, towards technological and especially social progress. Given the sheer pace of such progress during that era, this is perhaps not so surprising.

However, it does betray a Church caught up in the absolutizing of relative values, attempting to divinise human structures, not least being the political system of the absolute monarchy. It must also be remembered that “during the past 150 years... All too often modern political, social, and economic revolutions have meant the restriction or total suppression of religious freedom for Catholics. Thus, Catholics have traditionally seemed opposed to progress and human freedom because of their allegiance to religious values (Clarke, 1986)” especially in the face of emerging and often equally absolutist ideologies.



In the past 150 years, though, the church has indeed moved on from the *Syllabus of Errors* of Pope Pius IX and the anti-Modernism of Pope Pius X. It has adopted a much more positive attitude to the world around them, and to the progress made in so many areas of the secular sphere. The Second Vatican Council, in *Gaudium et Spes* no. 36, directs Catholics to respect the relative autonomy of the secular world as having a meaning and value of its own.

## **2.8 Negative Aspects of Secularization**

The effects of secularization have not been entirely positive. Freed from the dependence upon norms, laws, traditions and values that were once considered absolute, human reason and autonomy can become a dangerous loose cannon (Paul Kevin Meagher, OP, Thomas C. O'Brien, Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne, SSJ, eds., , 1979). The same internal dynamic of reason, freedom and human autonomy that gave rise to the enlightenment and its values also spawned; among others some of the worlds known dictators like Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin.

Despite being motivated by secularization and the ideals of the enlightenment, many subsequent revolutions around the world have succeeded only in replacing one tyrannical ideology with another. Unbridled economic and industrial progress has given rise to huge social inequalities within countries, is contributing to the widening gap between rich and poor worldwide, and is causing pollution, affecting the quality of life and health of millions, as well as degrading the environment and doing unprecedented damage to the natural world (Clarke, 1986).

One of the main dangers of secularization is that it can and does lead to secularism – the view that completely separates God from creation and even seeks to deny the existence of God altogether. According to secularism, humanity can do without God, does not need God, or the adherence to any absolute norms or values or recourse towards any ultimate authority save that of human reason alone and faith in the human capacity to advance itself in the light of that same reason (Clarke, 1986).

Even where it does not expressly seek to deny the existence of God, secularism can and does in itself become an absolute, giving rise to “ethical anarchism and metaphysical nihilism (B.R., 1982).” These among others seek to dominate and control in precisely those areas once dominated and controlled by religious and other ideologies. Thus, they stand in direct contradiction to the ideals of secularization. Seeking to denigrate and destroy traditional value-systems, they usurp and absorb these same value-systems, distorting them in the process.

Cox calls this “the adolescent phase of the relativisation of values (Cox, *The Secular City*, 1965).” Having rejected one ideological value-basis (usually the traditional Judeo-Christian one), there is still the lack of sufficient maturity to seek new bases for social consensus and a shared value-system based on plurality and the common realisation that no one group’s ideology or value-system is absolute.

## **2.9 The Different Forms of Modern Secularization**

The modern day secularization has disguised itself in mainly three faces that is the secrecy of the Christian religion, consumer materialism and economic factors. We will endeavour to discuss each of these independently and at length.

The first is the secrecy of Christian religion. The late Catholic Pope John Paul II in evaluating modern civilization in his address to the Christians entitled, *The third Millennium*, praised the developments of technology that they have raised the standards of human life. At the same time, however, the Pope warned the church that the western world has become "interiorly impoverished by its tendency to forget God or to keep him at a distance (Beigel, 1999)." The Pope's words point out the fact that secularization is a real challenge not only to the Church leaders but in the world at large.

The challenge of secularization on the church is even more intense today. Secularization says since God and other spiritual realities are not so important, then we must "create our own values." It means that religion has moved into a private sphere and into more generalized spirituality. And since everyone's values will be different; there is no such thing as objective right and wrong human actions. Beigel rightly says;

The secularist understanding of human values has become entrenched in our public school systems. As a consequence, there is little support today for parents who are attempting to teach their children respect for God and His commandments. There seems to be no limit to the capacity of secularism to erode all moral foundations of society (Beigel, 1999).

The above statement shows that secularization process has become a challenge to the Christian church because it attacks its leaders and even goes beyond that into attacking the basic unit of the society (family) where Christian values are taught to the children. Secularism is deeply engrained in the fabric of human society. Every facet of life has been contaminated to the core. Values and morals have been eroded. This therefore makes fighting secularization in the church such an enormous task. This is because its leaders have fallen into its trap. Budd puts it that:

No church can control the changes of secular life because it can no longer command the absolute adherence of its members. The competition for membership makes resisting secular wants with spiritual values dangerous. Once churches accept more or less explicitly, that doctrine must sometimes be modified to accommodate t secular changes; religious values loose the pre-eminence which it is argued that they can have in a traditional society (Budd, 1973).

Secularization is today fighting the Christian faith in many different angles. Emile Durkheim's idea of division of the world into two domains, that is, the secular and the sacred has actively propagated secularization process. This division aimed at the onset to keep the church from having its hands on the affairs of the state. This is secularism in its full manifest. A theologian J.A.T. Robinson once said;

If the religion – society split gives rise to the feeling that Christianity has nothing to say beyond individual salvation, and no distinctive worldview affecting education, politics and business, then in this sense, secularization is corrosive of Christianity (Ferguson, Sinclair B., David F. Wright (eds.), 1988).

The point that Robinson in the above puts across is typically what happens today. Secularization process is slowly and gradually taking foot in the church through its leadership. Some years ago the talk of abortion and or euthanasia was almost unheard-of in the church and society. It was sharply rebuked in the church, today it is a subject of discussion whether or not to have it legalized. The other example is that of homosexual "marriage" the issues of belief have been pushed aside and tagged as 'private matters' which should not be shared in public and private sectors.

The second form of modern secularization is the consumer materialism. This is the form of secularism most prevalent in the contemporary world, and the form which is rapidly appearing in Africa. It is the outcome of rapid technological change and is also strongly linked to wealth and the creation of wealth, since the affluent are the principal consumers. It is promoted by the electronic media, and it is associated with what has been called the global culture of "economism". This is another way of referring to the neo-liberal, Euro American technocracy. The indigenous cultures of the Non-western world are powerless against the economic forces of Western capitalism. Economism has its roots in a Western culture that is intrinsically divisive and imperialist, based on the manipulation of technological power and inequality. It is a system which proclaims the overriding importance of the economic factor. It

generates its own rituals and symbols and creates its own cultural myths of power, success, growth and prosperity (Glasner, 1977).

The final form of modern secularization deals with economic factors. These are assumed to be the main source of meaning and value, and virtue is defined by economic success, profitability, cost effectiveness and growth. Economism claims universal legitimacy as a world culture. In reality, however, it is a movement of "anti culture" which has no substance as a genuine cultural system at all. It results in cultural homogenisation and impoverishment. Paradoxically, the status of Christianity today as a world religion is largely due to the influence of Western economist culture. The Church has become the mirror and agent of economism and a vehicle of globalisation. Her missionaries unconsciously introduced secularism, by promoting a privatised, departmentalised religion that does not effectively challenge the myths of economism (Isichei, 1995).

In an article, Pedro Arrupe, S.J., told the 1977 Synod of Bishops in Rome, that the Church must make *"a fair and sober assessment of modern culture, however materialistic, irreligious and atheistic it may seem (Arrupe, 1978),"* otherwise the faith will continue to be separated from real life. Christianity must not merely collaborate with modernity, but must surpass it or transcend it.

### **2.10 Assumptions on Secularization in Africa**

The African assumption on the concept of secularization can be categorized to be in three areas; the belief in human progress, social degradation as observed in

institutions of higher learning. Looking at each of them individually will shade more light to our understanding of it.

First is the belief in human progress. This scientific orientation presupposes a primitivism and advance that is; it is popularly assumed that religion belongs to the childhood of humanity and that primitive people are naively pious, credulous and subject to the teaching of priests and magicians. With the progress of science and technology since the enlightenment, it is supposed that human beings have thrown off the shackles of religion. Mary Douglas maintains that secularism is not the exclusive outcome of modernity, but is "an age-old cosmological type ... a product of definable social experience, which need have nothing to do with urban life or modern science" (Douglas, 2009). Douglas bases her critique on a hypothesis, which is not without its own critics, that society is defined by a limited number of basic, organizational criteria, a combination of which prompt people to adopt a pragmatic attitude to life, to discount metaphysics and to make no distinction between mind and matter - in other words, to be secular.

Secondly is the belief in social degeneration. The secular society contains within itself the seeds of its own decline and dissolution. Both Peter Berger, the American sociologist of religion, and Lamin Sanneh, the African missiologist, believes that secularism should not be seen as a more formidable opponent than it is (Berger, *The Heretical Imperative, Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affirmation*, 1980). Sanneh, in particular, sees the Western cultural project as afflicted by a moral relativism that renders it deeply flawed (Sanneh, 1993).

Finally is the focus on higher educational institutions. There is dissatisfaction with organized religion and was imported from abroad, being disseminated through the education system and the encounter with Western technology. Unbelief tended to arise in the minds of the educated and, increasingly, the semi-educated, because religious education had not kept pace with secular and academic education. Universities and other institutes of third level education as places that posed a danger to the faith of young *elites*.

In a summary, Religious authority was seen as repressive and opposed to true academic freedom. Such freedom demanded an open mind, an agnosticism or methodological doubt. In matters of religious belief honesty was thought to consist in coming to no conclusion.

### **2.11 Secularisation within Churches**

Churches are defined as large complex organisations with a long history of investment in the past. As established churches mature they tend to become more centralised, develop a hierarchical administrative structure and rely on professional, well educated ministers, specialised administrators and theologians to oversee their activities. Church leaders are expected to have more training, knowledge and faith than the laity. While this provides stability and credence, it also dis-empowers the laity and also increases the sense of alienation and distance between the church and its constituents. Dempsey observes that extensive theological training favoured by churches isolates clergy from their congregations and frustrates the clergy and



congregation. This frustration contributed to the resignation of a large number of clergy from traditional churches in the late 1960s.

On careful examination, the challenges to faith attributed to secularisation are found to be due to structural changes accompanying modernisation than to deeper philosophical shifts in attitudes towards religion and science. The perceived decline in the influence of religion is strongly related to the rapid increase in the size and complexity of modern society. While clergy were the largest professional group in the early 1800s, with roles including teaching, counselling, keeping law and order and government clerical responsibilities, by the end of the twentieth century these roles had been replaced by increasingly specialist positions. Clergy were relegated to the periphery and religion was confined to the private sphere.

Consequently, part of the challenge facing the church is the need to redefine and rediscover the role of the clergy in a rapidly changing and increasingly specialised society. Traditional religions that invested heavily in past models and practices have often been ill equipped to adapt to changes in society. The churches have struggled to come to terms with increasing globalisation and pluralism and from revolutions in transportation and communication.

Churches have also been challenged by the decreased dependence of people on religious institutions through the increased power that modern society has given to individuals. Hierarchical, centralised, theologically-complex religious bodies have

found it increasingly difficult to relate to an egalitarian society that was characterised by individualism and freedom of choice.

The threat to institutionalised religion has been further increasing by greater competition from a growing range of attractive leisure activities, greater affluence and increasing consumerism. The decrease in religious observance can be linked to increased mobility, the development of the motor car, competition for leisure time through electronic media, changing participation rates in the work force and a decline in local, community life. Prosperous, modern societies have replaced trust in God and the church with a commitment to individualism, leisure and the family. Churches that have failed to respond to the many changes in society have declined, while others that see change as opportunity have grown.

The most significant impact of secularisation on religion has not occurred outside churches but within them. Berger observed that with the passage of time, established churches tend to become more inclusive, tolerant and open to the secular world. As new religious groups seek acceptance by established churches and the wider society their more extreme views become moderated. The inclination to want to change society tends to decline. There is usually an increasing value placed on social decorum and rational decision-making. The value placed on less comprehensible areas including emotionalism and the supernatural decreases. Over time liturgies and doctrines tend to become fixed in more concrete forms.

Established groups have a considerable investment to protect. They tend to look to fixed dogma and past history for security and to be wary of experimentation and new methods. Spontaneity, lay involvement and charismatic gifts tend to decline. The pursuit of security poses a strong challenge to church members who wish to pursue the transcendent, experiential, supra-rational religious expressions or pursue more confronting forms of evangelical outreach.

Kelley observes that mainstream churches tend to become more relativistic and lukewarm over time, and to lose their ability to provide clarity of purpose and an ultimate, other worldly sense of meaning to life. A decline in vitality and attendance is often observed as churches become overly institutionalised (Kelley, 1972). The formation of new religious groups can be seen as a reaction to the process of institutionalisation.

Revivalist groups are both re-active and pro-active. They react to changes in society and the church by promoting a return to values and practices that they perceive to have existed in the past. Revivalist groups can be viewed as reactionary responses to the processes of secularisation and institutionalisation that are inevitable bi-products of the growth and maturing of established religious organisations. They are a reaction to the tendency in established religious hierarchies to rationalise and objectify the transcendent in order to contain the *wholly other* in their words, rituals and beliefs. Revivalists seek to restore less institutional, less hierarchical and more mystical forms of the Christian tradition that more highly organised religious groups try to represses.

Revivalist groups seek to counter the established churches' emphasis on rationalism with an emphasis on individual religious experience including conversion and supernatural healing, miracles, prophecy and glossolalia. Formality in established churches is replaced in revivalist meetings by spontaneity and informality. While established churches spend most resources meeting the needs of middle class adults leaving the lower class and unchurched young people neglected, revivalists, on the other hand, pursue outreach to the lower classes and young people who are responsive to their contemporary methods.

While established churches develop complex, rationalised doctrines, revivalist groups counter this trend with simplified teachings based on biblical allegories and metaphors and uncomplicated, narrative-based messages. They use simple, expressive songs that empower ordinary, untrained, lay people, neglected by established churches. As sociologist, Bryan Wilson observes, 'Inner feeling has been hailed as more authentic than intellectual knowledge.' The complex politics of highly structured centralised, hierarchies and credentialed, highly trained clergymen are replaced in revival movements by egalitarian communities in which the charismatic gifts of each member are valued. Revivalists give greater opportunities for the 'ordinary' participant.

These movements are also the products of particular historical and cultural processes prevailing at the time of their formation. The twentieth century Pentecostalism and the charismatic revival movements show characteristics that were peculiar to the decades in which they developed. They also continue in the western, evangelical,

revivalist tradition and form part of ‘a path that involves many turnings but no basic change in direction.’

### **2.12 Challenge of Secularization to Church Ministry**

One of the most basic prerequisites for churches to a secular world is to recognize first of all that we are indeed living in a post-Christian era. The church can no longer assume that people are familiar with and understand the traditional paradigms they have used up to now in proclaiming Christ and the Kingdom. The church needs to find new paradigms in their dialogue about God that takes into account the dynamics of the modern society and in the world.

Writing from an ecclesiological viewpoint, Fr. Peter Hünemann says “To give witness in a substantive way, the legitimate features of modern society must be allowed their moment in constituting the church as an institution *for the sake of the gospel*” (Hünemann, 2001). Only then can the Church be a visible sign of God’s grace. It is his contention that the Church, by remaining imbued with and operating from an obsolete concept of society, is failing to come to terms with modernity and is thus hindering the fulfilment of “its role as sign and sacrament of God’s salvific will for all peoples and nations (Hünemann, 2001).”

Likewise, it is the task of the Christian church to proclaim the God of Creation, Exodus and Sinai. The church is called to encourage and facilitate the process whereby, in a pluralist world with differing value systems, members of society can aspire to a sufficient level of maturity so as to allow the peaceful coexistence of these

value systems for the mutual benefit of all. It means recognising that all institutions, structures, laws and value-systems are human creations, the construct of a particular context.

It is the task of and the challenge to the church to proclaim the Christ who points the way to the Kingdom. Jesus of Nazareth refused to absolutise human structures, laws and institutions. Instead, he proclaimed the coming of a kingdom that is beyond all the earthly structures, and he lived out the values by which that kingdom would be recognised. It is through this sonship that humanity is called to exercise that maturity necessary to live in a pluralized world.

Despite the huge advances of the past century and a half, it is clear that science and technology have failed to answer the deepest of human questions. Humanity is still engaged in the search for meaning, perhaps even more so now that the combined effects of industrialisation, secularisation and post-modernism have caused generations to become alienated from their cultural heritage, their social roots and from creation itself.

The challenge for the church now is to re-engage the secularized humanity in the search for meaning and to give it fresh focus. The time is ripe for a new evangelisation, speaking with the technology of the digital age, that addresses the search for meaning that surpasses all ages, that respects human freedom and autonomy, that is comfortable with and can dialogue with diversity, and that witnesses

to the Kingdom present amongst us through quiet but persuasive example as modelled by Jesus Christ.

Churches have too often been confused as the nature of the challenge that they face from the surrounding society. Many have assumed that declining numbers are inevitable and that their needs are best met by resisting change. If the Christian church and ministry are to remain effective the church leadership must recognise that secularisation and institutionalisation are dulling the impact of their message. Churches need to see themselves less as bureaucratic organisations and more as organic structures in which all members and their tasks are valued.

Churches today need to recognise that religious desire remains strong, but that people are seeking religious expression that is able to compete with the many other demands placed on them by a changing society. The religious message must be expressed in contemporary terms. Only as church leaders understand the nature of change in society will they be equipped to communicate their invaluable, unchanging message to a rapidly changing, but needy world.

### **2.13 Conclusion**

In summary, we set out look at the historical development of secularization, to find a working definition of secularization and secularism. Here we defined secularism as the loss of the true life of the Church, the alienation of Church leaders and even the members from the genuine Church spirit. We also mentioned the difficulty that lies in the definition of secularization and secularism. We then looked at its etymology and

usage, how it has developed over years. We have therefore realized that secularism and secularization process is the Church's gravest danger not only in Kenya but the world as a whole. This is because it adulterates her true spirit and her true atmosphere. Of course we must repeat that it adulterates not the Church, for the Church is the real and blessed body of Christ, but the leadership and members of the Christian church.

The Church has been viewed as the jewel of the world, and the charity of mankind. When, however, this jewel of the world is permeated by the secular spirit, when Christians, the leaders and the members of the church, instead of belonging to this jewel, instead of becoming the light of the world, are inspired by the world in the sense of passions and become the world, and then they experience secularism. This secularism is an anthropocentric view of our life. The Christian church leadership needs to enter the world to transform it rather than the world entering the Church to secularize it. A secularized Christian church leader is completely unable and weak to transform the world. And secularized Christian leader fails at all levels as they do not live up to their masters' expectation.

Having considered all the above challenges of secularization process to the Christian church leadership, it is clear that this social movement is as a profound threat to Church leadership not only in Kenya but the world as a whole.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The lessons learned from history teach that one era is connected to another and that the unfolding of the future is not random but is in fact a reaction to the past. The current and future leadership dilemma facing our society is clearly a reflection of the way we have negatively perceived what is really important in any leadership endeavour.

Quality of leadership is, arguably, central to the survival and success of groups and organizations. Sun Tzu in his book *The Art of War* says that, 'the leader of armies is the arbiter of the people's fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril (Tzu, 2002).' Tzu therefore underscores the importance of having the right people with right qualities in any leadership position as his contribution is fundamental to the success or failure of an organization.

In discussing the existing concepts of leadership in the African church, this chapter first explores leadership in general, examine leadership in the Church, its teachings on leadership on which we will look at the history of servant leadership. It will then look at the biblical and theological foundation of leadership in which it will touch on Jesus' teaching on leadership. Finally, it will examine the secular and the traditional concept of the same looking at the challenges they pose for church leadership.

### **3.2 General meaning of Leadership**

There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are commentators. One thing has however stood out in the different definitions, that leadership is a process of getting things done through people. Leadership is an art not a science. This means that being a leader is an adventure because you can never be sure whether you will reach your goal at the time of your leadership. Leadership is also a responsibility. It's adventure and often fun, but it always means responsibility. Leadership is not just for people at the top of the pyramid or those holding leadership positions. Everyone can learn to lead by discovering the power that lies within each one of us to make a difference and being prepared when the call to lead comes.

Many people still associate leadership with one person leading. Four things stand out in this perspective of leadership. First, that leadership involves influencing others. Second, is that where there are leaders, there are people to be influenced also referred to as followers. Third, leaders seem to come to the fore when there is a crisis or special problem. In other words, they often become visible when an innovative response is needed. Fourth, leaders are people who have a clear idea of what they want to achieve and why. Thus, leaders are people who are able to think and act creatively in non-routine situations and who set out to influence the actions, beliefs and feelings of others (Williams, 2004). In this sense being a 'leader' is personal. It flows from an individual's qualities and actions.

Burns argues that it is possible to distinguish between transactional and transforming leaders. The former, 'approach their followers with an eye to trading one thing for another, while the latter are visionary leaders who seek to appeal to their followers 'better nature and move them toward higher and more universal needs and purposes' (Burns, 1978). In other words, the leader is seen as a change agent.

Frequently, people confuse leadership with authority. To explore this we can turn to Heifetz's discussion of the matter. Heifetz is of the idea that authority is often seen by people as the possession of powers based on formal role. He looks at the organizational structure where people tend to focus on the manager or officer as people who have the right to give direction. They are seen as the ones who warrant obedience demonstrated in their exercise of powers often seen as legitimate. It may also be that the followers fear the consequences of not following their orders or 'requests'. This is because failure to comply may lead to a possibility of them sacking, demoting or disadvantaging them may well secure compliance of the led. People may also follow them because they show leadership (Heifetz, 1994).

Eisenhower on his part observes leadership as one of those things that are often awfully hard to define but you know when you see it, and you definitely know when it is missing. Leadership is a process that is ultimately concerned with fostering change. In contrast to the notion of management, which suggests preservation and maintenance, leadership implies a process where there is movement from wherever we are now to some future place of condition that is different (Eisenhower, 2010). Leadership is not something we do, it is something we are. Leadership also implies

intentionality, in the sense that the implied change is not random “change for change’s sake” but is rather directed toward some future end or condition, which is inherently value-based.

Leopold A. Foullah in his article “*The existing concept of leadership in the African Church*” points out that leadership can be looked at from many different angles. He looks at leadership from three basic concepts as identified in the contemporary world. They are: the traditional concept which is drawn from one’s social or ethnic background, the secular concept drawn from the view point of modern society in general and the biblical concept derived from the teachings of scripture ([http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Leopold\\_foullah](http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Leopold_foullah)).

### **3.3 Leadership in the Church**

Leadership within the church ought to differ from leadership in all other domains (Sanders, 1980). Jesus made it very clear to the disciples on many occasions (Mt. 20:26, 27). This should then be the primary reason to rediscover our foundational bases. Clinton defines development as “. . . a measure of a leader’s changing capacity to influence in terms of various factors over time; it is also used to indicate the actual patterns, processes, and principles that summarize development (Clinton, 1988).” The task of training church leadership is, therefore, a vital aspect of the mission mandate. Therefore, “Effective leaders recognize leadership selection and development as a priority function. Effective leaders increasingly perceive their ministries in terms of a lifetime perspective” (Clinton, 1988).

In studying the leaders both in the Old and New Testament, one finds that there are at least two large groups, specially selected and anointed leaders and natural or unanointed ones (Hendricks, 1987). The anointed or ordained leaders or Priests included people like Aaron and Samuel, who also functioned as judges (Ex. 28:41; 29:7).

According to C. L. Feinberg, these leaders were experts in the Law of Moses and in the beginning belonged to the priesthood. There were also the Prophets such as Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the rest were all anointed and consecrated men who stood for God and the people of Israel, Kings (1 Sa. 9:16; 10:1; 15:1; 16:12-13).

In the Old Testament kings were also divinely ordained and appointed to their positions. The unanointed leaders or statesmen include those who had positions in government such as Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah. They were not anointed in the strict sense of the word as they could not perform the priestly duties like offering sacrifices, although all of them occupied high positions in the palace. Yet we do not deny the truth that God was with them, appointed, and used them for His higher purposes.

The elders (Ex. 25:1) may have been officially recognized during the time of the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness (Ex. 24:1), for we find them existing before that time. The Judges were probably appointed by Moses (Ex. 18:13-27), and their leadership was prominent in Israel during a period when they were threatened by foes after the conquest of Canaan. The Old Testament pattern for leadership basically

focused on two aspects: first of all, the call and second, the training and development of leaders (Gangel, 1970).

We will first set our focus on the call. This has been the first step towards developing strong leadership in the church. "The divine call was never absent from the life experiences of the Old Testament leaders (Downey, 1981)." This is clearly seen as we take note of the prominent leaders in the Old Testament. We see in the Scriptures how the Holy Spirit inspired the writers to make mention of the call of priests, prophets, kings, among others at the very beginning of their vocation. Some examples include Moses (Ex. 3:7-10), Gideon (Jud. 6:11-18), Amos, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. (Amos 7:14-15; Jer. 1:1-10; Isaiah. 6:1-9; Ezekiel. 2:1-10).

In the New Testament time, we can also mention the Apostle Paul (Ac. 9:15-16) and many other giants in the history of the church like Martin Luther, John Wesley, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, among others who emphasised the necessity of the call. But we should also be aware of the fact that "Not all Christian leadership theorists agree with the concept of a call (Clinton, 1988)." Sanders says,

Both Scripture and the history of Israel and the Church attest that when God does discover a man who conforms to His spiritual requirements, who is willing to pay the full price of discipleship, He uses him to the limit despite his patent shortcomings. Such men were Moses, Gideon, David and a host of others (Sanders, 1980).

Sheldon Blank describes four common characteristics of a prophetic call: a conviction of mission, a feeling of inadequacy, a ministry of communication, and a consciousness of the magnitude of the task (Sheldon H. Blank,...R. K. Harrison,

1969). Johannes Lindblom's contribution is also noticeable in this aspect. He observes that the legitimacy of the true prophet and the authority of his message are established by his call. He knew that he was properly called by Yahweh to carry out his task. The false prophet is declared to be such and his visions and messages are rejected as valueless not because he did not have visions and ecstatic experiences, but because he had not been called (Lindblom, 1963).

The coming of "the word of the Lord" seems to be an integral part of the call in the lives of the prophets of the Old Testament. It is reflected explicitly in the expression, "thus says the Lord." Yahweh spoke or imparted the Word to them which eventually became the core of the prophets' communication. It is divine communication from God to the prophet and the prophet to the masses. The call of Yahweh determined this channel. David Watson writes clearly concerning this, "A prophet must above all learn to listen to God, discern the voice of God, and then to pass on that word from God to his people (Watson, 1978)." It was the call which assured this divine "word" to them. From this we can learn that God is not more interested in outward qualifications as humans are, for He looks upon the heart and desires that one should respond to the call and give oneself totally to him.

### **3.3.1 Christian Teachings on Leadership**

Majority of the churches in this century advocate for leadership in the perspective of service. In this regard, the leadership style advocated for by most Christian churches is a leadership approach called 'servant leadership.' However, some Christian scholars

like Tite Tienou have advocated for the use of 'servant hood' (Tienou, 1987) as opposed to the use of servant leadership.

The term servant is defined in *Oxford English Dictionary* as "one who is under obligation to work for the benefit of a superior and to obey his or her commands (Oxford English Dictionary, 1933)." The original usage of the term servant leader is accredited to Christianity and the ancient teachings of Jesus. In the Biblical text, Jesus gives instruction on the qualities of a leader, the role of the leader and the issue of power or (authority) (Sendjaya, S., and Sarros, J.C, 2002).

Servant leadership model is one that is slowly gaining popularity today in the church and even in the secular domain. It challenges the leaders both in the church and worldwide to examine their practice, motives and models. In this leadership model, the leader serves the people he/she leads. Greenleaf observes that the nature of a true leader is his willingness to be first and primarily a servant to others and it is this very desire to serve others, which makes one great (Greenleaf, 1977). This model implies that the leaders are not an end in themselves but rather a means to an end in the organizational leadership purpose.

In this model, servant leaders devote themselves to serving the needs of the organization members. They focus on meeting the needs of those they lead. They develop those under their leadership to bring out the best in them through coaching and encouraging (Greenleaf R. , 2011). They also facilitate personal growth in all who work with them and readily listen and build a sense of community.



The very definition of servant also reflects the historical and philosophical trends. In the 14th and 15th century, a servant was described as “one who is under obligation to work for the benefit of a superior and to obey his or her commands (Oxford English Dictionary, 2005).” Around the 17th and 18th century, when there was a clear separation of theology from philosophy, a servant was also defined as “slave” (Spears L. C., 1995). This connection with slavery within the western paradigm has also added confusion and possible opposition to the concept of servant leadership.

The servant leadership approach is a term that was coined and first used by Robert Greenleaf. It emphasizes the leader's role as a steward of the resources that is human, financial and otherwise provided by the church. It also encourages leaders to serve others while staying focused on achieving results in line with the church organization's values and integrity. In his description, Greenleaf says:

It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead...The difference manifest itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons, do they grow while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (Greenleaf, 1977)

Servant leadership is today strongly advocated for both in the religious and secular organizational settings. This is because it is felt to be effective because the needs of followers are so looked after that they reach their full potential, and hence they perform at their best. The power of this model of leadership is that it forces the leader

away from self-serving, domineering leadership and makes those in charge think harder about how to respect value and motivate people reporting to them.

Consistent with the notion that leadership is concerned with change, servant leadership model views the leader basically as a change agent, that is, he is the one who fosters change. Leaders, then, are not necessarily those who merely hold formal leadership positions; on the contrary, all people are potential leaders. Furthermore, since the concepts of “leadership” and “leader” imply that there are other people involved; leadership is, by definition, a collective or group process. Today, many institutions and individuals are slowly adopting the Servant approach to leadership.

### **3.3.2 History of Servant Leadership**

The concept of Servant Leadership as is understood and used today can be traced back to the writings of Robert Greenleaf. Greenleaf who wrote the book on this subject says: "A servant-leader is one who chooses to serve, and serve *first*.... (Greenleaf, 1977)" this publication led to further essays from him and others in the recent years. It is however thought that this concept is thousands of years older than this. Chanakya, one of the strategic thinkers in ancient India, wrote about servant leadership in his 4th century B.C. in the book Arthashastra. In it he says the king (leader) shall consider as well, not what pleases himself but what pleases his subjects (followers)"the king [leader] is a paid servant and enjoys the resources of the state together with the people (Servant Leadership through History, 2011).

In approximately 600 B.C., the Chinese sage Lao Tzu wrote *The Tao Te Ching*, a strategic treatise on servant leadership (Servant Leadership through History, 2011). In it, he argues that the greatest leader forgets himself and attends to the development of others. Tzu is of the opinion that good leaders will support excellent workers. Great leaders support the bottom ten percent. He goes on to mention that great leaders know that the diamond is always found "in the rough (Servant Leadership through History, 2011)." In the west, the concept of servant leadership can be traced way back, at least partly, to Jesus, who taught his disciples that;

You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many," (Mark 10:42-45)

Robert Greenleaf explains that the servant-leader is servant first, which means it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve (Greenleaf R. , 2011). Patterson's model of servant leadership included seven virtuous constructs that define servant leaders and shape their attitudes, characteristics, and behaviour. Four of these constructs appear to be in opposition to the source of energy for extroverts; humility, altruism, service, and perhaps trust. Therefore, it is proposed that for the individuals to be identified as servant leaders by their followers, the proportion expressing a preference for introversion on the instrument will be greater than the proportion of individuals expressing a preference for introversion in the general public.

Servant leaders are those who know that theirs is a ministry reflecting the supreme leader or Minister Jesus Christ himself and that they are a continuation of what is initiated by Jesus. Servant leaders are people-oriented. They represent a group of people with rights and various tastes, and they honour those diversities. Servant leaders are those who look to Jesus as the model; for he said, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mk. 9:35). Therefore, they take leadership as a service and not as a position. Leadership operates between two poles: people, on the one hand, and their goals, on the other.

Much has been studied and written about servant leadership since that time. The research has included identifying traits of servant leaders. Patterson presented the theory of servant leadership as an extension of transformational leadership theory and defined and developed the component constructs underlying the practice of servant leadership. Additional studies have built upon this model to explain such interactions as leaders and followers in servant leadership relationships (Patterson, 2003).

### **3.4 Biblical and Theological Foundation of Leadership**

The leadership concept in biblical perspective is derived from the teachings of Jesus and the life he modelled as the ideal standard for Christian leaders being the example of many who were called to leadership by God (Rush, 1971). Warren contends that there is specific biblical scripture and Judeo - Christian teaching associated with servant leadership and that serving others is one of the five main tenets within the Biblical world view (Bennis, Warren, G. Spreitzer and T. Cummings., 2001).

Consequently, Warren argues that humans are created to serve, to pay attention to the needs of others, to do the best with the resources available to us, to do everything with equal dedication, to be faithful and humble (Bennis, Warren, G. Spreitzer and T. Cummings., 2001). In addition, the Biblical world view promotes the concept of *grace*, which is foundational to the altruistic nature, and focus of a servant leader. The integration of grace from God into ones being, by following the teachings of Christ, allows one to interact with others in the same manner. Others then do not need to do or act; they receive love and serve simply because of who they are as fellow human beings.

The general biblical teaching on leadership is not a fixed hierarchy of offices to be filled but rather, leadership are functions that should be carried out by people that God will raise. All leadership in the church should be based on spiritual gifts. According to the Bible, there are basic leadership gifts given to this community. Leadership functions successfully and is appreciated to the extent these gifts are properly, equally and beneficially utilized for the service of the community. This is understood in a terminology of ministry, service, function and not an office in the Bible.

The New Testament description of the church as the messianic community undercuts the very basis of any institutional or hierarchical view of leadership and puts ministry on a charismatic/organic basis. The important teachings from the New Testament are: God provided the necessary leaders, this leadership was seen in terms of the exercise of spiritual gifts, and there was great flexibility in the way these leadership functions operated and were understood in the early church (Greenleaf R. K., 1977).

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew *'eved* was originally applied to a slave, but later, it came to mean a trusted servant. This term was often applied to those who did work for a ruler or God. Kings and prophets were often called servants of the Lord (2 Samuel 3:18; Isaiah 20:3; Ezekiel 34:23, 24). Prophet Isaiah for example, painted vivid pictures of servants who, through serving God, and serving others (42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13 through 53:12). Contextually, Isaiah's servants have three levels of identification: the nation of Israel serving God; a godly and faithful remnant who served God in difficult times; and the Messiah who would become the suffering servant (Stanley M. Horton, 2000).

These examples from Isaiah confirm that the fundamental spirit of the biblical servant first embodies a deep and intense feeling of serving God. Through mediating the covenant and bringing others into God's will, biblical servants had a consuming desire to flesh out essential service to God through ministry to the world around them (Isaiah 52:7-11) (David S. Young, 1999).

Servant leaders in the bible first anchor themselves in service to God and stand ready to serve and lead others, if called. This is what the Bible conveys when it speaks about charismatic leadership, it is a leadership inspired by the Holy Spirit and endowed with the necessary graces or charisma and appropriately recognized by the believing community. Therefore, there is a striking contrast between secular leadership and spiritual leadership.

In secular leadership, people crave for popularity, throw their weight around, play the role of benefactors; and they form the apex of the hierarchical pyramid. In God's kingdom there is a radically new pattern of leadership; the first should serve. This has been often referred to as servant leadership. It is a leadership pattern where the leader is not the boss as the world looks at but where a leader serves with those whom he leads.

Leadership is the function of helping that body of people toward achieving their goals. Clinton says 'a leader functions best as a trusted friend, and the prime means of leadership are the word of God and personal example (Clinton, 1988).' A good leader does not tell people that he is an authority. A good leader has authority on his side and uses it to serve the people, but he is not an authoritarian.

Leadership in the Bible is viewed, first of all, as the influence for good one has on another. Both Sanders and Richards generally accept the fact that leadership in the church differs from leadership in all other domains (Sanders, 1980). It is therefore clear that Christian leaders differ very much from the secular, political and business leadership sphere. It differs in terms of its source, purpose, status and leader-follower situation. A servant leader is the one who submits to the power and authority of the Sovereign God. Jesus made it very clear to the disciples on many occasions during his life and ministry. "It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave" (Mt. 20:26, 27).

According to Greenleaf, leadership is, therefore, ultimately a service. It is a leader-act of influencing a group or person with a blending of both natural and divinely endowed capacities, authority, holistically and divinely shaped behavioural styles toward accomplishing God-given objectives, plans and purposes for and of a group, church and organization through interpersonal influence and specifically given power in a given situation. This includes elements such as leader, follower, organizational and immediate situations as well. He/she is a servant leader (Greenleaf R. , 2011).

The very nature of being a servant as described by Greenleaf was an internalized calling to serve others. Integrity and alignment with ones own beliefs and values were imperative. This alignment should not be confused with a required spiritual conversion or religious affiliation. It is simply referring to an alignment with the core beliefs, values and assumptions that inform and direct the servant leaders' actions, which are more accurately reflected in the teachings of Jesus within a biblical or eastern paradigm (Russell, R.F., and Stone, A.G., 2002).

Therefore, servant leadership unlike other leadership approaches is committed to people reflecting the model of Jesus' leadership. Greenleaf goes on to say that servant leaders are felt to be effective because the needs of followers are so looked after that they reach their full potential and perform at their best. A servant leadership forces one away from self-serving, domineering leadership models, and makes those in charge think harder about how to respect value and motivate people reporting to them (Greenleaf R. K., 1977).



### **3.4.1 Jesus' Teaching on Leadership**

In the bible, Jesus taught and modelled leadership. In doing so, He demonstrated the highest form of leadership. The leadership provided by a servant more to the point of being a bond-servant, one who presents himself to another in servitude. Jesus' use of the term servant (diakonos) clearly communicated with His disciples. They knew the word emphasized the service given on behalf of others. The term also carried the idea of deep devotion. Influenced by the conventions of the day, the disciples were probably puzzled by this crucial lecture on how to climb the leadership ladder. Others serve leaders, they reasoned, but Jesus literally turned this thinking upside down. True Christian leaders are to be devoted to service that focuses on the needs, personal growth, and happiness of others (Young, 2011). In time, the disciples would recognize that Kingdom leadership was not about climbing the ladder, but serving at the bottom.

Jesus' view of a leader as a servant stretches itself across two millennia and informs the church of the 21st century. Jesus' servant-leader concept brazenly defies modern concepts of power, authority, and control as the highest expressions of effective leadership. His concept of the leader as a servant reveals a pattern of leadership that embraces deep humility, disregards personal agendas, and puts others first (Young, 2011). Power-oriented leadership laden with posturing, protectionism, cynicism, and adversarialism may contribute to a low-trust ministry environment in which leadership effectiveness is marginalized.

The New Testament clearly indicates that Jesus' servant teaching served to inspire His disciples. The Book of Acts reveals a caring church in which leaders and followers expressed a mutual and active servant hood toward one another (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37). The leadership in the Early Church chose to follow Jesus' example. Deep humility, a sense of sacrificial service to others, and a willingness to suffer hardship marked these leaders as they emulated Christ's self-imposed humiliation and servant hood (Philippians 2:4-16). The attitudes and behaviours of New Testament leaders allowed them to lead by example and principle (1 Peter 5:1-4). As servants, leaders understood the importance of training others to serve the body of Christ through their personal gifts and ministries (Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 4:8-11).

One of the fundamental characteristics of God is to become such a servant. God, in Christ, demonstrated this aspect of His character in sending Jesus to be our Guide and Model, as well as our Saviour. This concept is expanded by the words of Jesus Himself in Matthew 20:26-28 and Matthew 23:11-12.

It must not be this way among you! Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave-just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20: 26-28). "The greatest among you will be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted". (Matthew 23:11-12.)

The book of Isaiah 61:1, 2 is another passage that talks of servant hood. Jesus read this passage in the synagogue at Nazareth to inaugurate His ministry. Although the term servant is not used in Luke 4:18, 19, these verses contain important ideas that connect them with the other servant passages. Jesus' mission to the despondent and

broken people and His own sufferings solidly connected Him with the servant of Isaiah. Although Jews in New Testament times applied Isaiah's servant prophecies to the Messiah, they avoided attributing the sufferings to Him. Jesus created a new way of thinking about ministry and leadership when He clearly associated himself with the restorative ministry of the suffering servant, who served through great sacrifice and ignoble death (Isaiah 53:1-9).

Jesus understood His mission and He clearly articulated as an attitude for leadership in the Church He promised to build. Following an argument among His disciples about greatness in the Kingdom, Jesus turned common assumptions and values of leadership upside down through a revolutionary teaching (Young, *Rediscovering Servant Leadership.*, 2011). After arriving at Capernaum, He questioned them: "What were you arguing about on the road?" He then sat down and called the Twelve to Him. He spoke with intentionality: "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last and the servant of all" (Mark 9:33-35).

Positions of leadership often confer upon servant leaders more power over others than warranted. The subtle temptations of power and position led first-century leaders to challenge emerging leaders to live lives of humility and service (Young, *Rediscovering Servant Leadership.*, 2011). Addressing his fellow leaders, the apostle Peter outlined the attitudes that characterize servant leaders. Ignoring the inherent power of a position, a biblically based leadership focuses on demonstrating a genuine concern for people through tenderly serving them, modelling the spirit and attitudes of Christ. In essence, servant leaders are caring shepherds who lovingly protect and

nurture those under their care. And if required, would bleed and die for the welfare of their flock (1 Peter 5:2-4).

Unselfish servant leadership refuses to rest on the inherent power of a position and desires to empower and release others for ministry. The servant leader does not hold back gifted people in a spirit of insecurity (Young, *Rediscovering Servant Leadership*, 2011). Born aloft by the unselfish spirit of Christ, the servant leader is not happy unless others are soaring. Inspired by the vision of creating other servants, the servant leader is dedicated to equipping and liberating others to fulfil God's purposes in their lives and find meaningful expressions of Christian ministry through servant hood.

Church leadership is not based on any inherent or acquired authority. Rather, Christian church leaders are mere instruments of Christ; what they do they do in His name, (Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21-23; Matthew 16:18-19; 18:18-20) When they act, they do so in the name of Christ. Only when a Church leader acts according to the mind of Christ does he act with His authority; this attitude precludes doing anything merely to enhance our own position or prestige. Christ's Spirit will always remind a leader of his identity and power of influence, "You are a servant of servants; you can do enormous good if you don't care about getting credit for it." Servant Leadership, as thus described, is not about power or position, although it can be present in one who has power as well as position. Rather, it is about a life modelled after the life of Jesus Christ, Who lived for the express purpose of serving others.

Servant leaders are one with their community. They listen, honour, trust, help and encourage others-treating them with dignity and respect (Spears L. C., 2011). This model of leadership is a radical one because it represents a dramatic departure from the egocentric concept of leadership that seems to pervade the current secular thinking. In a world where power and position rule, the idea of Christian leadership, as defined herein, is difficult to understand and even more difficult to convey but once internalized and applied, it is the most influential leadership model.

### **3.5 The Secular Foundation of Leadership**

The ‘secular concept of leadership’ is generally used in reference to non-religious organizations and institutions. The Bible makes reference to this concept of leadership and a number of authors who have discussed it, point out its advantages and disadvantages. The secular concepts of leadership will therefore be discussed from the biblical and secular point of view.

The Secular conception of leadership on one hand puts the ability of the leader above all other considerations. They lay emphasis on salaries, bonuses, benefits, position, promotions and the worth of a person based on what he can do or produce. If you can only sweep the floor for example, you are worth almost nothing, you are easily replaceable; you can be paid peanuts. On the other hand, if you can bring in the millions for the company, you will be worth a lot. Your salary, benefits, promotion prospect, future with the company is assured.

In the article *Postmodernism and its impact*, the writer looks back to secularism in the Biblical times. He says that the Pharisees made the same mistake. They lived according to a rigorous (and hypocritical) religious moral system and tried to impose it on everyone else. They according to Jesus tied up heavy loads and put them on people's shoulders (Matt. 23:1). They judged and rejected Jesus because he refused to conform to their values (Postmodernism and Its Impact, 2011). This article gives an important background to the influence of secularization from the biblical times. It also gives a biblical approach that should be embraced by leaders today.

The modern concept of secular as applied to leadership implies that there are some areas of human life and activity that may legitimately be separated from religion (Waggoner, 2010). These areas are now generally presumed to include civil governments, politics, education, industry, science, medicine, journalism, business, transportation, commerce, entertainment, law, economics, ethics, foreign affairs, and environmental issues among others. As the process of secularization continues more and more areas of life will come to be considered secular while the realm of the religious or sacred will become much more restricted (Wilson B. , 1969).

Secularists often argue that religious people should confine their religion to matters of worship and attending to the spiritual needs of individuals in their private lives. Since this line of thought looks at religion as being a private matter, they contend that religion should have nothing to do with public life especially with regard to leadership. Hence, preachers and other religious leaders are not generally welcomed in those areas of life most people now consider secular (Hitchcock, What Is Secular

Humanism?, 1982). The Bible, however, knows no area of life that should be separated from religious principles. The Bible clearly declares, “Whatever you do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...” (Colossians 3:17).

In Matthew 20:25 Jesus said, "You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them. And their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you." In this portion of scripture, Jesus was making a contrast between the secular concept of leadership and that of Biblical leadership. The immediate context of the text mentioned above gives one a better picture of the secular concept of leadership from the biblical perspective (Wilson B. , 1969). The mother of James and John (the sons of Zebedee) was asking Jesus for specific high positions for her sons in the kingdom of God. In secular leadership, the focus is on position and control. The higher the position a person finds himself/herself, the greater the control and authority one has. Also Jesus showed through contrast that this kind of leadership does not focus on serving, but to be served.

There are also scriptural accounts in the Old Testament that portray the differences between secular and Biblical concepts of leadership. In I Samuel 8:4-6, the Israelites asked Prophet Samuel to give them a king to rule over them and Samuel was displeased by the request. According to Deuteronomy 17:14-20, God had plans for the nation to have a king, but that king must be distinguished from those of the Gentiles. But when the people asked for a king, they said that Samuel should appoint for them a king such as all the nations have.

A close examination of the Deuteronomy passage mentioned above reveals characteristics of secular leadership. God in the Old Testament made a clear contrast between the leadership he approves of for his people Israel and that of Gentile nations. It was a contrast between the secular and the Biblical concepts of leadership. From the biblical standpoint the following are typical of secular concept of leadership: the amassing of wealth, lack of reverence for God, and a sense of superiority to all.

The Bible does not only discuss the concept of secular leadership but also gives a vivid example of the devastating effect such leadership concept can result to. In 1 Kings 12:1-7, the Bible records the circumstances that led to the division of Israel. Joyce Peel observes, "Rehoboam sees royalty in terms of privilege and absolute power. He ignores the advice of older, experienced counsellors and encouraged by his arrogant friends, he returns a harsh answer. The result is the cry, 'to your tents, O Israel' The enraged Israelites marched out of Rehoboam's" presence and set up Jeroboam as their king. In this observation, Peel has shown that it was Rehoboam's concept of leadership that resulted in the division of the nation. His concept was that of the kings of other nations, who used their power and position to force their subjects to serve them. This was really a practical demonstration of the secular concept of leadership.

### **3.6 The Traditional Foundation of Leadership**

A traditional definition of leadership looks at Leadership as an interpersonal influence directed toward the achievement of a goal or goals ('A definition of Leadership.', 2011). Three important parts of this definition are the terms interpersonal, influence,



and goal. First, interpersonal means between persons. Thus, a leader has more than one person (group) to lead. Second, influence is the power to affect others. Finally, goal is the end one strives to attain ('A definition of Leadership.', 2011).

The above concept of leadership is heavily drawn from a sociological perspective. This is because it is still strongly recognized in most African societies. In many of the African countries for example, the social and ethnic backgrounds of individuals do influence their whole perspective of life, including both the religious and the secular.

According to the traditional view, there are certain "traits" and characteristic of leaders which distinguish leaders from non-leaders (<http://expertscolumn.com>). The leader possesses power (authority, influence, control), either through his or her personal traits, style, or position (<http://www.leadershipreview.org>). Traditional leadership theories focused more on the traits, behavioural styles, and charisma that give leaders power in the context of certain situations.

Basically, this traditional definition of leadership says that a leader influences more than one person toward a goal. In this model, whether the leaders choose to act in a transactional (incentive-driven) or transformational (empowering) way toward their subordinates, the hierarchical relationships between them and the followers are spelled out (<http://www.leadershipreview.org>). Consistent with the notion that leadership is concerned with change; the traditional model views the "leader" basically as a change agent-one who fosters change. Leaders, then, are not necessarily those who merely hold formal "leadership" positions; on the contrary, all people are

potential leaders. Furthermore, since the concept of leadership and leader implied that there are other people involved; leadership is, by definition, a collective or group process. A leader therefore is a man or woman whether young or old, who looks to others to get the work done. If the leader takes charge, the work gets done. However, if the leader does not take charge, it is most likely that the people looking up to him for leadership may expect him to do the work all by him/her self.

From the biblical records, one can have the spiritual dimension of traditional concept of leadership. The Bible makes specific references to Jewish traditions in Matthew chapter 15 and Mark chapter 7. In Matthew 15:14, the Pharisees and teachers of the law questioned Jesus because His disciples had broken the tradition of the elders. In response, Jesus asked them - "And why do you break the command of God?" There is a twist in Jesus' response to the Pharisees. He did not focus on the issue but on leadership and authority. These elders had equated their human commentary or interpretation of divine laws with divine revelation. Jesus recognized their leadership but questioned their authority. Their leadership, even though not acceptable was recognized. Unlike the western world, some African countries still recognizes traditional leaders like the Buganda kingdom in Uganda even though their authority may not be acknowledged by many. However, within their own sphere of operation, they are not only recognized as leaders but their authorities are also acknowledged. The Bible also acknowledges the facet of strong traditional leadership that had great influence on people.

Magbaily Fyle makes the following observation about how leaders were recognized in African societies or within an ethnic group. He says that a great hunter or a popular "moriman" (Quranic scholar) easily becomes a leader. As he further states, warfare was the most important factor in recognizing a leader. One who had led people in a victorious battle has the right to lead (Fyle, 1981). F.K. Buah in his book, *Ancient World* mentions that leaders were recognized on the basis of age and the fact that it can be passed down from one family member to another. He further shows how this indigenous concept of traditional leadership has been influenced by western concept over the years. Education has also become an important factor in the enhancement of traditional leadership (Buah, 1960). However in this concept of leadership, the followers usually respect the leaders' position and decisions.

### **3.7 The Challenge of Traditional and Secular Leadership on the Church**

Leadership is a critical issue in our Kenyan society. A leader holds a very important office in our society and people looks up to him constantly for direction. The threat of traditional and secular ideology on leadership in the church should never be trivialized. A leader both in the church and the society is a symbol of unity and purpose. Mutahi Ngunyi observes that as a country we are too far leader – centred. If the leader does not speak for a week we get terribly nervous: we begin to believe that the country is falling apart (Okesson, 2007).

The danger of traditional and secular ideology can be more clarified from the words of Chinua Achebe in his book *Things Fall apart* where he says... he (*secularization*) has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart (Achebe,

1958). Achebe's words only give a glimpse of what secularism may end up doing in our Kenyan society. The sad reality of the traditional and secular leadership ideology is that it has not spared the church. In order that we may understand how this has impacted on Church leadership, we will consider some of its manifestations.

First, the spiritual challenge begins once one goes beyond the policy and practice level into the realm of beliefs and values that one espouses as one's worldview. Soh Guan Chin observes that at the heart of secularism is agnosticism. He also underscores that for one to understand it as fair and pragmatic policy for the conduct of social institutions, one has to adopt it as the true view of what reality is, and in doing so, many unconsciously, distort their view about God, about man, about the world and reality as any religious view (Chin, 2010).

The above therefore changes what is sound social policy to become adopted as the justification of a type of belief that says that God or gods, belief or disbelief in such is unimportant. This is a type of agnosticism that is seen as pervasive and justified in society.

Second, the very definition and meaning of what is leadership in the Christian church's understanding is challenged by secularism. For it is virtually certain that even when the Christians seek to define and understand spiritual leadership, they often at the forefront of their mind have what leadership is in society today. Joshua YJ Su however points to the problem of looking at leadership in this dimension. He notes that:

The society that we live in is secular society. Whether we look at political leadership, business leadership, leadership of charities and societies, we are looking at secular forms of leadership. We are in the position of being followers and not initiators or innovators. Seldom does church or Christian leadership become the model for secular leadership. Far too often and widespread is the case that church and Christian leadership is often modelled after secular leadership (Su, 2010).

Last, since secularism puts God and the spiritual realities in other domains of life often considered as being not so important, secularism therefore gives the green light to all kinds of humanism, where man and his ability becomes the centre stage of life and reality. Yet they are all called upon as the justification of an agnostic and man-centred world where man is the master of his own destiny and God is an optional extra that can be ignored. The above therefore shows that secularism is very destructive if embraced by any spiritual leader.

In the recent past, Christian leaders in Kenya have been accused over the Media as not being objective in commenting on political issues in the country. Some leaders from the National Council of Churches (NCCCK) have also come out clearly to admit that they did not live up to their expectation as leaders in the recent period when the country was hit by post election violence after the December 2007 general elections.

Nikko Tanui in his article *“Hard times for preachers in the village,”* says,

The respect Wachungaji’s (Church Leaders) once enjoyed in the village has been eroded. This is especially after national Council of Churches of Kenya leaders came out to own up that church leaders could have contributed to the chaos that rocked the country as they rose took sides in the elections (Tanui, 2008).

Some of the above have only arisen because the leaders have embraced the secular approach to leadership rather than modelling the biblical teaching on the same.

### **3.8 Leadership within the African Church**

In the African Church, there are laid down principles as to how leaders are chosen or acknowledged. The way of election has been one among others held by many churches. Such elections are usually preceded by nomination; which could be done before or during the elections. When the process of choosing or acknowledging leaders is by elections, the obvious question that arises is: 'who is eligible to stand?'

Formal education in many churches has become a criterion for leadership. In fact, many considered it the most important criterion. For example, a study conducted by the Anglican Church in Sierra Leone found that the elderly people in the main-line churches sought formal education, in the theological field as one of the qualifications for one to be qualified to enter the pastorate (Kagema, 2011).

In some evangelical churches, there are certain positions that one cannot hold without a university degree. On the other hand, many independent churches considered spirituality or charismatic gifting as the most important in the criteria for leadership. Many charismatic leaders, by virtue of the fact that they planted the church assumed the position of leadership and acknowledge other leaders by their gifts. These leaders however do not subject themselves to election.

If however they do, it is certain that they would have ensured the safety of their position by some clause in the constitution. However, in both mainstream and evangelical churches, individuals aspire to leadership because they are convinced that God has called them. Charismatic and evangelical churches can be very welcoming in acknowledging these leaders, if their leadership abilities are obvious. It should be pointed out that this way of acknowledging leaders have opened the church to dangers, As Oswald Sanders observes, "In many cultures today where Christian leadership carries prestige and privilege, people aspire to leadership for reasons quite unworthy and self seeking (Sanders, 1980). Though some who have said they have been called to leadership have proved unworthy, it is still worth noting that churches acknowledge leaders in response to their personal call. The aspect of call is still very strong in many of the mainstream churches.

Having discussed the present practices of recognizing leaders in the African Church, it is in place to see which of the concepts of leadership already discussed, the present practices fit into. In the first place, leaders who were acknowledged through election fit into the secular concept of leadership. This concept does not consider calling. It focuses more on qualification and bureaucracy. Second, recognizing leaders because of their charismatic gifts or leadership abilities portrays more of the traditional concept of leadership. Traditional leaders were recognized because of the special abilities or qualities they possess. They may continue to be leaders until someone with greater abilities comes around. Third, the Catholics and some other churches still consider calling to be the main criterion for leadership. This shows that in the African

church, there is an aspect of the biblical concept as far as choosing or recognizing their leaders is concerned.

The biblical teachings seem to portray God as being in the business of cultivating, moulding, processing, and intervening in the lives of the people in order to develop them for his purposes. Clinton notes that, "When Christ calls leaders to Christian ministry He intends to develop them to their full potential. Each of us in leadership is responsible to continue developing in accordance with God's processing all of our lives" (Clinton, 1988).

The call and development of Christian leaders is however not an easy task. The situation is even more compounded with the emergence of secular ideologies. This has in turn made servant leadership advocated by majority of contemporary scholars and theologians quite difficult. Harvey Cox who immensely became popular and influential for a book on theology makes a theological case for the above. He says; that the problem is that with the world of declining religion...has begun to change in ways that few people anticipated. A new age that some call it "post-modern" has begun to appear (Cox, 1965). Cox goes further into saying that the challenge that modern theology took on was to define and defend the faith in an era of religious decline, the task of a post-modern theology is to interpret the Christian message at a time when the rebirth of religion rather than its disappearance, poses the most serious question (Cox, 1965). Cox words point to the reality of secularism in the post-modern society, which should be a wakeup call for the spiritual leaders to fight hard against secularist ideologies with regard to leadership.



Michael T. Mckibben and Benjamin D. Williams in *Principles of Christian Leadership* go on to prove the significance of servant leadership from a Christian viewpoint. He says, “Christian leadership in action is perceiving and articulating the vision of the kingdom of God and effectively defining its incarnation, following Christ’s example of service (Michael T. Mckibben and Benjamin D. Williams , 2002).” In *Kingdom- Centred leadership* he goes on to argue, “Christian leaders have the responsibility of leading the members of Christ’s body toward and into that kingdom...nowhere else.” He goes on to say, “Leadership holds special sacramental significance because it includes the opportunity and responsibility to serve and to be channel of communion, love, and grace” (Michael T. Mckibben and Benjamin D. Williams, 2002). The above quotation provides valuable insights on the need for servant leadership in our secularized society.

Servant leadership is a lifetime of God's lessons, and each one will be unique for each servant leader. God will take a leader or person of his choice through many leadership developmental processes or stages on his/her way to a lifetime of service (Clinton, 1988). People do expect that leadership within the church should differ from leadership in all other domains. This is because Jesus made it very clear to the disciples on many occasions that the path to greatness was through service (Mt. 20:26, 27). This should then be the primary reason to rediscover our foundational bases. Clinton defines development as ". . . a measure of a leader's changing capacity to influence in terms of various factors over time; it is also used to indicate the actual patterns, processes, and principles that summarize development" (Clinton, 1988). The

task of training church leadership is, therefore, a vital aspect of the mission mandate. Therefore, "Effective (servant) leaders recognize leadership selection and development as a priority function. Effective leaders increasingly perceive their ministries in terms of a lifetime perspective" (Clinton, 1988).

### **3.9 Conclusion**

The procedure of the presentation was as follows: First, the biblical concept of leadership was discussed; second, the secular concept and third the traditional concept. Finally the leadership practices in the present day church were discussed and comparisons made with the three basic concepts to determine what concept is prevalent in present day African church.

It should however be underscored that the secular and traditional leadership concepts are prevalent even within the Kenyan churches. The biblical leadership concept, which in reality should be the norm in the Kenyan church, has little or no recognition at all in practice.

The leadership concept of some Kenyan churches has been heavily influenced by formal education, which has been considered as pre-requisite for position within the church. In some other churches, people in leadership are said to have been chosen into leadership position because of their charisma or by 'spirituality' and as such, these leaders function more like traditional leaders who do not tolerate competition.

In as much as Church leadership needs both formal education and charismatic gifts, the Church in Kenya must as a matter of urgency return to the biblical concept of leadership. A leadership that portrays the leaders as servants of the people they lead and not their masters. A leadership that follows Jesus' leadership example in word and practice. A leadership that is out to reproduce themselves in others and not only serving their own egocentric course. This does not mean that the Kenyan church has nothing to learn from the secular concept of leadership. There are some positive elements of leadership in the secular concept of leadership which the church can, and must learn, but the biblical concept must and should always be the norm for Church leadership in Kenya.

## CHAPTER FOUR

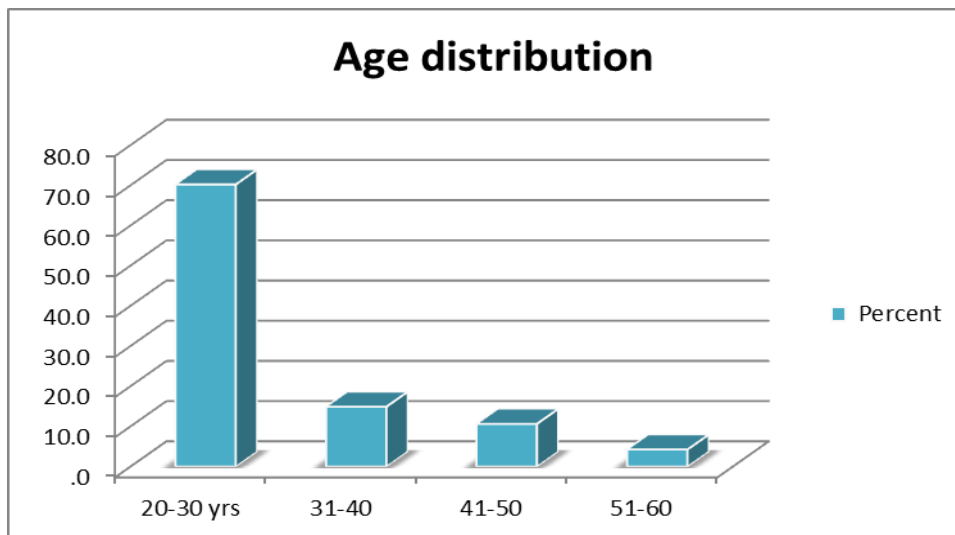
### FIELD DATA PRESENTATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents an analysis of the results of the data collected from the field research. The analysis was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in performing the analysis of the secularization process in Kenya.

The respondents were of different ages. The majority of the respondents were aged between 20-30 years. Only 5% of the respondents were aged between 51-60 years. These findings demonstrate that majority population in the three churches are young people. The age distribution of the interviewees is demonstrated in the graph below.

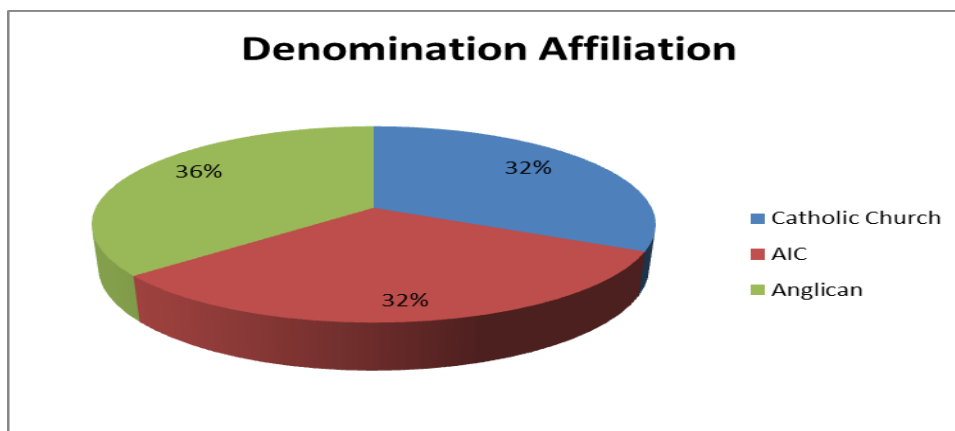
#### Age Distribution



*Figure 1: Age Distribution*

### **Denominational Affiliation**

The questionnaires administered were distributed amongst the various denominations which the interview targeted. The questionnaires were all aimed at getting to know the views of both the laity and clergy on secularization and its implication for church leadership in Kenya as exemplified case of Eldoret. The churches targeted were the Africa Inland Church, the Anglican Church of Kenya and the Roman Catholic Church. Of the 60 respondents in the three churches, the distributions of the respondents were as follows: the Roman Catholic Church comprised of 32% like wise to the Africa Inland Church, the Anglican Church comprised of 36%. The distributions are presented in the chart below.

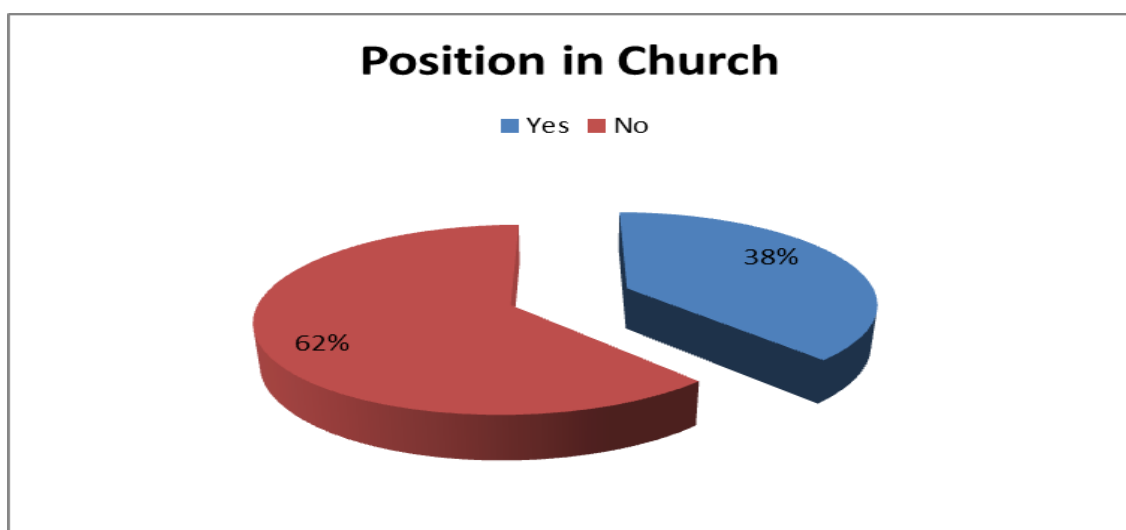


*Figure 2: Denomination Affiliation*

### **Position in church**

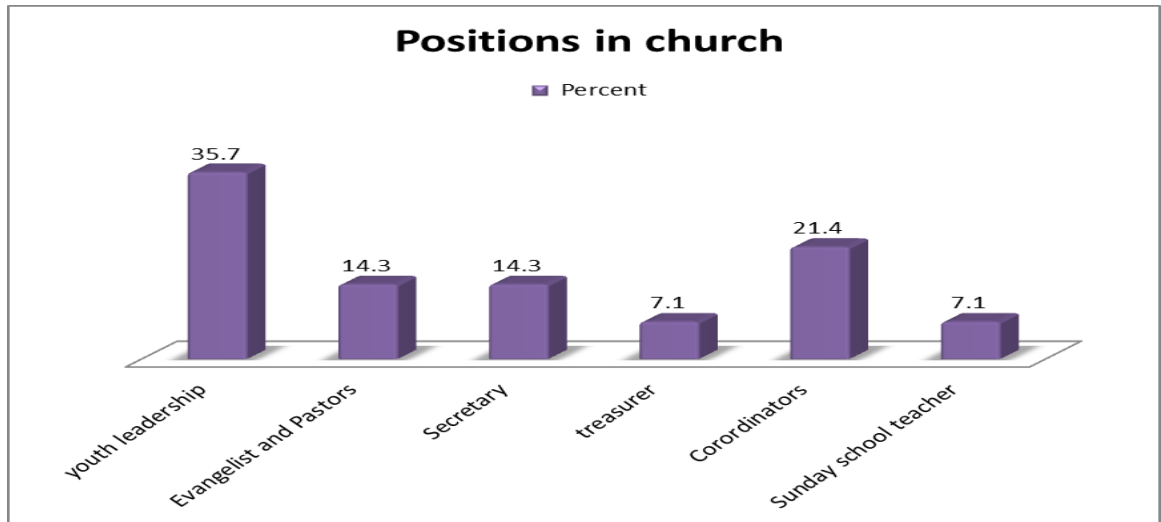
To identify the effect of the secularization process in our churches today, the researcher sought to know the positions held by the respondents in church. The

findings indicate that majority of the respondents did not hold any position of responsibility in church. This was good because the respondents could freely give their honest view on what they thought of their church leaders without having to withhold anything. This is demonstrated in the pie chart below;



*Figure 3: Position in the Church*

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the perception of the secularization process in church leadership, the researcher sought to find out the different church leadership positions held by those in leadership. The findings were presented in the frequency table below:

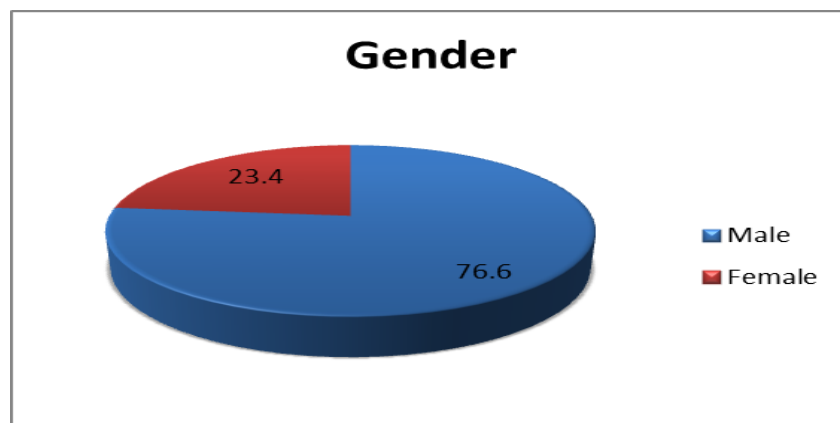


**Figure 4: Positions in church**

In interpreting the frequency table above, we see that a huge percentage of the respondents were youth leaders. This corresponds to the earlier statistics in which the age bracket of 20-30 years had the highest number of respondents. It also confirms that many people who attend these churches are the youth. The reason for this could be attributed to the many colleges and universities within Eldoret town that many young people have come for studies. The positions such as Sunday school teaching and the treasurer is taken by only a few members. There are a relatively large number of coordinators. This shows that there are many youthful people taking over different leadership positions in the church today. It also means that many of the respondents fear the position of the treasurer and Sunday school teaching and this maybe for fear of the commitments that come with the two offices.

### Gender and Marital Status

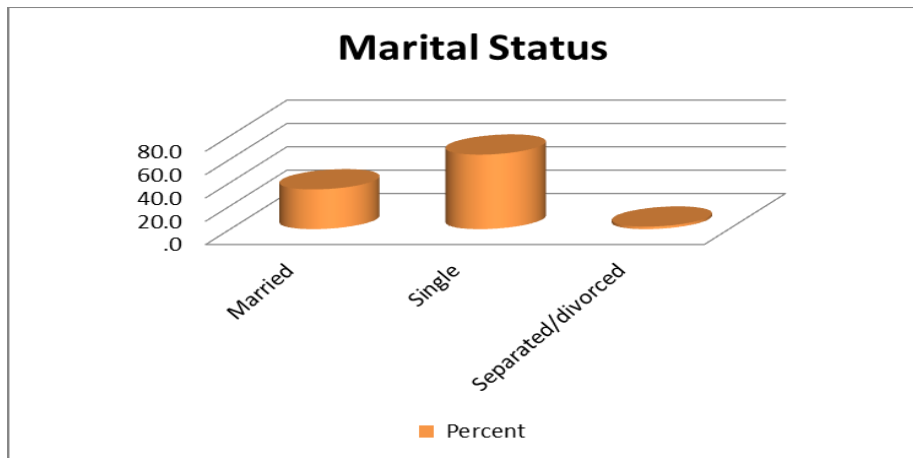
Most of the respondents were male. This shows the disparity in the male and female population. In terms of openness to share information about those in church leadership.



*Figure 5: Gender*

The study also found out that most of the respondents were single. This also corresponds to the many respondents of the age bracket 20- 30years. This shows that there is a huge population of youthful people in the church these days. The married respondents are relatively few. Very few are separated or divorced. This could be as a result of the church operations, which include young church members required to work in the church. It could also mean that the young people are more interested in the church activities than the married, separated or divorced. The purpose of information on age was to give diverse views across all ages and to note also the dominant age group in the three churches.



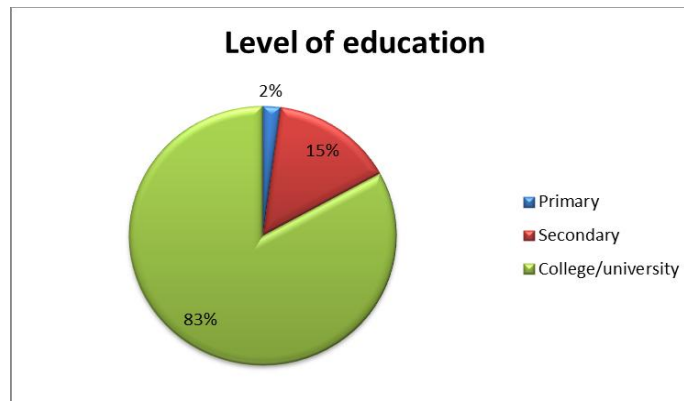


**Figure 6: Marital Status**

### **Level of Education Attained**

Reasonable percentages (83%) of respondents have attained college or university education. This shows that most of the members are literate. It also shows that most of the interviewees who cared to respond to the interview were literate and as such were more objective in evaluating their church leaders.

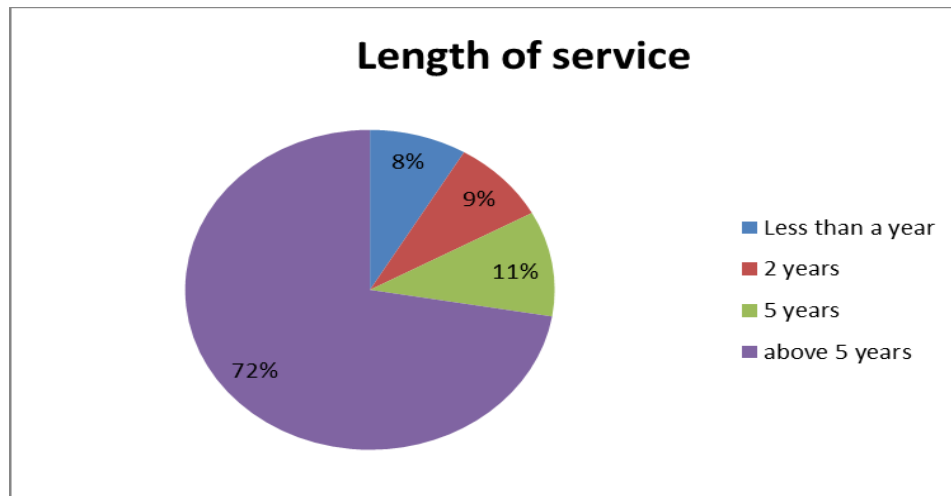
Only 2% of the respondents shown in chart 4 did not go beyond primary school education. This shows that most of the members in the three urban churches have attained university or college education. This could be attributed to the fact that the three churches from which the interviewees were picked are urban churches meaning that majority of the people who attend church service here are people working or students in colleges and universities within the town.



*Figure 7: Level of Education*

### **Length of Service in Church**

Most of the respondents have been members of the church for five or more years. This is ironical in that around 61% hold no position in the church. This could mean that many people are not interested with leadership positions. According to one lay person, some people in the church these days because of the nature work, Sunday is the only day they would want to spend with their families and as such may not want to be added other demanding responsibilities in the church (Omondi, 2011). This could be a demonstration of secularization process. In chapter two of this research, we found out that secularization is a 'slippery' term in that the more or the less people in the church could be a manifestation of it. The same can also be applied to leadership roles. It could also mean that leadership in the church no longer commands the respect in the society; it could also indicate that church positions are dominated by only a few members while the rest would rather be in the church but not committed to church programs.



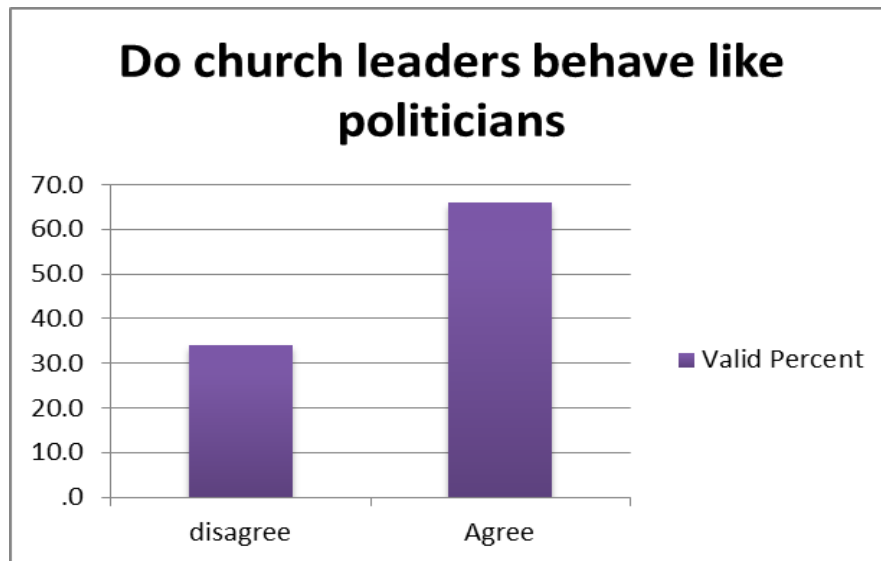
*Figure 8: Length of Service*

#### **4.2 Discussion and Analysis of Field Data**

In this section we shall analyse the insights and contributions from the interviews that were gathered while conducting the research. At this stage the respondents had the power and the liberty to define and to distinguish the status of their churches with regard to the secularization process. The questionnaire had open ended questions to allow the respondents to speak out openly and to explain effectively what they think of their church leadership.

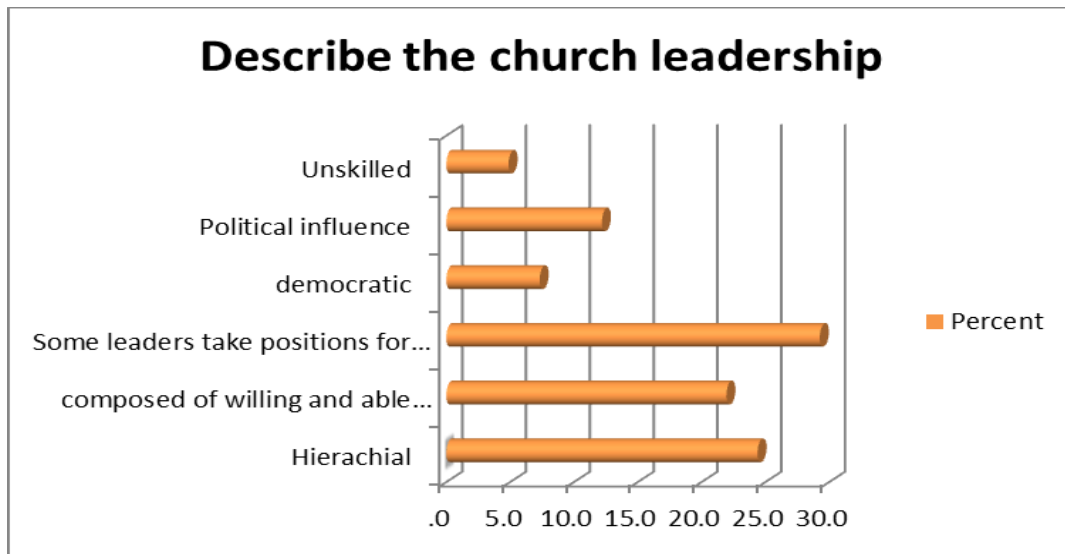
Among the objectives of the study was to investigate the effect of secularization on the effectiveness of church leadership models. To achieve this objective, the respondents were asked if they perceive their church leaders as behaving the same way as the politicians. From the literature review, we underscored that a church leader recognizes that as a leader, one should exercise his spiritual gifts under the call of God to serve the people he is leading to achieving the goals God has given them and the

end of which is glorifying Christ. The politicians' view of leadership is generally for ones' self-glorification and not necessarily to glorify Christ. The frequency table (Figure 9) below shows how they responded:



***Figure 9: Do Church Leaders Behave like Politicians in their Exercise of Leadership?***

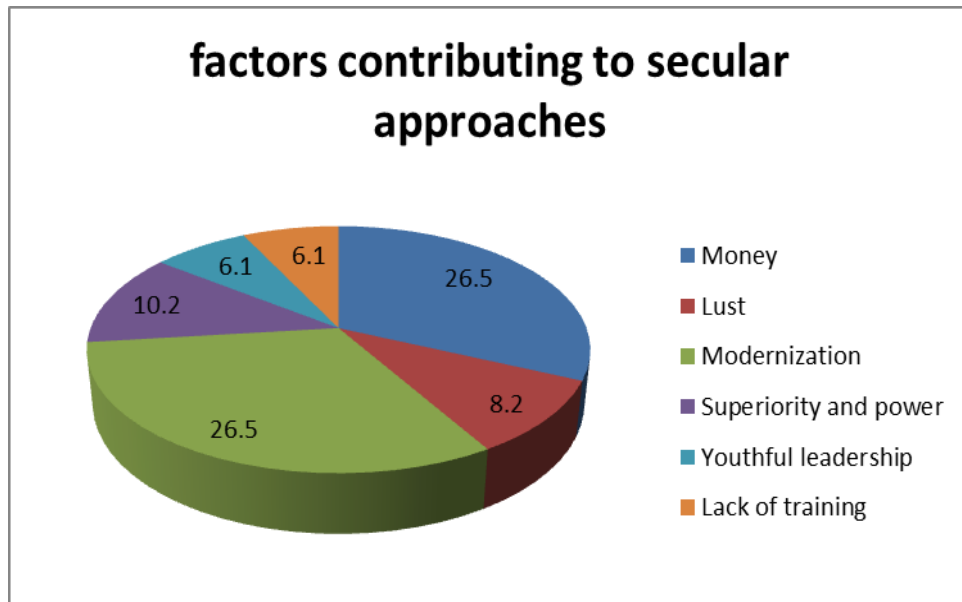
From the above findings, it is clear that many church leaders are perceived to behave like politicians with regard to their leadership styles; about 65% of the population interviewed fully support this fact. In fact, an interviewee mentioned that some of the pastors in the church nowadays seem to emulate what they see politicians do in their political rallies (Kibet, 2011). From the 35% of the respondents who disagreed, a vast majority of them are church leaders and clergy while the other 65% of the respondents who agree did not hold any leadership position.



***Figure 10: Describe the Church Leadership***

When asked to describe the kind of leaders found in the church, the findings showed varied results on the perception of church leadership. A small percentage indicated that the church leaders are unskilled which was followed closely by those who think the church leadership is democratic. About 50% of the respondents indicated the church leadership has a lot of political and secular influence. On the other hand 23% of the respondents described the church leadership as composed of willing and able leaders, we also found about 24% of them saying the church leadership is hierarchical. 30% of those interviewed categorically stated that many church leaders take positions for their own gain and not so much to serve God's people. This agrees with the initial hypothesis of the study that the church leaders behave in the same way as the politicians who have also been accused of taking leadership for their own gain.

The chart below shows that many of the respondents do perceive the church leadership as embracing secular approaches in their leadership.



**Figure 11: Factors Contributing to Secular Approaches**

Some of the factors they mentioned as having led to this change are listed below;

**Money:** The biblical teaching on this is that the love of money is the root of all evil. According to 26.5 percent of the respondents love for money has been a major challenge to all church leaders. This forms one of the biggest factors contributing to secular approaches in our church leadership today. According to one of the church members, the desire for money has led many church leaders into using un biblical approaches to get more money from the church faithful (Koech, 2010). The biblical teaching in 1Timothy 3, teaches that an overseer or deacon must be self-controlled and this is in all areas including finances.

**Lust:** The desire for material things is also a contributing factor to secular approaches today and these statistics forms 8.2% of our research respondents. Like the love of money, the bible warns those in leadership positions in the church to be free from lusting after material things. The bible advocates for contentment with the materials one has as being the great freedom. According to one AIC pastor, the people holding leadership positions in the church need to be encouraged to go back to the biblical teaching on material things and exercise contentment (Ng'ang'a, 2010).

**Modernization:** The transition from our cultural heritage to the western way of living has formed a major contribution to the factors that bring about secular approach in church leadership. This formed 26.5%. Aping modern trends is a thing that has to be tamed for us not to completely sink into the secular approaches in church leadership. This finding agrees with secularisation theory a theoretical framework from which the study was developed. This theory states that as the modern society advances it will become increasingly secular and religion will become increasingly hollow. The bible however in Romans 12:1-2 strongly warns the Christians not to conform any longer to the patterns of the world but to be agents of transformation. According to one church member, the church leaders should show the way in leadership and not follow what the secular leaders have to offer (Lagat, 2010).

**Superiority and power:** The feeling of being superior and the desire to be in power has also been a contributing factor to secular approaches according to 10.2% of the respondents. This finding goes against what leadership in the church should look like. In the Christian leadership theory, a theoretical framework from which church

leadership in this study was based; leadership is viewed as coming from God. It is divinely imparted to us by the spirit of God. The objective of Christian leader in this case is to exercise leadership in order to influence the people of God towards the accomplishment of His plan for their lives. The followers in this theory are always to be considered as belonging to God; they are never to be regarded as belonging to the leader. The biblical teaching in 1 Peter 5:1-4 warns the elders (leaders) to shepherd God's flock serving as overseers (servants) and not lording it over those under their care. The church leaders should look at leadership as service opportunity and not a chance to be superior or powerful.

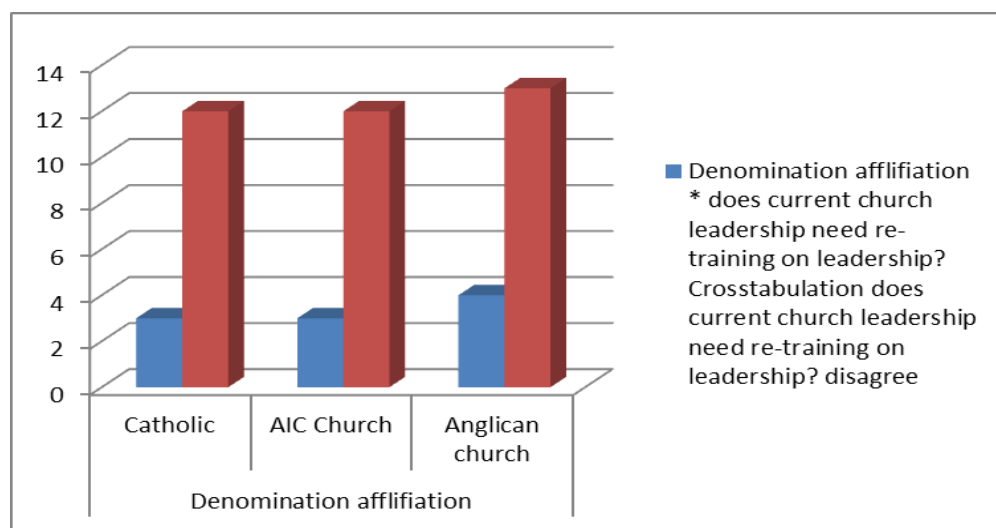
**Youthful leadership:** Over 6% of our respondents stated that the youth today and their leaders have significantly contributed to the secular approach to church leadership in our churches. To reverse this trend, the biblical teaching in 1 Peter 5:5 encourages the young people to be submissive to the older and learn from them. The young people in church leadership should seek wisdom from the older people who have had the experience in church leadership.

**Lack of training:** A number of those interviewed also attributed the lack of training and exposure to be among the factors contributing to secularization in church leadership. They associate lack of proper foundations to education as a factor that makes them easily manipulated by those who are learned. According to one priest, to minimize this tendency, the people taking over leadership positions in the church should be taken through some form of formal training where they can be taught the



fundamentals of church leadership and how it differs from other forms of leadership in the areas other than the church (Rotich, 2011).

Another objective of the study was to propose amicable leadership replacement model in reversing the negative effect of secularisation on church leadership structure. To achieve this objective, the researcher sought to find the views of the respondents on what should be done to solve this problem. Their responses are presented in the frequency distribution table below:



**Figure 12: Retraining the Leadership by Denominations**

According to the above findings, an interesting statistic was depicted here as the respondents from the Catholic Church felt most of their church leaders have been trained but they need just a little training to change their leadership style. The

Anglican Church respondents on the other hand had the vast majority indicating their leaders need serious re-training on leadership as compared to the respondents from the AIC church. According to the distribution table above, we can also capture the fact that many of the respondents from all the three churches strongly feel that the church needs to do more training and retraining of its leaders on the new challenges facing church leadership in the dynamic 21<sup>st</sup> century as a means of reversing the negative effect of secularization on church leadership. This is because change is inevitable in any area and church leadership is not an exemption.

According to one of the respondents, the area of retraining for the church leaders should mainly touch is on the servant leadership model a leadership model that was taught by Jesus Christ (Mutai, 2011). The servant leadership model is one in which the leader serves the people he leads. The followers in this model are an end in themselves rather than a means to an organizational purpose or bottom line. The leader as a servant, is devoted to serving the needs of the members, and develops employees to bring out the best in them. As noted in the literature review, He (leader) facilitates personal growth in all who work with him and builds a sense of community within the organization. According to one church deacon, servant leadership forces one away from self-serving, domineering leadership models, and makes those in charge to think more about how to respect value and motivate people reporting to them (Kemei, 2010). By emphasizing the value of the individual over and above anything else, the servant leader demonstrates the influence of existentialism in its model.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

From the research findings, it can be noted that the issue of secularization in the church leadership is exhibited. The people in church leadership are no longer living up to their expectations as church leaders. In the three churches from which the interview was carried out, it was clear in the minds of majority of the respondents that secularization has impacted on church leaders. There is still a great problem in the church as its current leadership is not adequately trained on the challenge posed by secularization. There is therefore, a need for the leaders in the church and especially the clergy to be re trained again on sound biblical principles of church leadership. This would finally help the church to live up to its expectation as salt and light of the world.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary and Conclusions

This study has attempted to highlight the challenge that secularisation poses on church leadership in Kenya today. The fundamental area of concern in this study has been based on an assumption that secular ideas have negatively influenced the Christian concept of servant leadership in Kenya. The challenge for the theologians and students of religion therefore is to present a biblical approach to leadership as an antidote to the modern secular view of leadership.

We have also noted that in the context of leadership in Kenya today, secularism is still a major challenge that threatens servant leadership. The words of Watson Omulokoli in his article *Leadership training for churches in Africa*, captures the heart of the problem when he says,

The church in Africa (Kenya inclusive) can ill-afford to remain out of step for long with the general trends in the continent and among its people. It augurs ill for the future of the church if, remaining myopic to these developments it fails to devise adequately the ways and means of grappling with this ever-shifting environment (Omulokoli, 1992).

It is important for us to note therefore that the church in Kenya suffers from a shortage in number and the quality of leaders this maybe because of many leaders embracing the secular leadership ideology. Okesson's call for the theologians on his part is note worthy. He says, 'the theologian's task arises out of concrete issues, which

are affecting the lives and faith of the people of God' (Gregg, 2004). The author believes that leadership is one of this issues that deserves an urgent attention.

The author in this case strongly believes that a biblical approach to leadership is the best way forward in Kenya. This leadership approach will not only solve the leadership crisis that faces our country (Kenya) but will also go a long way into bringing the wholeness in leadership which is the ultimate purpose that God intended for any form of leadership.

The author concurs with Omulokoli's argument that the challenge (leadership) before us is an 'African problem whose solution should engage the minds and resources of Christians in Africa.' He further notes that 'church in Africa cannot work out the required answers in isolation' (Omulokoli, 1992). The author agrees with Omulokoli that there should be collaboration, partnership and co-operation with churches in other parts of the world.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

At the onset of this study, one assumption was that secularization if not carefully checked, would adulterate the life of the church right from the top in its leadership. The study as revealed in table 2 shows that most of the respondents agree that church leaders behave in the same way as the politicians in terms of their leadership approaches and how they perceive leadership. Leadership according to the bible is God given for the purpose of serving God's people. It is not to be taken as an opportunity to ascend to greatness. It is in this regard that we recommend the

following: First, the church ought to wake up to the realization that secularization is real in the church especially in the area of leadership. Secular approaches in church leadership are becoming even more manifest each day. The people assigned leadership roles in the church should therefore heed to the biblical call of shepherding God's people in a manner that agrees with the biblical teaching. Furthermore, church leaders should be more cautious and steadfast in their leadership responsibilities.

Second, the church faithful also have to take a proactive role in keeping their leaders in check to make sure that they apply the teaching of the bible in their leadership endeavours. Since many of the people taking up leadership in the church today are from the younger generation, the wisdom of the older faithful in the church should not be neglected.

Third, it is recommended that the church needs to regularly train and re-train its leaders on biblical precepts of church leadership so that anybody taking up leadership position in the church is well aware of the expectations. The congregation as a whole also needs to be taught on the dynamics of church leadership and how this differs from leaderships in other spheres. This is especially important for the congregation so that they will be able to choose their leaders from a well- informed position.

Fourth, the church needs to seriously go back to its biblical roots especially when it comes to the choosing of its leaders. The bible strongly advocates for the centrality of prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit's guidance when choosing its leaders as it

was the case during the time of the apostles. The church should encourage the faithful to spend more time in prayer when preparing to choose its leaders.

Fifth, in as much as this study does not advocate for the separation of the church and the state, it however does advocate for the church to take its rightful role in providing leadership. It also encourages all other leaders that the standards and expectations of a leader is to be above those he leads in all areas of service and integrity. The leader is expected to be 'above reproach' in all areas of private and public life.

Sixth, if the Christian church is to live today as salt and light of the world, the people in leadership must constantly repent and admit failure in areas of past leadership mistakes and make amends. They should set a positive example that the followers can emulate.

Seventh, the study cautions church leaders not accept that there are times to modify doctrine to accommodate secular changes because in doing so, religious values loose the pre-eminence it once had and this is secularization in its full manifest.

Eighth, theological institutions that are mainly involved in the training of church leaders should take heed not to promote secularization of knowledge because this has been noted to weaken the influence of religious framework in most areas of life. This has been the case that led the British society to be described as secular and as such the Kenyan society should take precaution not to go the same direction.

Ninth, the African theologians especially here in Kenya are not left out either. They need to take a more pro active role in the process of re-educating the people. Church

leaders in urban areas should make use of all available resources in the print and other media to champion leadership education in the church so that young upcoming leaders do not get entangled with the ever increasing challenges of secularization.

Finally, Christian leaders in the church have to be sensitive to the changes in the society in which we live. This sensitivity means that the church should not bury its head in the sand and wish these challenges go away, it must be open to learning new dynamics of still living its mandate as salt and light of the world. This can only be achieved when the church and the larger society come together and embrace an understanding that leadership in the church and in other spheres do have some difference but coming together in forums or joint conferences would help in discussing a better and all inclusive way to make the leadership office a dignified one that earns respect in all areas.

### **5.3 Areas for Further Research**

The study was mainly concerned with only one area in which the impact of secularization can be observed in church leadership. It is however, sad to notice that a lot of research work on secularization has been done from a western perspective. This study looks at it from a non-western approach. The researcher therefore makes the following recommendation for further research:

1. That more African scholars and students of religion to further venture into studying and researching more on the challenge of secularization on church leadership.



2. There should be other publications also on topics relevant to church leadership so as to share this vital knowledge with the upcoming crop of elite leaders and to contribute positively to the ongoing search for leaders who embrace biblical teaching of leadership.
  
3. Secularization in itself is not a negative concept as it has in many other areas served for the society's advancement. Where the real task lies and should be an area of further research is how to protect the church from being negatively influenced by the negative effects of secularization, and how the church and its leadership can remain true to their mandate as salt and light to the world. How to do this is still an area that needs further research.

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**APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLERGY AND DEACONS**

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF SECULARIZATION ON CHURCH LEADERSHIP  
IN SELECTED CHURCHES IN ELDORET MUNICIPALITY, KENYA.**

Dear sir/madam,

I am a Master of Philosophy student at Moi University. I am currently doing a research on *The implications of Secularization on Church Leadership in selected churches in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya*. I would like to find out what the leaders of the church think about on the above mentioned topic. The information you give will be treated as confidential and used only for the purpose of this research. Your help is highly appreciated.

**SECTION I**

**Section A. Personal data**

- 1 Your name [optional].....
- 2 Age: 20 – 30 years [ ] b. 31 – 40 years [ ] c. 41 – 50 years [ ] d. 51 – 60 years [ ] e. Above 61 years [ ]
- 3 Gender a) Male [ ] Please tick appropriate box  
b) Female [ ]
4. Marital status  
Married [ ] Single [ ] Separated/divorced [ ] Widowed [ ]
5. Highest level of education attained  
Primary [ ] Secondary [ ] College/University [ ]
6. Church affiliation (denomination).....

7. What office do you hold in your local church?

Deacon [ ] Evangelist [ ] Pastor [ ] Ordained Pastor [ ]

Other, please specify .....

.....

8. For how long have you served in the stated position in your current church?

Less than a year [ ] 1 year [ ] 2 years [ ] 5 years [ ] over 5 years [ ]

**SECTION II**

9. Why did you take the leadership position?.....

.....

10. Have you ever heard of the term secularization?

a) Yes [ ]

b) No [ ]

11. If yes explain what you understand about secularization.....

.....

12. Do you see any impact from the secular world on the current leadership in the churches?

a) Yes [ ]

b) No [ ]

13. Is today's leadership in the church living up to their biblical expectation?

a. Agree [ ]

b. Disagree [ ]

14. If you agree, explain what you think might have led to this? .....

.....  
.....

15. Do you have any knowledge of church leaders embracing secular approach to leadership?

- a. Yes [ ]      b. No [ ]

16. If yes explain your answer.....

.....

17. What do you think are the factors that have led some leaders to embrace secular approaches to leadership in the church? .....

.....

18. Are church leaders compromised because of material favours?

- a. Agree [ ]  
b. Disagree [ ]

19. If Agree, what do you think would be solution to the above? .....

.....

20. Do you think that majority of church leaders today have compromised their leadership standards in favour of other leadership approaches?

- a) Yes [ ]      b) No [ ]

21. If yes, explain what has led to this change .....

.....

**APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHURCH MEMBERS**

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF SECULARIZATION ON CHURCH LEADERSHIP  
IN SELECTED CHURCHES IN ELDORET MUNICIPALITY, KENYA.**

Dear sir/madam,

I am a Master of Philosophy student at Moi University. I am currently doing a research on *The implications of Secularization on Church Leadership in selected churches in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya*. I would like to find out what the leaders of the church think about on the above mentioned topic. The information you give will be treated as confidential and used only for the purpose of this research. Your help is highly appreciated.

**SECTION I**

**Section A. Personal data**

- 1 Your name [optional].....
2. Age: a. 20 – 30 years [ ] b. 31 – 40 years [ ] c. 41 – 50 years [ ]  
d. 51 – 60 years [ ] e. Above 61 years [ ]
3. Denominational affiliation.....
4. Do you hold any position in the church?
  - a. Yes [ ]
  - b. No [ ]
5. If yes, what position do you hold?

6. Gender    a) Male        Please tick appropriate box

                  b) Female

7. Marital status

                  a) Married

                  b) Single

                  c) Separated/divorced

                  d) Widowed

8. Highest level of education attained

                  Primary   

                  Secondary

                  College/University

9. For how long have you been a member in your current church?

Less than a year     1 year     2 years     5 years     above 5 years

## **SECTION II**

10. Have you heard of the term secularization?

                  Yes

                  No

11. If yes explain what you understand by it.
12. Describe the current leadership in the Church?
13. A large percentage of leaders in the church are embracing secular approaches to leadership?
  - a. Agree [ ]
  - b. Disagree [ ]
14. If Agree, explain your answer
15. Is today's Church leadership is living up to the biblical expectation of leadership?
  - a. Yes [ ]
  - b. No [ ]
16. If yes, explain what you think might be the contributing factor
17. What do you think are some of the factors contributing to secular approaches to leadership in the church?
18. It is easy to trust leaders other than church leaders
  - a. Agree [ ]
  - b. Disagree [ ]
19. If Agree, explain why?

20. Are most church leaders easily compromised?

a. Agree [ ]

b. Disagree [ ]

21. The current leadership in the church needs to be re-trained on leadership

a. Agree [ ]

b. Disagree [ ]

22. The current leaders in the church behave in the same way as the politicians

a. Agree [ ]

b. Disagree [ ]

23. I can easily trust the words of a politician more than those of a priest/pastor

a. Agree [ ]

b. Disagree [ ]

24. If you agree explain your reasons for this