

IMPACT OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHURCH
MEMBERS AND THEIR PASTORS ON
CHURCH GROWTH

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work is to study the level of interpersonal relationship between church members and their pastors as it affect the church growth. Fourteen churches were selected out of twenty eight churches in Victory Baptist Association in Lagos Conference, as sample for the research.

The major findings of the study are: many pastors in Victory Baptist Association have a positive attitude to the educational programmes of the church. There is high cordial relationship between the pastors and the church members and this has a positive impact on church growth. The level at which church members care for their pastors is high. Members have low attitude towards the educational programmes of the church especially the Bible Study. The overall relationship between the members and the pastors has a great influence on the numerical growth of the churches in the Association.

The major recommendations of the study are: the pastors should work hard on how to make the Bible Study more interesting for the church members, pastors should take the issue of discipleship more seriously as this will have great impact on the spiritual life of the members, there is need for seminar at the associational level on the importance of good relationship between pastors and church members. Also pastor may seize the opportunity of prayer services which attract large attendance to teach Bible Study.

numerical and spiritual growth in the church due to the relationship between the pastors and the church members.

That there are three areas where the pastors score the members very low and this has to do with the member's attitude to Bible Study. Seven pastors rate the members low. Also church training programme, members do not attract high mark because their attitude to church training is very low according to the response from the pastors. Other area where the pastors rate the member low is the area of discipleship programme. Nine out of fourteen pastors gave low mark to the members which may have a negative impact on the spiritual growth of the members as individual and as the church as a whole.

Conclusion

The researcher wants to conclude by saying that the importance of good interpersonal relationship cannot be over emphasized. The questionnaires sent out helped the researcher to discovered that pastors and church members need to be in good relationship so as to help the church to grow physically, numerically, spiritually, and even structurally. The responses from the questionnaire also revealed the level of relationship between the pastors and the church members has great influence on the caring of the pastors and how the pastor care for the well being of the church members.

Finally, the researcher was able to know the impact of the interpersonal relationship between the pastors and the church members on the church growth.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby given based on the result of the findings.

1. The pastors should look for an avenue to know the reason for the low attitude or poor attitude of the members to the Bible Study, since this aspect is very essential in the life of the church members. It may be the time of the Bible Study is not conducive enough for the members or the method of teaching.
2. Considering no response from some church members concerning the attitude of the pastors to the discipleship programme, the pastors need to make some adjustment where necessary because this is the major assignment given to the believer especially the pastors.
3. Since the level at which church members visit the pastors is very low according to the response from the members and even from the pastors, there should be seminar at the associational level where by the church members would be admonish to know that it is very important not to give pastors gift alone but also pay them visit so as to know more about their well being.
4. Since the attitude of members to prayer meeting is very high and encouraging, the pastor may size this opportunity to slot in Bible Study because prayer without effective Biblical support may amount to shouting alone.