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Leadership practices and challenges: Wolaita Sodo City Local Kale Heywet Churches Fellowship

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Abstract
For the development of a country and organizations, as well as churches, leadership plays an important role. An appropriate leadership style can influence and ensure the prosperity and the economic growth of both organization and the people. While skilled leadership elevates the organization and country to growth, poor leadership can destroy the soundest organizations. Most of the failures in the organization have come from an incorrect direction that the leaders pursued to achieve the objectives. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study design was to assess the leadership practices and challenges in Sodo City local Kale Heywet Church. Phenomenological studies survey human experiences through the images provided by the people who participate. The main aim was to provide a detailed understanding of beliefs, emotion, attitudes, and perspectives of church leaders in the Wolaita Kale Heywet Church. Thematic analysis was used in data analysis. Data analysis yielded a number of themes: a) thoughts about leadership (definitions, philosophy, styles of leadership), b) leadership practices (planning & coordination, being a role model, vision sharing, empowering, encouraging, directing change) c) leadership challenges (challenges they experience, overcoming challenges), d) hopes for the future (involving new generations, resolving cultural issues, appointing bible based leaders and listening to the people). The findings of this research might help the local church to be well prepared for the future leadership of KHC's.

1. Introduction

For the development of a country and organizations, as well as churches, leadership plays an important role (Fairholm, 2002) [24]. Leadership is the most significant key in the Kingdom of God (Daniel, 2004) [21]. Maxwell (1993) [53] said, "Everything rises and falls on leadership (p.3). This is a central statement for any leader irrespective of the sector in which they practice. Because of leadership styles and the skills that the leader exhibits, a country can be developed economically and technologically (Fairholm, 2002) [24]. A good leader can take the organization he or she leads to high achievement. An appropriate leadership style can influence and ensure the prosperity and the economic growth of both organization and the people (Meraku, 2017) [55]. Jabbar et. al. (2017) [38] add to this, leaders are able to contribute significantly in the way a firm functions its activities. Leadership, which has effective strategies and leaders who follow those strategies, can expedite the growth of an organizations (Mwenje, 2015) [61].

While skilled leadership elevates the organization and country to growth, poor leadership can destroy the soundest organizations. Most of the failures in the organization have come from an incorrect direction that the leaders pursued to achieve the objectives (Mwenje, 2015) [61]. Skillful leadership shapes the morals and behaviors of its members who also impact families, communities, nations and continents at large (Kaguara, 2018) [80]. Therefore, leadership ensures that people do not remain in the same place they were before they were led (Mwenje, 2015) [61].

The Christian church has a vital role to play in society. The very mission of the church is to take the gospel to the entire world and teach every new believer everything that was passed down from Christ's leadership. The growth, multiplication and health

of the church is directly connected with its leadership (Objantoro, 2019) [65]. In Ethiopia, one particular denomination has played an important role in evangelization of the country. The Kale Heywet church (KHC) was established in Ethiopia in 1920 (Davis, 1920; Wotango, 2009; Balisky, 2009) [18, 84, 3]. The mission of the church is "to serve God through proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to the peoples of Ethiopia so that people may have eternal life and become Christ's disciples, and be fulfilled spiritually, mentally and physically so that they become salt and light to the world for the glory of God" (EKHC, n.d). There are more than 9,850 KHC churches in Ethiopia. One of the country's largest number of KHC churches in Ethiopia is found in the Wolaita area, with at least 1, 450 different KHC churches (SCLKHCF, 2022).

The leadership and formation of Wolaita Kale Heywet Church (WKHC) was started in 1920's with the coming of Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) Team (Davis, 1980, 1984; Wotango, 2009; Balisky, 2009) [84, 3]. Since its beginning as a church, the WKHC has experienced biblical church growth and preached the gospel message across Ethiopia through the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. Its leaders have recognized the church as an institution dedicated to the mission of Lord Jesus Christ. Its principal vision was to see a world where all the peoples of Ethiopia and beyond have heard the Gospel and become Christ's disciples and actively involved in His service for holistic life transformation (SCLKHCF, 2022).

Historically, the church has recognized the Bible as the legitimate source for doctrine and direction. The founding fathers of the church believed that all believers should demonstrate a holy lifestyle and personally experience a close and growing relationship with God (EKHC, n.d). Their leadership has influenced the area and country as a whole with positive Christian behavior and integrity, impacted the community and transformed life in to Christ likeness.

Currently, WKHC is above 1.35 million people in memberships with more than 1,450 local churches. For leadership purposes and to manage its vast size, the WKHC is structured in 19 fellowships which are distributed throughout the region. For example, if the number of local churches in a given locality exceeds 20, based on the constitution of the EKHC, the local church fellowship should be formed in that local area (EKHC, 2020) [23]. Thus, in 2018, 27 local churches, planted in different times in Sodo city, formed their own fellowship hoping to be led more easily and strengthen spiritual activities in the area (SCLKHCF, 2020). The church around the world is in decline (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021) [25]. In Ethiopia, while the church has historically been strong, there are factors that threaten its growth in the future (Desta, 2020; Open doors, n.d.;, and Burkle, n.d) [19]. It is the goal of this researcher to make sure that the WHKC church continues to thrive and grow into the future. Leadership is one of the keys for this.

While a number of studies has been conducted in the Wolaita area, previous studies were directed in the areas of church history, growth, and persecutions it endured. Some of those studies are *Wolaita Evangelists* by Paul E. Balisky in 2009, *The Winds of God* and *Fire on the Mountains* by Raymond J. Davis in 1980 and 1984, *Born at Midnight* by Peter Cotterel in 1973, *Ye Ikule Lelit Wegegta by* Wendiye Ali in 2000 and *Ye Tinsae netsebira*k by Yosef Mena in 1992).

While countless resources exist in supporting leaders in business and political organization, little has addressed those serving in church leadership in Ethiopia, specifically. Therefore, research about the practices of leaders in the WKHC, as well as the challenges they face, is merited. The focus of this research will be to use a qualitative methodology to discover the current practices of leaders in the Wolaita Kale Heywet Church, especially Sodo City KHC fellowship as well as the challenges they face.

Literature review
Leadership and Christian Leadership
Many studies have been conducted on the field of leadership over the years. Leadership makes a difference in organizational performance (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. Maxwell (1993) [53] said that healthy leaders make healthy people, and when the leader is unhealthy those who follow are also unhealthy; good leaders lead better organizations. He believed that leadership in organizations does have an impact and influence on its performance. Maxwell (1993) [53] stated, "Everything rises and falls on leadership" (p.3).

Kouses and Pozner (2010) write that leadership begins with you and your belief in yourself and continues only if other people also believe in you. It is a relationship between those who seek to lead and those who choose to follow (Bosoik, 2013). Davis in his (2009) [16] article writes leadership includes a reordering or organizing of a new way of acting as well as the need to overcome battle to change. It is the process of influencing the actions of an individual or a group in efforts toward common goal. Maxwell (1993) [53] summed up leadership with this simple yet profound statement, "Leadership is influence. That's it. Nothing more; nothing less" (p.1).

A sub-set of leadership is the area of Christian Leadership. Christian leadership separate type of leadership. There exists commonality and differences between Christian and secular leadership. Thomas (2018) [81] writes, "Christian leadership is uniquely narrowed as a Christian." (p.19). While secular leadership may use moral and biblical principles in their models, Christian leadership is beyond principles- it emphasizes heart and actions of leader. It is based on a text from Scripture on Christian faith (Crowther, 2011) [51]. The Christian Leadership Center (n.d) defines Christian leadership: "It is a dynamic relational process in which people, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, partner to achieve a common goal - it is serving others by leading and leading others by serving." (p.108) GRM (2005) [32] defined it specifically in relation to congregations, "Effective Christian leadership is the process of helping a congregation embody in its corporate life the practices that shape vital Christian life, community, and witness in ways that are faithful to Jesus Christ and the gospel and appropriate to the particular congregation's setting, resources, and purpose" (p. 17).

In quoting Daniel Wallace (1999) [21], Hildebrand (2016), writes that Christian leadership is multiple eldership. New Testament records indicate that each local church had more than one leader or Elder (Acts 11:30; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; Acts 16:4).

Merkle, (2008) [56] puts a reason of having of multiple leadership in the church: first there is wisdom in multitude leadership (Prov. 11:14). The second reason is there is great accountability to live, teach and lead faithfully. Multiple leadership helps to prevent one man lordships over the members. The third reason is balancing of the gifts in the church. In the Book of Ephesian (4:11) it is written that:

"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (NIV)

Merkle writes another reason of multiple church leadership, the burden should be shared together because it is not intended one man to care by himself even faithful and gifted pastors. They needs help from God. In Acts 20:28 it is written, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood." Northhouse (2016) emphasizes team based work by stating, there is quick response, rapid change because of their flatter organizational structures. There is also greater productivity, effective resource use, good decisions and high problem solving skills. There is greater innovation and creativity with quality products and services.

Leadership in the Early Church
According to Robert (2009) in early church leaders were elected by three ways. The first one is called to be charismatic type of election. It is based on direct divine call to an individual by its gift (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:11-13). Jesus himself called the 12 men to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and evangelize and named them *apostles.* He gave an assurance to them saying, "'He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives Him who sent me'" (Matt. 10:40).

The second is familial leaders. These are blood relatives of Jesus. During his earthly ministry some of brothers of Jesus did not believe him. However, to bring them to belief James and Peter were selected (Mark 3:31-35; John 7:5, Gal. 1:18, 19) [40]. The last category described by Robert (2009) is appointive leaders who were elected in some fashion by the church. Robert puts a reason for this method, stating apostles were busy in preaching and teaching of the Gospel message in every area. Because of that some administrative issues were left uncovered in the church. Henceforth, believers complained that widows were not receiving what they should in the daily distribution of supplies to the needy. Therefore, the apostles directed that the believers select seven men, of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, to perform this work. They brought the seven before the apostles, and having prayed they laid their hands upon them. This was the beginning of the appointive ministry, leaders selected by the people and given authority by the laying on of hands (Philip, 2013; Miguel, 2009) [71].

Leadership in Wolaita Sodo KHC Fellowship
The leader's election style in the Sodo City KHC fellowship bases hand vote. The EKHC's (2020) [23] written constitutions tells that the election of leaders in the church is based on hand vote (p.16). Before they come to election the selectee is asked about their willingness to lead by the church's former leaders. If he is willful, then they would bring him to the stage. Among the eight brought forward to the stage, seven of them would be decided by the people for leadership. The electoral committee is also first informed of about the leaders who are going to be selected. Then after, the committee brings them forward to the stage and the people decide who is going to be a leader for the church. There is no other requirement except that the candidate has completed eighth grade complete. That is the way leaders are elected in the church of Sodo KHC fellowship according to the EKHC written constitution (2020).

Leadership Theories
In this section I briefly discuss major leadership theories that have significantly contributed to the leadership literature. The theories presented in this research include: great man theory, trait theory, behavioral theory, contingency theory, situational theory, path goal theory, transactional theory, transformational theory, and servant leadership. Hernandez et al. (2011) [33] outlined a number of leadership theories.

Great Man Theory
The great man theory is based on identifying the innate qualities and characteristics influenced great social, political, and military leaders and believed that only the great people possessed them (Northouse, 2016) [63]. Great man theory assumes that a 'great man' naturally holds the essential skills which allow him to perform as a leader (Emerald Group, 2014). The theory says leaders are destined to lead others in their very nature; they are exceptional people based on some beliefs, born with intrinsic quality to lead. This theory has generally been disproved because once leader in one situation might not be a leader in another situation. There are no constant set of traits that differentiate leaders from non-leaders; it is a trait that a leaders possessed is relevant to situations in which he is working (Northouse, 2016) [63].

Behavioral Leadership Theories
Behaviors are used as an indicator to differentiate effective from ineffective leaders (Hernandez, 2011) [33]. These concentrate on what leaders actually do, rather than on their qualities. Different patterns of behavior are observed and categorized as styles of leadership. This area has probably attracted most attention from practicing managers (Hernandez et al., 2011) [33]. This theory exclusively focusses on what leaders do and act. It is composed of task behaviors and relationship behaviors. Task behaviors facilitates means for the group members to achieve their objectives; whereas, relationship behaviors help followers feel comfortable in situation which they find themselves (Northouse, 2016) [63]. Northouse adds in stating its purpose, behavioral theory is to influence followers by combining these two kinds of behaviors to reach their goal. Therefore, in behavioral approach leaders actions to followers occur on a task and a relationship level.

Situational Leadership
This is most widely accepted approach which bases the theory on different situations that demand different kinds of leadership (Northouse, 2016) [63]. Northouse (2016) [63] notes it is an approach composed of both a directive and a supportive dimensions to meet the changing needs of followers. Groups accomplish goals by giving directions, setting timelines, and defining roles which is to be achieved. Supportive behaviors help members feel comfortable with themselves, with partners, and the situation. It is a job related approach. This approach sees leadership as specific to the situation in which it is being exercised. For example, whilst some situations may require an autocratic style, others may need a more participative approach. It also proposes that there may be differences in required leadership styles at different levels in the same organization (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64]. Hersey and Blanchard (2015) [34] describe effective leaders use multiple leadership styles for different conditions.

They should change their leadership styles based on the maturity status of the people they're leading and the details of the task they run. In concluding the model, to accomplish his assigned task a leader depends on day to day perceptions of situational variables and environmental observations. To the model no single leadership style is finest. Instead, situations at hand and strategies define the tasks (Hersey and Blanchard, 2015) [34].

Contingency Theory

Contingency theory is dependent upon a factors like quality, situation of the followers and other variables (Khan, et al., 2016) [45]. According to Khan (2016) [45] "there is no single right way to lead because the internal and external dimensions of the environment require the leader to adapt to that particular situation" (p. 2). It is based on the belief that an individual's motivation depends on the expectations that spending more effort to achieve better performance could be successful (Hernandez et al., 2011) [33]. In contingency theories leadership effectiveness depends on the interaction of leadership style with situational favorableness. Therefore, situational favorableness was considered high when leader follower relations, and task structure and/or position power were high. Based on this, a leader presumably is supported by the situation because it provides some influence and potential power (Nyakundi &Ayako, 2020) [64]. Therefore, the style of leadership that is functioning in some circumstances may not be functional in others.

Path-goal Theory

This is a theory that motivates followers to accomplish designated goals (Northouse, 2016) [63]. It enhances follower performance and satisfaction by focusing on group motivation. Northouse (2016) [63] writes more about the theory that it removes obstacles and road blocks to attain the goal. It makes path clear and easy to travel by doing coaching and giving directions. In path goal theory people are more likely to engage in a specific behavior if they perceive a high probability that the behavior will lead to a valued outcome. Hernandez et al., (2011) [33] suggests having a path laid out in front of them that leads to valued personal outcomes. Path-goal theory suggests that task structure moderates the relationship between leader behavior and employee job satisfaction, so, the relationship is positive for low task structure and negative for high task structure. When tasks are highly structured, the path to success should also be identified (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64].

Transactional Leadership Theory

Transactional leadership theory is a theory of leader/follower associations based upon agreements between followers and leaders (Khan et al., 2016) [45]. This approach emphasizes the importance of the relationship between leader and followers. Focusing on the mutual benefits derived from a form of contract through which the leader delivers such things as rewards or recognition in return for the commitment or loyalty of the followers (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64]. In transactional theory leaders not only influence subordinates but are under their influence as well. The theory rewards and punishes followers when they accomplish/do not accomplish their agreed objectives (Khan et al., 2016; James & Ogbonna, 2013) [45, 40]. There are always bonuses were positive support could be exchanged; there is also penalization for poor works (James & Ogbonna, 2013) [40]. In overall, transactional leaders are effective when specific tasks completed by managing each portion individually.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership works to create changes in followers by enhancing motivation, morale, and performances through variety mechanisms (James & Obgonna, 2013) [40]. The theory inspires others to achieve higher outcome by paying high attention to developmental needs of individual followers and helps them to look new way. Its emphasis is on leaders who create change in structures, processes, or overall culture. Transformational leaders interact with followers in common values, beliefs and goals and treat them individually (Khan et al., 2016) [45] Leader mechanisms may be compelling vision, brilliant technical insight, and charismatic quality. The central concept here is change and the role of leadership in envisioning and implementing the transformation of organizational performance (Hernandez et al., 2011) [33]. Generally, leaders who use and exhibit transformational theory had higher outcomes than those who demonstrated autocracy (Khan, 2016) [45].

Servant Leadership

People everywhere want an ethical and effective leader whom serves others and invests in shared development objectives. The one best represents this is servant leadership. Servant leadership as a theory was first originated in the writings of Greenleaf with the intent to serve followers by giving emphasis, and nurture them in 1970, 1972, and 1977 (Northouse, 2016) [63].

The first definition of servant leadership given by Greenleaf is quoted in Northhouse (2016) [63].

Servant leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead…The difference manifests 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… is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, will they not be further deprived?"

Quoting Spears (2002) Northouse has written ten characteristics in his *Leadership Theory and Practice* book. These are: *Listening;* Servant leaders acknowledge the viewpoint of followers and validate their perspectives by listening to them first. *Empathy.* This is looking of others in the place they were and attempting to see the world from their point of view. It creates happiness in the followers. *Healing.* To heal means caring about the personal well-being of their followers. Helping and supporting followers to overcome their personal problems. *Awareness.* Servant leaders should be aware of the physical, social, and political environments they are working. *Persuasion.* Convincing followers to change. *Conceptualization.* Refers being visionary for organization, its goals and direction. *Foresight.* Encompasses a servant leader's ability to know the future and predict about the future based on the present and what has happened in the past. *Stewardship.* Is about taking of responsibility for the leadership role entrusted to the leader. Servant leaders are steward to carefully manage the people, society and organization they lead. *Commitment to the growth of people.* Treating each follower as a unique to the organization,

committed to help each person in the organization and grow personally and professionally. The last characteristics of servant leaders in Northouse (2016) [63] is *Building of community*. The leader fosters the development of community. Servant leaders shape community, make their living environment good place where people can feel safe and connected with others (Northouse, 2016) [63].

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles are used to motivate followers to achieve the objectives of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2010) [50]. Furthermore, leadership has a great contribution on organizational performance in which the success or failure of organizations, nations, and other social units has been largely credited to the nature of leadership style (Mekuria, 2017) [54]. Responsible church leaders influence others who work together on tasks to attain organizational goals. Before the coming of modern concepts of leadership, the early apostles had their own styles of leadership to ensure continued growth and survival of the church (Ajayi, 2018; William, 2019) [1, 82]. Those styles today remained the model for the church. For example, servant leadership which first originated in the Bible was a method modeled by Jesus Christ to the apostles to run the mission given by him (Kimotho, 2019) [47]. Jesus has covered the physical, spiritual, economic and political needs of the people during in his earthly ministry. His leadership was characterized by full of love and compassion; he was not only a servant leader but also a good shepherd who died for his people (Katola & Nyabwari, 2013) [44]. Quoting the work of Greenleaf (2003) Kimotho, mentions the word servant occurs 1,300 times in the Bible. Again in quoting Oxford Dictionary definition, (2008) He writes, servant is "One who is under obligation to work for the benefit of a superior and to obey his or her commands" (Kimotho, 2019, p. 1) [47]. Jesus said in Matthew, 20:25-28, "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first 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."

God was first in their life; they placed others before self; they cared for people they were serving., With this style apostles served one another, expressed submission, assisted and helped together, build their community, valued the people (Brewer, 2010) [7]. Evangelist Billy Graham stated, "Tears shed for self are tears of weakness, but tears shed for others are a sign of strength" (Brewer, 2010, p.2) [7]. Leadership is a process of influence by which a leader shapes the attitudes and activities of others towards the achievement of the organizational objectives (Tewari et. al., 2019) [79]. Leadership occurs as a leader uses a particular style, which is the method a person uses power to lead other people; its style depends on the function of the leader, the followers and the situation (Smith et al., 2018) [77].

Advanced and well-developed leaders have the capacity to exercise different styles of leadership in different situations (Tewari et al., 2019) [79]. Morris (2017) [59] states that leadership styles are not fixed. It is the situation that dictates which style can be used. Therefore, the success of any organization depends on the application of appropriate leadership styles. The commonly accepted styles and the type of relationships a leader and follower have are discussed below.

Nyakundi & Ayako (2020) [64] suggested that there are certain leadership styles. What follows is a summary of their work ranging from autocratic leadership to transactional leadership.

Autocratic Leadership

Autocratic leadership is one of a leadership styles characterized by individual control over all decisions (Cherry, n.d.). In autocratic leadership leaders make decisions on their own without consulting subordinates or any other dependents (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64]. A leader has absolute power, responsibility and authority over their workers (Mekuria, 2017) [54]. There are no guidelines, procedures or policies to be followed. According to Nyakundi and Ayako (2020) [64] the advantage of autocratic leadership is it is quick in decision making since authority is vested in the leader. For routine and unskilled jobs, the style can be effective because the advantages of control may outweigh the disadvantages. The individuals become uncooperative in the absence of their leaders and may be unable to continue the work.

Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership involves freedom in expression of ideas, free participation, sharing of responsibilities, competence, justice, courage, honesty and the leader holds final responsibility (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64]. Democratic leaders have the ability of solving complex issues, facilitate member participation in decision making and invite other members of the team to contribute to the decision making process (Ojokuku et al, 2012; Mekuria, 2017) [54]. Al Khajeh, (2018) [2] describes in democratic leadership there is poor decision making and weak execution. It has the advantages of equally participating on the affecting issues; everybody has sense of inclusiveness, and empowering group members to accomplish their goals by training them and keeping them informed (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64]. Whereas, democratic leadership has disadvantages as observed by Morris (2017) [59], it can be affected by indecisiveness during times of crisis and time consuming because it gives discussion a priority which may bring about procrastination of urgent issues.

It is also practiced in the Bible in the book of Exodus (18:24.) while Moses was advised to apply democratic leadership by Jethro in governing the Israelites. Moses used the advice and established a hierarchical structure for solving wars among Israel. This shows us about the power of delegating authority to others and sharing of tasks

Bureaucratic Leadership

Bureaucratic leaders are strongly committed with processes and procedures, highly relied on policies to meet organizational goals (Ojokuku, 2012; Al Khajeh, 2018) [66, 2]. Based on those policies the organizational execution, strategy and objectives are driven (Ojokuku, 2012) [66]. Bureaucrats influence the people under them to follow the policies and procedures designed by them (Al Khajeh, 2018) [2]. The overall focus of the bureaucratic leaders is their task should be completed in a systematic way. Followers' promotion based on obeying office rule and followers should obey leaders because authority is best owed upon the leader as part of their position in the company (Mekuria, 2017) [54]. Al Khajeh (2018) [2] mentioned its weakness that it does not lead to the development and motivation of the employees and that in turn leads the organization into ineffectiveness. The leaders focus on policies and procedures rather than people

and may appear aloof and change adverse (Ojokuku, 2012) [66]. Quoting Michael (2010) Ojokuku mentions the greatest danger of bureaucratic leadership is benefits, motivations and developing people, are ignored by bureaucratic leaders.

Laissez-faire Leadership
The laissez-fair leadership gives authority to employees and workers according to departments or zones to work without interference. Tewari et al. (2019) [79] describe this style of leadership as delegative leadership and it encourages personal development and values innovation. It is also failed due to lack of skills (Ajayi, 2018) [1]. It requires continues supervision and time to adapt to changing circumstances. This style of leadership requires skilled human power who can work without supervision (Ajayi, 2018) [1]. In this is a type of leadership, leaders leave their team members to work on their own. Laissez-faire leadership is effective when individual team members are very experienced and skilled self-starters. Quoting Whitney (2016), Nyakundi, & Ayako describe that laissez-fair leadership style gives a better opportunity to followers to prove their knowledge which makes them grow their skills and expertise (Nyakundi and Ayako, 2020) [64].

Charismatic Leadership
Charismatic leaders are well known political, social and business leaders who have significant impact on the lives of others. In describing charismatic leadership Nyakundi & Ayako (2020) [64] narrates that the leader uses his personality to gain the respect of followers. Charismatic leaders motivate followers to broaden their abilities and offers growth opportunities. They have a vision and asks their teams to execute that vision (Ojokuku, et al., 2012; Al Khajeh, 2018) [66, 2]. One of the characteristics of the charismatic leadership style is it prepares ground for creativity and innovation. However, the study by Ojokuku (2012) [66] investigated problem with charismatic that once charismatic leaders leave, an organization can appear rudderless and without direction. That is because charismatic leaders rarely develop substitutes and lacks succession (Al Khajeh, 2018) [2]. It usually eliminates other competing and strong personalities (Morris, 2017).
Adding on the Ojokuku's idea Morris (2017) [59] remarks this leadership style lacks opportunities to mentor others and this affects the future of the organization. Charismatic leaders encourage open communication which creates a healthy working atmosphere for workers (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64].

Transformational Leadership
This is a style of leadership intended to initiate change in organizations and groups. It concentrates on the development of followers and their needs (Ajayi, 2018) [1]. This type of leadership motivates others to work as a team for high success (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020) [64]. Prophet Nehemiah from the Bible sets a good example of transformational leadership in his efforts of rebuilding the city of Jerusalem by initiating change in the team (Nehemiah 2:17-20).
Transformational leadership has the advantages that the vision of the group is well communicated to followers to get everyone on board (Tewari et al., 2019) [79]. Transformational leadership inspire and motivate followers and passion and enthusiasm are main qualities that enable its leaders to succeed. The disadvantage of this style is that leaders may

misuse their influence to act unethically (Morris, 2017) [59]. And also in mentioning its challenges, Ojokuku et al., (2012) [66] state that incorrect ideals can easily be transferred to followers by a wicked leader. Through transformational leadership followers are expressive and adaptive to new and improved practices and changes (Ajayi, 2018) [1].

Transactional Leadership
Transactional leadership is a bargaining style of leadership where the leader compensate his subordinates based on their achievement of specific goals of the organizations (Ojokuku et al., 2012; Ajayi, 2018) [66, 1]. It is style of leadership that leading followers through specific incentives or rewards and motivate them through matching performance with rewards. Nyakundi & Ayako (2020) [64] states transactional leadership focuses on ways to manage the existing state of affairs and maintain the day-to-day operations of a business, but it does not focus on long term goals of the organization and how the followers of the organization can work towards those goals, enhance productivity as well as increasing their organizational profitability (Morris, 2017) [59]. Ajayi (2018) [1] mentions that there is competitions and unhealthy relationships among the group which destroys smooth relationships between the organization and followers. There is also high expectation of transactional leaders.

Leadership Practices
Kouzes and Posner, (2010) [50] write about what exemplary leaders should do in their organization to accomplish goals. Their research based work recommends five practices to put any leader in action to bring changes to themselves and to the organizations they lead. Quoting Kouzes and Posner (2017a) William, (2019) [82] wrote that, "a leader who practice those five principles were more effective in meeting job related demands, creating higher performing teams, nurturing renewed loyalty and commitment, increasing motivational levels and willingness to work hard, and possessing high degrees of personal credibility" (p. 32).
Again William (2019) [82] references Kouzes and Posner (2012) [49] work states that "the people who work alongside leaders who practice the five practices of exemplary leadership 'are significantly more satisfied with the actions and strategies of their leaders, and they feel more committed, excited, energized, influential, and powerful' (William, 2019, p. 32) [82]. These practices includes: a) Model the way b) Inspire a shared vision, c) Challenge the process d) Enable others to act, and e) Encourage the heart

Model the Way
One the most important qualities people admire in a leader is personal credibility (Kouzes and Posner, 2012) [49]. A leader gets leadership confirmation from followers. He or she must believe first the value he expresses about the company or church stands for. Speaking the value and following it with actions/words and deeds must be consistent. Those who model the way are committed to their beliefs, distinguished by relentless efforts, steadfastness and give attention to details (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49].
Kouzes and Posner (2012) [49] state that holding a position does not guarantee respect. It is behavior and belief that earns respect. Therefore, if a leader wants to gain commitment and achieve the standards, they must be models of the behavior they expect of others. They must first be clear about their own guiding principles. Before leading others, a leader needs to

know clearly who he is and what his core values are. "Leading by example is more effective than leading by command. If people see that you work hard while preaching hard work, they are more likely to follow you" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 16) [49].

The Bible clearly states that leaders are to model the way for members by bearing images of God. If we see the life of Jesus Christ, He demonstrated the life of servanthood (Matthew 20:26-28; Philippians 2:5-8). He washed the feet of disciples and encouraged them to follow his example (John 13:12-17). His life was model to the followers (William, 2019) [82]. The New Testament preacher Paul told Christians to follow his example as he followed the example of Christ (1 Corinthians 11). Again, Apostle Paul told to Timothy to set an example for the believers in speech, in love, in conduct, in faith and in purity (1 Timothy 4:12). Timothy was ordered by Paul to model a more Christ like way for his audience to follow as believers (William, 2019) [82]. So, in conclusion, modeling the way William (2019) [82] quoting Kouzes and Posner (2017) states that, it is beneficial for Christian leaders to model the way for others in good examples and model the way of Christ behavior and to live out God centered leadership

Inspire a Shared Vision

Followers want a vision of the future; all organizations need well defined vision that excites and energizes their followers (William, 2019) [82]. Leaders envision the future by picturing, stimulating and enabling possibilities. You need to make something happen, to change the way things are and to create something that no one else has ever created before (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). A leader needs to have clear goals and a vision to make a positive impact and share that vision with others and get them to believe in it. William (2019) [82] relating to Kouzes and Posner statement (2017a) assert, "In this rapidly changing time, people want to follow leaders who can see beyond today's difficulties."(p. 57) William declares that rousing a shared vision is necessary for Christian organizations of all types. It releases organizational energy, generates creativity, and satisfies followers.

A person with no follower is not a leader; people will not follow until they accept a vision as their own (Pfeiffer, 2003). A leader should foresee a future to the organization they lead. They should plan for extraordinary future that does not yet exist in the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. A leader should have intimate knowledge of people's dreams, hopes, aspirations, visions and values and work to bring unity among people to accomplish those visions.

Therefore, great leaders are seers and visionaries (William, 2019). Jesus Christ shared a vision with his followers. He presented the great commission on mountain and challenged the disciples to go into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:16-20). This was a vision and a mission for all people in the world who choose to follow Jesus Christ as their personal Savior (William, 2019) [82].

Challenge the Process

One's leadership should work to change an organization's status quo. A leaders could not work for things as usual. In their comments, Kouzes & Posner (2012) [49] add, not one person claimed to have achieved a personal best by keeping things the same. So, according to them challenging the process creates innovative new products, a cutting edge service, a groundbreaking piece of legislation (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. In recommending the task of a leaders, in

relation with challenging the process Kouzes & Posner (2010) [50] remarks that leaders deal with unexpected economic declines, loss of physical ability, natural disasters, and technological disruptions. According to them leaders are pioneers, willing to step out into the unknown, and creators or originators of new products, services, or processes. Innovation comes more from listening than from telling. They have to constantly look outside their self and their organization for new and innovative products, processes, and services (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49].

To Kouzes & Posner a leader should change the status quo or usual situations of the organizations. This requires challenging of the present process in the church, to improve the system and services. In conclusion, Pfeiffer (2003) suggests those who lead others to greatness seek and accept challenge.

Enable Others to Act

In working with others Kouzes and Posner (2012) [49] recommend to a leader that the vision and mission of the organization cannot be achieved with single person action. It requires a team effort, solid trust and strong relationships and deep competence and cool confidence. Group participation is required with individual accountability. Leaders enable others to assist them in the insights and decisions needed and to effectively run an organization. Innovations generated and new ideas occur during the interaction of people with diverse expertise, experience, or points of view when followers are encouraged to participate in decision making process of the organization (William, 2019) [82]. Therefore, the leader's main task should be enabling of others and empowering those around him (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. Facilitating relationships and engaging all those who make the project work successful is necessary. Kouzes & Posner (2012) [49] stated that extraordinary things in the organization cannot happen by oneself. It is the participation of whole team or body that enables corporations and communities to function effectively. Paul wrote to Corinthian Christians that they have to contribute their part to the whole group (1 Corinthians 12:27). In this view, any part that is not contributing to the whole body would cause the body to be dysfunctional. When leaders strengthen others by increasing self-determination, developing competence and focus serving the needs others, this builds trust in a leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2010) [50]. When priority is given to others the more that followers trust their leaders and each other, the more they take risks, make changes, and keep organizations and movements alive (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. Therefore, success is not something we get freely from the ground; it is a result of team work. Encouraging, appreciating and motivating people and preparing a reward program publicly widens chances for high achievement (Kouzes & Posner, 2010) [50].

Encourage the Heart

It is part of a job as a leader to show appreciation for people's contributions and to create a culture of celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community. When leaders are doing their best, they model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49].

Good leaders encourage the abilities and skills of their followers and challenge back to accomplish new goals; these are one of the purposes of a leadership (William, 2019) [82]. Consideration and appreciation of employees helps to excel,

achieve more in efforts of jobs and positions (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. The study conducted by Kouzes and Posner (2003) [48] about "encouraging the heart" shows that 98% of people responded, encouragement contributed to higher performance levels (William, 2019, p.47) [82]. When leaders understood the status of employee contributions, they feel better about the organization, have a sense of community, and they are more likely to stay in the organization and continue to contribute (William, 2019) [82]. And also Apostle Paul encouraged the hearts of Corinthian believers saying that he took pride in their actions, was greatly encouraged and had much joy in their conduct (2 Corinthians 7:4, 13-14).

William (2019) [82] wrote that leader's effectiveness depends on vision sharing, enable of others to act, encouraging the heart, challenging of the process and modelling the way for their followers. Leaders who practiced the five exemplary leadership practices of Kouzes & Posner (2012) [49] were effective, bringing success to their organizations and making extraordinary things to happen. Therefore, there exists strong biblical support for the five leadership principles presented by Kouzes and Posner (2017a). Practicing the five leadership principles in a Christian context is practicing principles that are biblical.

Kouzes & Posner's (2012) [49] recommendations were for leaders in all type of organizations. While not specifically focused on church leadership, they could state that it is everyone's business (Other authors have also written about leadership practices. For example, Smith et al. (2018) [77] wrote about the function of leaders: Respecting of others' values, equal treatment, showing care and concern, listening, appreciating others' contributions and reflexive practices including managing of emotions.

Leadership Philosophy
Leadership philosophy differs from leadership styles and theories discussed above. Philosophy is concerned with "not what to do, but what kind of person to be" (Serrat, 2018. p.4) [75]. Building strong leadership philosophy builds successful team, organizations and business (Carter, n.d). Therefore, successfulness and authenticity in leadership is important for an organization and individuals who engaged in the position of leadership. A leadership philosophy rooted in strong values, principles and goals will more likely motivate and inspire others at regular bases (Serrat, 2018) [75].

Leadership philosophy makes a leader stay updated, brandable and makes him effective in current and next jobs. Philosophy is "Love of wisdom" and/is guiding principles of behavior (Oxford Dictionary). Philosophy is a belief system of life focuses on private life, relationships and emotions that guide's one's choices in decision making (Case et al., 2011; Carter, n.d). Serrat, (2018) [75] strengthens the benefit of leadership philosophy stating, "leadership without philosophy is a rudderless ship sailing for distant lands" (p.5). Leadership based on someone else's philosophy does not make effective (Carter, n.d). Because, "one size will not fit all and we should use the right tool for the job, which as the case may be can include older notions and practices of leadership" (Serrat, 2018. p.5) [75]. Therefore, leadership philosophy is personal and specific to one's own conditions and circumstances. It authentically reflects values and situations of a leader.

Personal Characteristics of Leaders
Mekuria (2017) [54] narrates what characteristics effective and successful leaders are required to possess. He pointed out the following qualities: - ability to inspire others, problem solving skill, emotional maturity, ability to understand others behavior, verbal assertiveness, willingness to take risks, dedication to organization goal. Morris (2017) [59] writes that a leader should have empathy of understanding and identification of others feelings and situation. Morris (2017) [59] goes on to note that effective leaders show a persistent determination of obstacles, he must be able to separate himself from conflicting situation and analyze it from a distance. He is a calm one and composed in the face of turmoil and uncertainty. A leader must have excellent communication skills. He must be comfortable running meetings and making presentations. In lastly, an effective leader has to be resourceful enough to find the resources needed.

The success and effectiveness of a leader depends upon numerous factors. According to Moss (2014) [60] the following are factors that affect leadership effectiveness. First is arrogance: - autocracy, false, heroism, and excessive egotism all facilitate and clear the way of failure. Another factor is a loss of focus in which leaders fail to keep an eye on the ball. Finally, Moss (2014) [60] mentions a lack of integrity, character, ethics and value. Counterfeit leaders are those who have authority without understanding what leaders do, how they behave, and relate to their followers.

Spiritual Leadership
Spiritual leadership forms the backbone of the spiritual organization (Benefiel, 2005) [5]. Spiritual leaders are motivating and inspiring workers through a strong vision. It is founded upon a clear vision, an empowered team, individual wellbeing, and commitment (Smith et al., 2018) [77]. A spiritual leader is someone who leads others to a closer walk with Christ (Morris, 2017) [59]. Spiritual leaders are people who help others to grow physically, economically, socially and spiritually in the church. Morris (2017) [59] adds spiritual leaders should follow the way of Master Jesus. If the leader does not have a close relationship with Christ, it is impossible for the leader to model it for the rest of the group (Morris, 2017) [59]. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul wrote to the Corinthian leaders, "Follow me as I follow Christ." He said this word to show a leader that, he needs connection with Jesus Christ to lead his people. This is what the great spiritual leaders are doing (Morris, 2017) [59].

In postulating about spiritual leader's accountability Morris (2017) [59] adds, spiritual leaders hold their followers accountable. If a spiritual leader is accountable to them, his followers can hold them accountable as well. When spiritual leaders do not allow themselves to be held accountable, they turn into dictators or autocratic leaders. Therefore, Morris on these issues quotes multiple leaders, will serve as a 'check and balance' on each other and serve as a protection against the very human inclination to play God over other people. A leader who neglects God given accountability is toxic leader. These leaders lead as their decisions are the final word and cannot be evaluated or critiqued by anyone (Morris, 2017) [59]. Quoting Oswald Sanders, Morris writes, "true greatness, true leadership, is achieved not by reducing men to one's service but in giving oneself in selfless service to them" (Morris, 2017, p. 6) [59].

Smith (2018) [77] also writes about spiritual leadership, "The definition and application of spiritual leadership include six behaviors that promote spiritual practices in the workplaces.

These are: respect for others' values, fair treatment, expressing care and concern, listening actively and responsively, showing appreciation for others' contributions, managing emotions" (Smith et al.,2018: p..81) [77]. So that, the spiritual leadership is accountability of the souls being led. This does not mean he doesn't care about their physical needs but his primary responsibility leading them to spiritual maturity. It is an authority is bestowed by God for the benefit of Christians (Hebrew 13:17). Paul writes in the second Corinthians that, the authority given from God to us is building rather than pulling down (2 Corinthians 10:8). God's plan for the church was "equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11, 12). The spiritual leadership should work and plan for his vision based on this tone.

Leadership in Christian Churches
Not all spiritual leaders are leading in the church setting. Leadership within Christian churches is a unique calling with its own set of challenges. William (2019) [82] notes that a leader is a person with a God given capacity and responsibility to influence a specific group of God's people towards God's purpose. And also Davis (2009) [16] adds that, church survival depends greatly on leadership abilities (Davis, 2009) [16]. The continued existence and growth of church will require sound leadership. In strengthening this point William (2019) [82] writes that the achievement of organizational goals and objectives depends on its leaders. Leaders prepare the agenda and influence the organization to be successful. Good leaders motivate the workers by giving cheers and rewards (Davis, 2009) [16]. Additionally, effective leaders knows where things are, where they want to go, and able to articulate vision. When these behaviors are practical in leadership the followers get inspired and put all their abilities to better performance (William, 2019) [82].
Hollinger (2013) writes that churches in the 21st century need godly leaders who are capable of influencing others to achieve the mission of the church. It needs leaders who puts values, and mission central to their leadership. Therefore, leaders who aim to grow their church must create a mission statement that gives direction for church planting and evangelism (Johnston, 2009) [43]. Moreover, leaders in the church should display moral development, community service and maintenance of positive relationships (Johnston, 2009) [43].
Davis (2009) [16] states that church leadership is relational, and requires skills and abilities, tolerance for vagueness, fundraising, advocacy, and grant writing and motivating a workforce. Since it is complex, it requires relationship among pastors, leaders, and members, and the community (Davis, 2009) [16]. Johnston (2009) [43] shows that a church leader must lead by example and never let pride, guilt, envy, that lure him from service to which God has appointed. In the book of Matthew the Bible says, "Whoever wants to be great, must be your servant" (Mathew in 20: 26).
One of the effective practices of leaders in churches is prayer. Church leaders who make impact are those who pray together. Methods, programs, goals, and plans without prayer may become dry and short-lived (Johnston, 2009) [43]. Ingram (2016) strongly recommends this point by stating that, prayer is like the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink; it is a necessity for survival in the Christian realm. So, a church leader without partnering with God's divine initiative cannot revive, grow, and expand (William, 2019)

[82].

The Leadership Challenge
Challenges are issues which affect the forward movement of an institution (Hawkins, 2009). These challenges emerge from external, internal and the leaders themselves (Rabinowitz,,n.d; Mekuria, 2017) [54]. The leadership challenge is about how leaders mobilize others to get extraordinary things done (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. Kouzes & Posner (2010) [50] add more stating "there are always challenges in leadership when a leaders transforms values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into unity, and risks into rewards." According to Morris (2017) [59] there are five leadership primary challenges. The first is *developing managerial effectiveness:* The challenge of developing the relevant skills such as time management, prioritization, strategic thinking, decision making, and getting up to speed with the job to be more effective at work. The second is *inspiring others,* the challenge of inspiring or motivating others to ensure they satisfied with their jobs and motivated to work smarter and attend the church. The third point to Morris (2017) [59] is *developing others*, the challenge of developing others, especially through mentoring and coaching. Fourth is *leading a team,* the challenge of team building, team development, and team management. The last is Guiding change the challenge of managing, mobilizing, understanding, and leading change, including mitigating the impact of change, overcoming resistance to it, and dealing with followers' reaction to change.
In addition, Kohls quoting Elliston's (1988) summarized work on leadership problems commonly found in Church writes that today's churches are experiencing:.
- Growth is placing unmet demands on leaders in some areas.
- Over functioning leaders who try to do everything and decide everything is frustrating the church in some areas.
- Nonfunctioning leaders are allowing churches to die.
- Undertrained leaders are not leading to their full potential in many churches.
- Over trained leaders are discouraged and discouraging as well as frustrated and frustrating to the churches.
- Inappropriately trained leaders continue to do all of the wrong things in the wrong places, at the wrong times, and in the wrong ways.
- Dropout leaders continue to fill the ranks of government bureaucracies, development agencies, and private business.
- Overextended leaders try to meet all of the pastoral and sacramental functions of multiple congregations and seek to uphold the artificially high western standards of ministry but deny the priesthood of all believers.
- Coordinating leaders use church leadership training programs to jump into suitable positions in business, government, and Para church agencies (Kohls, 1998, P. 108).

Leadership by itself is a challenge. As a Rabinowitz (n.d) noted, three kinds of challenges happen in any organizations. Externally from people and situations, internally within the leader himself and from the circumstance of being a leader. Therefore, when challenges happen, using strategies to cope is better option to stay focused on it (Rabinowitz, n.d).

Methodology
Research Questions
The purpose of the study is to understand the leadership practices and challenges in Sodo City Local KHC fellowship. The overarching research question for this study was, how do Sodo City Kale Heywot Church leaders describe their leadership practices? And what are the leadership challenges faced by Sodo City KHC fellowship leaders?

Research Design
The research was designed to use qualitative method. Qualitative research stresses the way of people interpret and make sense of their experiences to understand social life's reality (Fugard and Potts, 2015) [27]. Its main aim is to provide a detailed understanding of human beliefs, emotion, attitudes, and perspectives by providing complex textual descriptions on a given research issues (Sandelowski, 2004) [73]. Based on this, people's belief, attitudes, understanding and experiences on a given research questions were assessed, described and narrated. The study design was phenomenological in its type. Phenomenological studies survey human experiences through the images provided by the people who participate. Such experiences are called lived experiences (Greening, 2019) [31]. The goal of phenomenological studies is understanding people's perception and perspectives for each subject. Pathak (2017) [68] describes that the best criteria to use of phenomenology is when the research problem requires a deep understanding of human experience common to group of people. Information is generally obtained through interviews. To understand the lived experience from the vantage point of the subject, the researcher must take into account his own beliefs and feeling (Greening, 2019) [31].

Description of Study Area
The study site Sodo City local KH churches fellowship office is located in the southern part of Ethiopia. It was conducted in the administrative center of Wolaita Zone, Sodo. It is located at a distance of 327 km. south of Addis Ababa. Wolaita Sodo town had a total population of 146,490. (Befikadu et al., 2012; WZFED, 2018; Naol et al., 2019) [4, 85, 62].
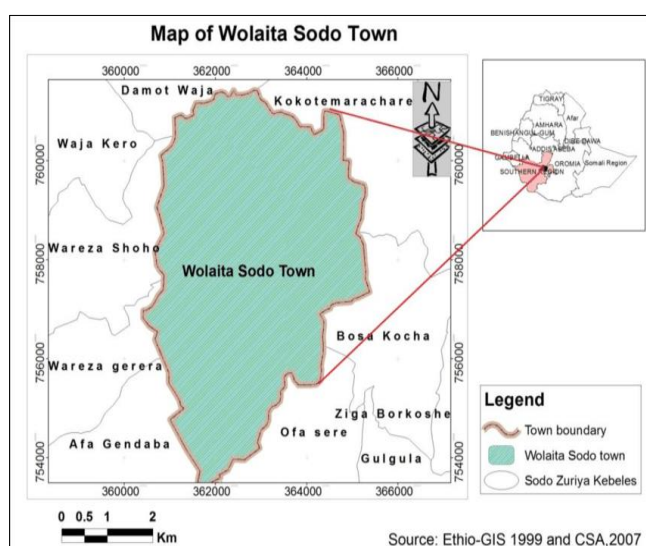
Note: Map taken from Befikadu & Yonatan, (2012) [4]

Fig 1: *Map of Wolaita Sodo Town*

Sampling techniques and sample size
Purposive sampling is one that selects sample based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study that represents the population. Based on this, from total of 37 Local KHC the researcher purposefully selected five local churches. The interviews were participants who have served above twenty years in a church as a criteria to select informants and for those church elders who have served more than two terms. Therefore, a total of ten individuals of pastors, evangelists and elders were interviewed for the research. The sample size was determined by saturation point. Saunders et al., (2017) noted that in interviews when the researcher hears the same comments repeatedly again and again, data saturation is being reached; therefore, after 10 interviews, I stopped collecting information and started analyzing what has been collected.

Instrumentation
The primary data was gathered using semi-structured interviews with an open ended questionnaire to answer the research question and accommodate individual variations (Marshal, 1996) [52]. The researcher asks, and listens to, what informants say about their lived situation in the church. The main technique of data collection for this study is interviews. All the interview protocol is similar for each of the informants. But, before starting the main interview for the study; it was first field tested all the interview protocols for the interview.
The interview protocol (Appendix A) consisted of a mixture of demographic and other questions.
Demographically the following questions were asked;
About gender; Male or female; Age Group in years, below 26, 26-35, 36-45 and above 55
About educational Background; below certificate, certificate, diploma, BA/BSC Degree, MA/MSC Degree, PhD.
Questions regarding leadership experiences; Less than 1, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, and above 20.
The twelve interview questions asked were listed below.
1. How do you define leadership?
2. What is your philosophy of leadership? Or what are your beliefs about leadership?
3. How do you describe your leadership style?
4. What are some things you DO as a leader?
5. In what ways are you a role model for others?
6. How do you share the vision/mission with others?
7. What are some things you do to enable/empower others?
8. How do you encourage others for their contributions?
9. How do you plan to challenge the statuesque of your church? (For example - What are your thoughts about directing change? How do you come up with new ideas?
10. What are some of the challenges you face as a leader?
11. What do you do to overcome challenges?
12. Is there anything else you want to say to me?

The Researcher Role
In the study, a researcher begins with a theory, provide statements of past experiences and collects data that either supports or disproves the theory and then makes the necessary reviews and additional tests. As a member to KHC, I had an experience of the church leadership practices and challenges. Therefore, it is important to the researcher that the study be credible and trustworthy. I am a third generation of this denomination which means my paternal grandparents and parents are members of this denomination.

My main function in this study was gathering and organizing of information and examination of the results of the information collected during of face-to-face interviews. To maintain the purpose and the validity of the research, all ethical standards were applied. Careful evaluation was needed to remove personal ideas and perspectives which may create bias in the research information. For example, pointing informants to a direction where the researcher wants and adding and removing on someone else's ideas for personal gains. Therefore, when researchers recognize and set aside their ideas, they are better at understanding the details of others' experiences, which I tried to do throughout the study

Data Collection

Before beginning data collection, requested a permission letter to conduct the study from Sodo City Local KHC fellowship. Two letters were requested, one is the general permission letter to the overall project work (Appendix A) and the next is to about informant's permission request (Appendix B). And after obtaining the approval, I started the work. The interview were conducted in agreed and suitable place for both of us. The selected place was church, office and hotel gardens. One-on-one interviews served to gather information on each church leader's perceptions of their leadership practice and challenges and impact on church at Sodo City Local KHC.

During the interviews, I listened carefully, and took notes and audio recorded, ask probing questions as needed, and allowed the participants to speak without interrupting. Follow up questions were asked as needed. Each interview took approximately maximum of 40 minutes. At the end of data gatherings, I held debriefing sessions via telephone with 4 participants for any unexpected misunderstandings. Debriefing was also a further opportunity to thank participants for their involvement in completing the research and assure them that their confidentiality would be maintained. The informants had full opportunity to accept or refuse the audio or written formats recording process. Each participant will have enough time to answer the interview questions honestly.

Data Analysis

Data for this study was analyzed using thematic analysis method. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that involves searching closely for ideas, items, underlying meanings and assumptions in a given data set to analyze and report repeated patterns (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Mohajan, 2018). When engaging in thematic analysis, researchers can identify themes irrespective of the number of times a particular idea or item related to that theme appears in a data set (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

The following steps are most commonly used method in thematic analysis for a theme identification. The data analysis was started after all data have been gathered and prepared (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). The steps used here was outlined by Kiger & Varpio (2020). In the first step I was familiarized with the data set actively and repeatedly reading the interviews, and recorded observations. The second step was coding. In the second step themes were not generated. Only phenomenon was assessed, well defined and demarcated to

prevent overlap with other coding. All data coding process was done in this manner by hand. In the third step coded and collated data was examined for broader significance. Then the theme construction were begun by analyzing, combining and comparing codes to relate with one another.

Step four was reviewing of all relevant coded data placed within each theme. Looking for each themes supporting, common and coherent data types. Kiger & Varpio (2020) points that, "data excerpts can be resorted and themes modified to better reproduce coded data. Theme adding, combining, dividing and even discarding was done here. In the process detailed notes, memos, thought of decisions made was not deleted it was used to make connections for further references" (p. 6).

In the fifth step, themes were defined and named. The importance and contribution of each theme was evaluated with broader study questions. Looking of overlap between themes, identifying of emergent sub themes which can be used both to provide detail of themes and to describe hierarchies within the data. The last step was report writing for data analysis and describing of the findings. The report was written in clear, concise, and logical account of data interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

I was granted ethical clearance to conduct the research by the Wolaita Evangelical Seminary. I used pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants. All participants were made aware of their voluntary status in participation in this study (See Appendix B for details). Before beginning the study, I provided a written description of the study's risks, and benefits. I was the only person to have absolute control over the information, which remains secured at home as well as password locked computer. The leaders who participated in the research given code numbers, which will serve as their pseudonyms to protect their identities during the research process. All the information will be destroyed and erased five years after completion of the research.

Findings

Demographics and Background Information

To understand the backgrounds of the participants, four demographic questions were asked. Totally 10 people were interviewed. All the informants are males among those four were between the age ranges of 56-65. Three of them served for two terms and two of them are for 5 terms. (Terms here means the position of elder leadership stay in the church. Once an elected leader serves for 3 years, he can be re-elected for another 3 years; that is said to be second terms). Three were pastoral ministers and the remaining three were evangelists. When seeing the respondent's age category, six of the ten were in the age range of 46-55. Their length of ministry ranged from 22 to 41 years. Eight of the respondents were serving in the local church and two were general and vice secretaries of the fellowship.

When looking their educational backgrounds, five of them were with Bachelor of Arts degree in theological education, two of the respondents are Masters Students in Christian leadership and three were with Bachelors of Arts degree in education from secular university.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Name	Churches	Sex	Age	Education	Years of Experience	Terms

Bassa	Church-A	Male	46-55	BA in Education	15 years	5 terms
Anjulo	Church-C	Male	56-65	BA in Education BTh in Theology	15 years	5 terms
Enkeshe	Church-D	Male	46-55	BA Degree	6 years	2 terms
Loha	Church-E	Male	56-65	MA in Christian Leadership	Above 20 years	
Fanta	Church-A	Male	46-55	BA in Education	Above 20 years	
Buche	Church-D	Male	56-65	BA in education	6 years	2 terms
Asale	Church-B	Male	56-65	Diploma	6 years	2 terms
Dagaga	Church-E	Male	46-55	BTh in Theology	Above 20 years	
Ginjo	Church-C	Male	46-55	BTh in Theology	Above 20 years	
Bachore	Church-D	Male	46-55	BTh in Theology	Above 20 years	

Note: Experiences are for evangelist and pastoral leaders whereas terms are for elders

Review of the Methodology

The research used a qualitative methodology and was phenomenological in its design. It was designed to capture and understand the real life of the people. Their belief systems, attitudes, understandings and experiences were assessed and described. The understandings of people's perception and perspectives of each subject in relation with the research questions were assessed.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected and gathered using open ended interview questionnaires. Thematic analysis was the main data analysis tool that was used to answer the research questions. The collected data then was condensed and categorized in themes. The study totally used ten people for the interviews and selected those informants purposefully. All 10 participants provided detailed answers to open ended interview questions. All respondents' views were received, considered and respected. Throughout this research, each participant was fully informed of the process that this research would undertake. Each participant also had adequate time to commit the process, being fully informed, and were aware of their ability to withdraw for any reason, during the research data collection period.

Results

Participants were asked twelve interview questions organized around two research questions (see Appendix X). The following themes emerged from participants' responses to interview questions: (a)Thoughts about Leadership (Definitions, Philosophy, Styles of Leading), (b) Leadership Practices (Planning & Coordination, Being a Role Model, Vision Sharing, Empowering, Encouraging, Directing Change) (c) Leadership Challenges (Challenges They Experience, Overcoming Challenges), (d) Hopes for the Future (Involving New Generations, Resolving Cultural Issues, Appointing Bible Based Leaders and Listening to the People).

The following sections describe the themes and include participants' feedback.

Thoughts about Leadership

Leadership is a different thing to different people and different things in different situations. Understanding how a person defines leadership is essential. After collecting the informants' demographic data, the interview was started by asking a question about their leadership practices and challenges, including their definition of leadership. Some of the respondents had a ready response, whereas others paused to think about the question before answering. The following are the definitions given by the informants to leadership.

Definitions

The respondents described different conceptions of what leadership means. As Bassa, a Pastor in Church-A noted, it is a way of leading self and family, before leading a church. Because leading self and family is the first requisites (1Timothy, 3:4) and in verse 4 *(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)* KJV.

On the other hand, Evangelist Anjulo from Church-C defined leadership as, "standing in front to show direction to the people and he is the first in education, in grace, and has the ability and/or capacity to take the people forward and makes the people to believe in him." To Enkeshe, leadership is, "trustfulness, being exemplary to others, it is full of knowledge, and leading and looking equally to his people."Loha a secretary at Church-D, shared a different idea that emphasized shepherding, "Leadership is shepherding of God's people in a direction put by God, It is, first finding the way and leading others on that way." So, it is keeping watch, paying careful attention, guarding and protecting the flock, equipping, building according to written word of God (Psalm 77:20, Ex. 33: 15-16, Hos 11:4, Ex. 15:26).

Philosophy

In responding to the questions related to philosophy some of the participants were hesitant and not clear with their thoughts about it. Buche, a leader of Church-A said, "why philosophy is needed to the church, since it is created by insane people?" His idea is based in the culture in which people locally looks youths who read a philosophical books culturally were seen as someone who practicing evil spirit. According to Fanta, a leader in church-A philosophy, "It is working of the will of God, it is not working with the will of man so, basing his work on the Bible and prayer is his main philosophy of leadership." Dagaga shared a different perspective, "it is believing in one's capacity to do something and then doing it with that capacity." To him, capacity and ability are a requirement to guide a philosophy. First believing that he can accomplish what he thought and acting with that belief. So, it is believing and acting to him. Loha described it differently, before doing something, he wants to know the people's motives by asking his workmates and then working based on their motives. It is people's intention that guides his leadership. Loha again added about his philosophy of leadership by mentioning that he always wants to start his work from bottom line that nobody wants to start. He described this point by stating, that his leadership is based on people being outcast by others economically, racially, physically, and mentally. To Bachore, Ginjo, and Bassa leadership philosophy was related to working to satisfy

others.

Styles of Leadership
Most of the Sodo city KHC leader participants reported their leadership styles were *servant and democratic* types of leadership. Ginjo from Church-C mentions a reason why he chose to use servant leadership, as he believes he is "called to serve others not to be boss over others." Jesus himself came to earth not to be served but to serve; therefore Ginjo concludes that he was called to serve Master Jesus and others.

Leadership Practices
Leaders develop a leadership practices based on their personality, goals, and organizational culture. The activities leaders chose is going to make them either succeed or fail. For any organization to succeed, it needs to have strong leadership. People who can manage their teams effectively to get the most productivity out of them are essential. Leadership practices are actions and strategies that help the team better themselves and attain growth. The practices the participants reported using provide directions, help to implement plans, and motivate people. The following leadership practices are the results obtained from the interview conducted in the Sodo city KHC fellowship leaders. They include: a) planning & coordination, being a role model, vision sharing, empowering, encouraging, directing change)

Planning and Coordination
Planning and coordination is a main leadership practice most of the participants reported. All activities which are currently running in the fellowship are the result of planning and coordination. In recommending his activities in the church Bassa, pastor of Church-A notes that he has: A plan for activities which are going to be launched in the church and discuss it with fellow members in the group before it is cascaded to downward because it needs careful analysis to execute in a small group. There are coordinations and follow-up checks for how they are executing it and appointing of other small group leaders.

So, these are the ways he works his plan in a church. Another leader, Anjulo, leader of Church-C comments about his planning and coordination, "planning in unity, executing all church activities in a team with the spiritual department, representatives of youth leaders, kids, women, and choir members, making a visitation of church members house, coordinating social activities when something bad and good happens in the life members (like death loss, wedding) and cross-checking overall activities of the church." These are mostly the activities cared out in the church as a leader of the church.

Planning and coordination activities for to pastor Fanta in the church include, "Marriage counseling, supporting economically weak people, coordination of spiritual department as a senior pastor to church and evaluations." Bachore, leader of Church-D simply states the activities he is taking, "coordinating of spiritual department, construction activities, planning for salary payment of ministers and serving people who to church needing support." To Enkeshe, planning and coordination activities include: "disciple-making, training bible study team, preaching, teaching, music playing, singing and coordination of youth." Asale, secretary in Church-B notes some different types of functions, "writing of all the meeting minutes of the church, coordinating social

wings of the church, controlling church materials and preparing a meeting agendas." All the leaders have their own plans and coordinating activities they share with their followers. To Loha, pastor at KHC fellowship, planning and coordination activities include, "Equipping the spiritual life of his subordinates, praying in team with a group of other team leaders, follow up ministers and the activities of youth's, preparing a trainings to curve false teachings which is widely moving in the city and giving trainings and fulfilling the needs of guards." Overall, the leaders of the churches spend much of their leadership time coordinating and planning activities

Being a Role Model
Leaders are an example for their followers to inspire them. They can demonstrate personal responsibilities for their actions. Before motivating others they can motivate themselves. It is important to note that all the respondents who answered the interview questionnaire indicated that they are role models to others. The leaders interviewed described their role modeling to those around them in the following ways. As it is stated by Anjulo, one of Church-C leaders "it is showing by being obedient to God's word, being available on time and going after everyone leaving the room" is one of his positive model activities for his followers. Loha, tells his experience, "it is being obedient to higher leaders, being loyal to the works he has to be appointed, being humble, and learning without stopping furthering of education, for the seek of gospels passing through uncomfortable situations like walking a lot of kilometers on foot to preach, teach the true word of God and by prayer."
Fanta shared an alternative viewpoint for his way of modeling, "by being happy and showing happiness to others, by being transparent and clean." To Dagaga, it is "listening to his followers, helping them, understanding their problem and situations, by being not negative to others" is a way he shows to others. "Showing the biblical way of living in life and by serving in a lower area not liked by others" is a model way to Enkeshe.

Vision Sharing
Most of the respondents noted that a leader should share a vision to inspire followers and convey a vibrant and attractive picture of the organization. For Bachore, pastor of Church- D KHC vision sharing encompasses, "discussion with each department and elder teams about written plans." To Anjulo, vision sharing is done during "group prayer time when they become one in spirit and it is sometimes also based on the rules and regulations of the church."
Bassa, senior pastor tells about how he would share his vision with others says, "As a senior pastor of the church I am mandated the coordination of all spiritual departmental tasks. So, I share his vision when he coordinates, mobilizes, and discusses with others." Loha, secretary of the fellowship notes, "we all who are working in the office have equal responsibility of the tasks running in the office and equally celebrates when we succeed and weak when we fail, I try to make all should be participated in vision sharing to have equal accountable for what we are doing." Vision sharing to Asale, secretary of stadium KHC takes, "during church elders prayer time and group Bible study time." Dagaga, shares his vision with others in a thoughtful way, "first writing it and praying over it personally alone and bring forward to discuss with others, there, if it got acceptance we will do it together"

he said.

Empowering

Empowering includes power-sharing with subordinates and giving them decision-making authority to increase commitment to organizations. Enabling others in the research area includes.

Two Forms: Individualistic empowerment and group empowerment. In individual empowerment all the respondents comment about their church's activity. They are allowing youngsters to preach in a small group, appointing to lead a team, allowing to participate in decision making, listening to their problems and solving it. Training is also one of the mechanisms chosen by them to capacitate. Dagaga and Loha, a secretary of Church-E state the same idea about how they empower individually notes, "according to their needs and talents we empower them. First, we work on the identification of individual weaknesses and strengths then we provide the teaching and training to fill their weak sides, allowing praying in our team to be well prepared for outside prayer" Loha said. Whereas, group empowerment is empowering all the team members, choirs, women, and youth ministry together. It includes allowing them in evangelism activities and following up with them until they leave the church to join the university." Asale mentions how his church empowers the group, "allowing to study the bible in a group, providing a one-year BTCP or Bible training course, short term disciple-making course and giving Amharic Bible Degree course to the group empowerment." Buche notes his church's activity towards empowerment, "They provide experience sharing between churches and among youths by calling specifically experienced and graceful leaders to the church and sometimes taking other areas." Therefore, empowering the followers either individually or in group is important power source for the church to be successful for her future careers.

Encouraging

Encouragement takes a different form in the church. Leaders use their strategies to uplift the morale of their followers. Buche encourages his followers on the staff by giving them a task to be completed by them and by fulfilling the needed materials. His church motivates by providing flashlights and night clothes to the guards. Paying their salaries without delay, freely giving mobile cards during each month and when holidays come extra holiday payment to ministers and encouraging cleaners by gifting a Bible. And also their church provides long-term loan services for pastors and evangelists.

To Anjulo, all the responses about encouragement from the respondents can summed up in the idea of discussions and feedback. Therefore, to him encouragement means being with them in their time, following up, and and giving feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.

Directing Change

Change is inevitable and it is everywhere. The informants shared how they manage changes in their church. Much of the change management is directed to the spiritual side. All commented on managing changes in the area of worship activities. Bassa notes that:

When the church was first established, they formed two times choirs worship program. One is taken at the

beginning of the Sunday program and the second is, at last, to shut the program with their worship. This is the time for people to leave the church without shutting down the program. The reason behind this, might be hating the last worship and by being tired of long taking program. Mostly the program is not timely manageable, it can take 4 up to 5 hours. Because of such routines, they have changed the worship style."

Fanta comments about his challenging the status quo "When the first time women started wearing the trouser in the church there was a big debate occurred. The church was divided into trouser supporting and unsporting groups. At this time what I did was called gift full orator to teach the church about whether is it good or bad. Then logically he changed the mind of both teams and the situation was changed into the idea of when and where should it wear." Training played a great role to direct change at that time.

Leadership Challenges

Each of the leaders was asked about the challenges they faced. The leadership challenges they reported are grouped under three main domains: External, internal, and challenges from leadership itself.

External Challenges

External challenges emanate from the community and situations of the area. One of the greatest challenges from the community to the church is false teachings. It is currently a headache to the church which polluted many youth in the church. In commenting on the situation Asale, one of the elders in the church states, "a lot of our church's youth who secretly running Biblically false teaching of Calvinism regarding, 'there is no sin if you commit anything on your flesh, the flesh is outermost protection for the soul sin cannot damage the soul.' With this teaching, those who ignored our advice, braked the church rules and even hated their parent's advice. 28 youths were fired from the church." This indicates how it is taking the ground in the church. Similarly, another church leader mentions, "There are also teachings which contradict the true Biblical teaching like Jehovah Witnesses, the Jesus only teaching and The Ethiopian Orthodox Church's, which are stealing and converting our members to their beliefs is one of our biggest threats." When coming out of religious challenges, the other external challenges happening to the church are from the cultural side.

Gifata which is said to be the New Year holiday to the people of Wolaita, is currently not accepted by the KHC and is a great political issue. The government is forcing the church leaders to celebrate and participated in the meeting. Therefore, the church has no clear-cut boundary with the idea and it is leading a lot of people to misconceptions. In some other places, leaders celebrate and other places do not. In other places, the followers murmur 'why do they celebrate and why we do not?' Because of lacking the boundary, the churches are in the chaos of cultural issues which is another threat to the church.

Asale comments, that instead of following the Bible. People follow somebody's fashion and the impact of globalization is immeasurable. He adds, "the political decision are currently taking the ground."

Internal Challenges

Regarding internal challenges in the church, these happen

inside/among leaders. Respondents noted many different types of internal challenges. Both Buche and Bassa, mention some of the challenges they faced internally, some leaders are dictatorial, take decisions without communicating with others. "We all are called and appointed to lead the church but, what would be the feeling if you are ignored and dominated by someone who is filled with 'I know everything spirit?" said Buche. Another leader, Enkeshe, notes the internal challenge of his church, "One of the elders in the church secretly hiding tithes from members for his gain but later identified by another team that, tither was come to the church to receive the receipt for his money. As a leader, what we did was we made it secret no one to hear that and asked the guy to pay back what he steals." Again Enkeshe notes, "When a pastor, accepted by the people and the church start growth, he wants to leave the church and shift to another area by breaking the heart of people." Another problem is jealousy, "when the church gives a scholarship to another evangelist, the next one starts to fight with elders and coordinates his supporting team to divide the church." This is the challenge the church is enduring.

Bassa, who served for the last 27 years as an evangelist expresses his ill-treatment by elders, "one of my fellow evangelists couldn't accomplish the orders they had given to him. He left undone because the order was contrary to the Biblical idea. As a result, they give him a warning letter. The second is happened on me, they chased me for asking them to increase my salary. The saddest story of all is that they decreased me from my previous salary for stating a reason why I asked for a salary increment and later on I moved in to other newly planted church and serving there." Poor thinking, looking for blood relationships, undermining pastors, sometimes holding and cutting the salaries is their bad activities that were happened to him

Bachore adds, "Elders' biggest worry is not the Bible; their biggest worry is the rules and guidelines, instead of doing what the Bible says, they try to refer to the regulations and listen to the high officials. Because of that a lot of tasks remain decision-less. If you see someone sinning, they don't want to punish and give a lesson, they ask you to bring a witness for the case. The other internal challenge is the prayer of people is directed toward an individual, they curse their brothers and sisters in Christ instead of cursing the devil."

Another Pastor, Dagaga, notes internal challenges he is experiencing, "your friend together laborer in the kingdom falsely accuses and persecutes you for something you never know and mobilizes others on you. If people love you and become accepted your workmate hates you."

Another thing is that no one is asks you for what you eat or drink but, you are working day and night. Sometimes you become truthful and expose the lies, the lie supporters persecute you but I experienced the situation I have no care for myself even people in group insult me, but I don't allow them to speak nothing on the church and Christ" Dagaga said.

Telling about the challenges he encountered Enkeshe notes, "Mostly they (elders) say and forces us to do that stating this message is sent from the upper leaders so do it even if it is negative with the Bible."

Anjullo from Kera KHC in summary form explains, "There are cultural issues that are unresolved yet and hovering a fight each year between leaders and followers. People need clear cut orders either to celebrate or not. This needs to be solved soon. The other big issues is when we call people for group prayer program no one wants to attend, they are disobedient and disrespectful to their leaders. Not only members are disobedient but also we, leaders ourselves are not feeling good to attend for prayer cession some of us are missing." These are what the churches are facing internally.

Challenges arising from leaders themselves
Many of the leaders reported such kind of leadership challenges happen when leaders neglect to work with the vision/mission of the organizations. Lack of mutual respect, lack of commitment, and feeling for leadership to do their best, (for instance lacking feeling to involve others in ideas sharing). As Bassa indicated, some leaders lack interest for growing themselves or furthering their education, they want to continue business as usual. Therefore, they are easily discouraged by their followers by idea. Enkeshe, remarks, "finding a wise and intellectual minister is a big challenge to the church when you hire someone seeing his outer characteristics, he become inefficient and not well qualify for a position he is appointed." Therefore, leaders are not well prepared for the time and situations they are preaching.

Overcoming Challenges
There are many challenges that leaders at the Sodo City KHC fellowship are passing through. Facing challenges and bringing a solution through them builds resilience and capacity. Therefore, overcoming obstacles and learning from struggles, and benefitting from mistakes lays solid foundations for success. As they have mentioned their problems, they have too noted a solution for overcoming those challenges. All the respondents answered that they use individual and group prayer and Bible teaching as a base to overcome the challenges. An elder named Buche, mentions how he overcome the challenges he faced, "I approach in love and patience instead of hate and vengeance, communicates taking a long time, eating and being together with them" is his chosen method.

Dagaga, notes his way of overcoming the challenges by, "Specifically communicates with the trouble maker, begging him to stop that, and approaching politely and being modest to him." Alternatively, Bachore shares his experience about how he overcomes the challenges, "To solve a problem I looks a different kind of options, looking my weaknesses in relations to the situations, consulting senior ministers who are currently retired and communicating with my hearty friends." Enkeshe, uses, "records the case in a minute form for future references with the individual, if the same mistakes happen with the same individual then he punishes, the other option is passing of participative decisions and the last option is removing."

Hopes for the Future
In spirt of the challenges, the respondents do have hopes and ideas for the future about what the church should look like and change. Their future wishes and hopes cans be arranged in four main themes: a) involving new generations, b) resolving cultural issues c) appointing Bible based leaders d) listening to the people

Involving New Generations
According to the respondents, the new generations defined here are those individuals who are capable of using new technology, more literate in secular and spiritual education, knows the present situations very well and even know each other's weaknesses and strengths very well., These people

have potential to do and create new things. Therefore, including new generations in the church benefits more since they are more experienced than the older ones in education, creativity, and technology use. Loha said, "Todays generations are digitalized; they can easily break any passwords under lock but, the leaders even don't knows how the passwords work." Asale, adds on this, "They reads and referees any English Bible commentaries which we don't read and touch with our hands." Therefore, their involvement can lay a foundations for future churches.

Resolving Cultural Issues
Cultural issues are defined here as the issues which are a challenge to the functioning of the church and its leadership. Cultural issues, especially the celebration of Gifata, and the New Year commemorations which are the people's cultural celebrations, have no clear demarcations about whether to celebrate or not. Mostly, the KHC leaders see it as a culture connected with evil spirits. But, the youth sees it as their ancestral culture and want to celebrate it. There are differences and divisions among leaders. Some leaders celebrate the festivals and others do not. In some places people celebrate and in other areas not. But, what government bodies do is that when the time of celebration approaches they invite the KHC leaders to attend and celebrate with them. But, still that nobody wants to solve it either biblically or secularly in research. The people are continued in the division. Therefore, the leaders and respondents to this research forwarded for future it should be resolved. Ginjo, mentions what he felt stating, "Because of preaching the cultural issues in the church people who love and support the culture are out casted me; for example one of our member whose son marries called the Orthodox believers to slaughter the ox for the ceremony. The Orthodoxies sees, the evangelicals as someone who believes in devil not on God, because of not worshiping for saint Marry. Though, the evangelical's slaughtered meet/ox is ghoulish or evil to them. So, I told him not to do that, we have to teach them that, we are worshiping not evil we worship the creator of heaven and earth Almighty God. Then that individual hated me even to see with his eyes stating, you was planned to spoil my ceremony but, God spared it said."

Appointing Bible-Based Leaders
The respondents define this theme that, most of the appointed leaders, especially church elders, have no background in theological studies. Some are teachers in high school or have an educational background, others are merchants who have no academic awards, and some others are government office workers who are filled with the spirit of politics and want to lead the church with that spirit and direction. Some of them are careless, others are late even coming to the meeting. In a briefing on this situation Pastor Bassa from Church-A notes, "All come to church at night in the spirit of tiredness, because teachers tired in their teaching school, merchants come tired, the cabinets come tired. When you give your work reports they don't care for that. The church needs hire real servants, her real concerning leader, someone who lifts her missions." Loha, adds to Bassa's ideas stating, "They more try to solve the challenges and problems by reading the rules and regulations of the church instead of looking solutions on the Bible." Dagaga, comments, "More, leaders are well enough to read Sunday's notifications and advertising of social issues on the pulpits, they look like social wing coordinators in the

church and their more attentions focus on buildings." Bassa, concludes that if future appointees are not Bible-based leaders, the survival of the church becomes in question. A number of leaders those are currently being on a position are not fit for leadership position. Dagaga notes "wisdom full, literate, and able to lead are sit outside, therefore, it could be changed soon if we want the success of the church.'

Listening to the People
Listening to the people is defined as giving attention to the problems church members are and understanding their current situations. Coming down to the people as well as lower team and group leaders, being with them and sharing their burdens is important. Anjulo, comments on the situation, Leaders are busy for the most unnecessary and giving high attention on the church's second objectives. The first agenda of the church the issues of the soul are forgotten and their attention is directed toward material things and social activities because of that most people see the KHC church as social issues accomplisher, not as Christ's missional church. The people want the listening leaders for their hunger, and thirst like Jesus shepherd on good pastures." Loha, notes, "They have to show ways how people to go and how to solve their daily life challenges."

Discussion
What follows is a discussion of the findings of the study. The first theme included thoughts about leadership (definitions, philosophy, styles of leading); three sub themes were identified. The definitions, the philosophy of leadership and their style of leadership commented by them is similar with the definitions given by Kouzes & Posner (2012) [49]. All except one individual all have their own philosophy of leadership which made them unique and successful in their endeavors of leadership which similar with Serrat (2018) [75] who indicated the importance of having a leadership philosophy which is personal and specific to one's own conditions and circumstances. It authentically reflects values and situations of a leader.

The leadership styles the leaders at Sodo KHC reported using are servant and democratic type which are mostly focused on serving others first and giving freedom and equal participation in decision making. Northhouse (2016) wrote, "Servant leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first and Democratic leadership involves freedom in expression of ideas, free participation, sharing of responsibilities, competence, justice, courage, honesty and the leader holds final responsibility" (p. 220).

The participants indicated that they were looking and following their master leader Jesus Christ in their every area of leadership by following his footstep. Which is similar with John (13:12-17) He washed the feet of disciples and encouraged them to follow his example.

A second theme was leadership practices, which included planning and coordination, being a role model, vision sharing, and empowering, encouraging, directing change. All leadership practices were similar with those mentioned in Kouzes & Posner's research work conducted in 2010 and 2012, which are: a) model the way, b) inspire a shared vision, c) challenge the process, d) enable others to act, and e) encourage the heart.

In relation with planning and coordination almost all the respondents stated that they function according to the plan and coordinate others based on that plan. I as a member of the

church, notice similar repetition of the plan that goes same each year. There is a movement of people and money in the church but changes are invisible. It does not seem there is a unique plan that takes the church and the people to the next level. Their plan is not inclusive for the livelihood situation of the people. We can easily understand this from internal migration of the church members to some other regions of Ethiopia for in search of food. Kouzes & Posner advise the leaders should change the status quo or usual situations of the organizations. This requires challenging of the present process in the church, to improve the system and services. Kouzes & Posner, (2012) [49] in their writing encourages that a leader makes something happen, to change the way things are and to create something that no one else has ever created before and people want to follow a leader who sees beyond todays difficulties. As Kouzes & Posner stated, they should plan for extraordinary future that does not yet exist in the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. They should have intimate knowledge of people's dreams, hopes, aspirations, about their daily problems, visions and values and work to bring economic independence.

The third theme was leadership challenges, which included challenges the participants experience and overcoming challenges. The challenges mentioned can be compared with Rabinowitz (n.d) stated as, internal, external and the challenges from circumstances.

One of the biggest challenges that the church faces is cultic/false teaching on the church youth. All of the participants emphasized its influence on the true teachings of the church. With this teaching some of the youths were betrayed and division has occurred of the church. For example, 27 youths who were accused on the foundational teaching of the Bible and the church were fired from church B. Again this may indicate lack of intimacy between and among the people, lack of knowledge of people's dreams, hopes, aspirations, visions and values (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49]. Therefore, grounded Biblical teaching is necessary on cultic teachings which are misleading followers from the church

The cultural issues which are one of the main church headaches were recorded as one of the main challenges to the leadership of the church as the findings indicated. The New Year celebration festival called Gifata, marriage ceremonies and other unmentioned issues, were an obstacle to the well-functioning of the church as mentioned under the theme of challenges they experience. Based on their responses I can conclude that, there is chaos and confusion among the people regarding with cultural issues. Which needs immediate solutions. Modeling of the behavior by commitment and leading by example rather than command is left job to do. Kouzes & Posner (2012) [49] supports this idea, "Leading by example is more effective than leading by command."

Finally, the participant hopes for the future included involving new generations, resolving cultural issues, appointing Bible based leaders and listening to the people. Again these points are similar with Kouzes and Posner statements of a) model the way b) inspire a shared vision, c) challenge the process d) enable others to act, and e) encourage the heart.

Northhouse (2016) mentioned listening as one of the characteristics of leaders. Kouzes and Posner (2012) [49] state the vision and mission of the organization cannot be achieved with single person action. It requires a team effort, solid trust and strong relationships and deep competence and cool confidence. William (2019) [82] therefore concluded working in

harmony births new ideas, brings diverse expertise, experience, and points of view when followers encouraged to participate in decision making process of the organization. Therefore, the literature indicates that leaders should be supportive and actively engage in the community activities, to resolve the economic challenges of the followers. The respondents of the study area did not mention their activity in relation to community support. Financial challenges are very difficult; many pastors cannot afford even their hand to mouth life. This directly indicates that there are gaps in church leadership participation in community support activities. Northouse (2016) [63] stated this idea as the last characteristics of servant leaders in is building of community. The leader fosters the development of community. Servant leaders shape community, make their living environment good place where people can feel safe and connected with others.

Reflections of the Researcher

My intent and goal in this study were to investigate leadership practices and challenges in the study area. What is interesting here is that the openness of the respondents to answer the research questions. As I stated, I would conduct the face to face interviews with the respondents, the interview location, cafe with Dagaga suddenly changed to office without any preempted communications. Though, I agreed to not disrupt him as I previously stated in the procedure. I encountered some challenges of interview, I was interview when I got free time, because my original time was occupied by my main jobs. Therefore, my reflection here is to employ other supporting individuals for future research.

As a researcher, I continuously observed their feeling and body language of the respondents. The first significant observation was they were not happy with the overall leadership of the church. For example, the salary they receive and the handling or leadership of the elders not good at all to them. My reflection to this is that, the church should nearly observe what they have and have nots to fill out.

My last reflection of the study is, that the leaders should plan to do something that is unknown to the area. What I observed is that all their plan year by year seems the same. Because, nothing has changed and changing. Therefore, they have to plan to create and invent something new.

Conclusion

The overall purpose of the study was to assess the leadership practices and challenges at Wolaita Sodo city Local KHC fellowship with the objectives to describe their leadership practices and challenges they face. The study's participants shared detailed responses to questions and expressed their beliefs about their leadership practices and challenges. Data analysis identified fifteen themes. Among those, eight themes were answers for two research questions. For the first research questions of leadership practices the research finding was six themes, they are; planning & coordination, being a role model, vision sharing, empowering, encouraging, directing change. For the research questions two, which is about leadership challenges the research found themes; challenges they experience and overcoming challenges. Additionally, recommendations were made about for leadership challenges that are found out by the study and possible actions were recommended and future research directions were also directed.

Recommendations

Kouzes & Posner (2010) [50] stated there are always challenges in leadership when leaders transform values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into unity, and risks into rewards. The Sodo KHC has faced the challenges of separation with regard to false teachings. Therefore, for future the church needs to be focused on teaching on the basics of cults, which would ground the followers on the truth.

There are dissatisfactions, lack of unity and jealousy among leaders. Which indicates lack clear shared vision in the church which fosters unity. William (2019) [82] notes a leader needs to have clear goals and a vision to make a positive impact. Kouzes & Posner (2012) [49] adds, if somebody is working as usual nothing new happens in the organizations. Kouzes and Posner suggests that, leaders should change the status quo or usual situations of the organizations.

Again Kouzes and Posner (2012) [49] concluded that, vision and mission of the organization cannot be achieved with single person, it requires a team effort, solid trust and strong relationships and deep competence and cool confidence. Therefore, group participations with individual accountability is mandatory. Like involving different church members who have different educational backgrounds should be participated and invited in accomplishing church mission and visions. And also leaders enable others to assist them in the insights and decisions needed and to effectively run an organization. Therefore, the leader's main task should be enabling of others this is similar with Kouzes & Posner ideas. (2012) [49]. For example, most of church activities cared out with backward experiences and traditionally, it is not with knowledge, and what the Bible orders to do. There are a lot of engineers, Drs, lawyers, consultants and attorneys others experts. Therefore, enabling them and using their talents are one of the potential to the church.

In general, the church should develop and hire leaders who have a new generational mindset. Such leaders should understand and addresses the challenges of globalization's impacts in the church. The leaders should have have their own self guiding leadership philosophies instead of following some others way. The study has found that some of the leaders are hesitant and not clear with what leadership philosophy is. As Serrat (2018) [75] said, philosophy is not about what to do, it is about what kind of person a leader is. Leadership without philosophy is a rudderless ship sailing for distant lands" therefore, building successful leadership philosophy builds strong team and organization. As Carter (n.d) said, Leadership based on someone else's philosophy does not make effective. Therefore, training about the creation of a leadership philosophy could be provided by the WKHC office.

In addition, Sodo City local KHC fellowship and the WKHC office should work together in developing/creating successful vision and mission of the church by looking at the present problems and challenges of the church, as well as the people's problems, to solve the problems their church is facing. There is a tendency of leaders to be threatened by other's participation, instead of mentoring and supporting them. Therefore, the lower and top level leaders should understand such kind of behaviors in the church and try to fix it by working with them. Meraku (2017) [55] asserts, if the ministry in the church does not consider mentoring they are going to lose the present-day generation of successors, if they lose the existing generation of successors then the future of the church

will not be bright.

Finally, the church should focus on their follower's life changing activities like reduction of poverty and low employment rates. If they do not do such kind of activities meantime, they gone lose the people, their system could not continue long carrying the missions and people will disperse to job search in other areas and that have opens great chance to change their membership. Therefore, I encourage the fellowship to work on people to change their mindset regarding job opportunity creation activities.

Therefore, I recommend that, the church should work on livelihood diversification plan in their plan and should teach about creativity and entrepreneurial activity. I encourage WKHC head offices should coordinate and prepare a curriculum on all types of false teachings on the Biblical truths. Kouzes & Posner supports this idea by stating the leader's main task should be enabling of others and empowering those around him (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) [49].

On this issues The Wolaita Evangelical Seminary should work more. They should have to prepare educational materials and arrange for a short term awareness creation trainings. Because, they have better understanding of the situations Biblically than others. Therefore, this is my recommendations for action to solve the problems in the church.

Based on analysis of the research, I have written down the recommendations of this study for future research. Because of the limited response of 10 participants in the study, further research is necessary to validate the strength of the main themes that emerged in this research. Future researchers might implement other methodologies such as quantitative or mixed method and other study designs with a larger sample size of participants which would enhance the generalizability of the results.

I encourage the next study should focus on the challenges of pastoral ministry, and elderly leadership challenges in the church. This was found out when I was exploring for the present study.

Dedication and Acknowledgements

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