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An Analysis of Mediators' Conflict Resolution Strategies of Selected Africa Inland Churches in Kangundo, Kenya

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Abstract:

The African Inland Church has undergone leadership wrangles at the national offices. These conflicts have however percolated to the local level which has resulted into schism which have caused some churches to separate completely and some factions went to courts to seek regress despite the mediation process that have taken place. The aim of this study is to analyse the mediators' resolution strategies of selected African Inland Churches in Kangundo. The objectives of the study are to analyze which conflict resolution strategies the mediators used in handling the conflicts and if they were balanced and to map out a pragmatic way of addressing and handling related conflicts in the future. The study adopted a qualitative research design. The target population was 11 KRCC churches where members of the congregation of all categories of men, women, pastors, adult youth and leaders were purposively selected. The researcher sampled 100 respondents from the 11 churches, approximately 25% of the total churches selected. The data was collected using questionnaires, focus group and narrative interviews which were administered by the researcher. The researcher used NVIVO 11 to analyse the data. The data was thematically analysed where responses were organized according to themes with the aid of the analytical tool. The predominant strategies mostly employed by DCC/RCC going by the numbers in QSQ2 were litigation and police force. Litigation received more responses and thus was the mode. Mediation and arbitration were the second key strategy. The DCCs involved together with the RCC did these efforts to their LCCs according to the responses. But the nature of these mediations was highly critiqued by the LCC elders, pastors and congregants. The other strategies to curb the conflicts were expulsion of the pastors, dismissal of the DCC chair and closure of churches. Litigation and court orders issued to churches were not balanced. Being authoritative and not giving the LCCs time to air their views was also imbalanced. On the side of LCC, sabotage and insubordination was an avoidance mechanism to face the real issues. The study recommends that LCC should be made to participate in grass root mediation process. There should be national dialogues and outlined mediation policy procedures in AIC church concerning conflict, schisms, mediation, and conflict transformation and the theology of mediation must be re-emphasized in theological colleges and universities.

Keywords: Conflict, resolution, mediation, strategies, churches

1. Background of the Study

Conflict, such a real part of life, has not by-passed the church and its leadership. Increasing uncertainty and complexity in the operating environment of organizations provide fertile ground for the onset of conflicts in organizations including the church. Hollenweger (1997) notes that conflict among the believers dates back to 1906 with Charles Price Jones and Charles Harrison Mason who were both pastors in the 'Church of God in Christ' in California. Though Jones was the leader of the church, Mason was more dominant and popular. Their harmonious working relationship ended in a split in 1907 due to a leadership struggle. When Mason left this church after excommunication, about half of the ministers and the members of the church followed him.

Traditionally, however, the church has not dealt effectively with the issue of conflict in the church. Successful management of conflict requires administrative skills and considerable knowledge of organizational strategies, neither of which has generally been given very high priority (Hugh, 1991). Because the church is so vulnerable to conflict today, the creative handling of controversy is no longer an option but a necessity. Managing conflict effectively would guarantee a better peaceful society (Clement, 2004).

The African Inland Church (AIC) has undergone leadership wrangles at the national offices which percolated to the local churches. There has been a leadership dispute in the tenure of former Bishop Dr. Silas Yego. During November 2006, the AIC church held its elections which begun from the local churches up to the level of the presiding bishop. A court application by Rev. David Mbuvi, a former leader at the CCC was that the elections were mismanaged by outgoing Bishop (Rev. Dr. Silas Yego) which resulted to emergence of two factions one led by Rev. Mbuvi and another by the outgoing bishop. The Registrar of Societies on 23rd February 2007 decided to register the faction led by the outgoing bishop, a decision which was contested. Therefore a long and protracted battle for leadership and control of the church between the two factions followed leading to the filing of several suits in the High Court.

As already mentioned fraction of pastors has had issues with the bishop both claiming to be the head of the Church. On September 2012, Justice Odunga granted ex-parte orders in favor of the petitioners (bishop Silas Yego) restraining the Rev. Mbuvi faction and his supporters from interfering with the petitioners' rights to administer the AIC which orders were later confirmed by this Court on 13th January 2013 after the hearing inter-parties of the Application dated 2nd September 2012

The faction filed under the Societies ACT of Kenya filed a request that 'any efforts to resolve the wrangles and confusion herein should thus involve the joint participation of both sides. This followed a situation where the incumbent bishop Silas Yego held a meeting with AIC pastoral leadership.

The conflict which started as a leadership wrangle, then a church split then morphed into armed conflicts and violence at the grass root local church levels resulting into eviction, destruction of church properties and barring of worshipers from accessing the churches mostly situated in Machakos and Trans-Nzoia Counties. According to affidavits sworn in courts, the gangs used physical force to assault loyalists. The matters were table before the Attorney General still following 'ownership' issues of the AIC church.

Kangundo RCC is located in Machakos, where many churches had issues. There are actual churches that had schisms and moved out of KRCC due to major internal conflicts. The wave prevailed from 2007 onwards. For instance, in one church which I will call Church A and which was one of the mother churches in KRCC, developed internal conflicts due to holding to the AIC tradition, which was an influence by Pentecostal churches around it. A mass number of congregants was swept away by the movement. In Church B, due to the strict disciplinary rules and its conservative culture, two pastors were excommunicated from the church for having charismatic elements. In 2004, there was a mass number of youths migrated from the church to Pentecostal churches.

There were equally church splits experienced in Kangundo RCC. For instance, a church had a project funded by one of its members who works in the USA where he got some partners to sponsor his home church. When the DCC transfers were issued, the 'older' pastor refused to move on for his transfer with the support of church elders. The LCC elders had requested he stays to finish the funded project. When the DCC came for the resolution, one official said they will follow the pastor to a latter end. This statement sparked chaos and the church wanted to 'defend' their pastor. Some two outside pastors joined this group. The DCC fired him. The pastor was jailed and later the deviant group received eviction notices to which they sought a different place to do their services. In the second church, the RCC had sent a new pastor to this church. The conflicts began early when there was a report purporting the sale of a church property by the RCC. This led to pressure from the RCC on increased monthly requirements. The church had originally requested to be independent but still be under the RCC. The church had another internal split comprising of the LCC and a self-elected group that would make decisions and give directives. The DCC had issues with this group for they rejected even the offertories being channeled to the DCC. The pastor received a compulsory leave and after the leave, he was given a directive to proceed on transfer to another local church. The church refused to let him go. He chose to be 'hired' by the church. They did two Sunday services facing different directions in the church. The LCC had very vocal persons from the said group who influenced and lobbied every decision. Internal factions have continued to exist with the afore-mentioned groups differing ideologically on management issues. The children home was the center of controversy. The climax was 2016, when the self-elected group reported one of the church assets had been sold by the RCC. The asset was for nurturing young orphaned children. Due to the intense pressure, the two pastor ladies were laid off and terminated from the church ministry. These conflicts continued in the entire region as nearly very local church experienced conflict either internally or both internally and externally.

1.1. Problem Statement

Internal church problems have been existent in churches. Of late, there are real church oriented schisms that have forced some churches to separate completely. The top leadership litigation phenomenon in AIC context saw AIC into the law courts for resolution. This adversarial version of mediation in KRCC worsened the conflicts. This also caused a similar move on the KRCC churches who sought court orders to block and bar either faction already mentioned since they all have followers. This was coupled by avoidance mechanisms- better espoused by Ken Sande- to the real conflict issues. According to the researcher, the mediation done in the schismatic churches in KRCC was one-sided; the higher offices did the mediation themselves. There has not been visible 'self-differentiation' of the DCC or RCC administrators (Bowen, 1978). If the self-concept was critically highlighted and taken care of, they could be lesser friction. Alternatively, the 'lesser' groups in the local churches face the dominance of the higher offices. Their voices and stories are not put on table. They are silenced, threatened and disciplined.

On one hand, the conflicting churches take hardline positions. On the other hand, both KRCC and the District Church Council (hereafter DCC) both faced an inability to constructively deal with the several conflicts has posed an administrative danger to our AIC churches in their jurisdiction. The negative side was litigations where the courts of law, including Milimani law court, tried to administer reconciliation. Mediations have been one sided and seasonal; they only come when conflicts are triggered or there are signs of church conflict.

There were clearly no ecclesial or administrative policies to guide mediation process in the affected churches. Due to this factor, the church conflicts morphed into both intra and inter-congregational conflicts. The church conflicts became almost contagious and intractable which raises the concern for this research. The motivation foresaid is informed by the fact that these schisms have set a precedent for future ones. Why has the DCC and RCC leadership failed each time to address the pertinent issues and avoid the splits? What policies need to guide mediation of the stalemates? This question will be addressed by the research through a contextualized approach of mediation.

1.2. The purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyse the mediators' conflict resolution strategies in selected African Inland Churches in Kangundo, Kenya.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

- To analyze which conflict resolution strategies the mediators used in handling the conflicts and if they were balanced.
- To map out a pragmatic way of addressing and handling related conflicts in the future.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The major significance is the formulation of a localized theological mediation model that will deepen biblical/textual understanding of Jesus' mediation and promote conflict transformation. The researcher formulated a contextual mediation to be used in KRCC. Firstly, the research filled the theological gap in African pre-existing literature on *functional* and *ancestral* Christology of mediation. Secondly, it will be pastoral/ecclesial material to teach Kenyan Christians on biblically rooted ways of becoming Christ-centred mediators. It is hoped that the AIC church leadership and churches will learn about destructive conflicts and how to creatively make constructive transformations of the same. It is true that effective leaders always try to minimize conflicts while pushing their followers forward. Hence, the research will teach leaders how to creatively manage conflict. Congregations in KRCC will learn positively on the perspectives of conflict. The research thus will seek for the positive lens of viewing the conflicts and also precisely the larger picture as per Paul Lederach. Thirdly, it will be scholarly material for thinkers in contextual Christological mediation; in particular afro-centric hermeneutics on Jesus' mediation. On this wavelength, the research will contribute to the correlational learning of KRCC ecclesial structures versus other denominations in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

Conflict resolution is a short term process of ending a dispute. From different scholars, it has elements of: finding the roots of the conflict, doing away with the conflict, ending it, stamping it out, putting it behind and finding solution to a problem (Wallensteen, 2007). It still uses third parties to solve the issue. Several CR methods are mediation, arbitration, adjudication, negotiation, and so on. According to Wallensteen (2011), conflict resolution occurs when parties agree and accept each other's existence. It is however, not clear whether the conflict can actually be terminated or ended completely. There are a number of methods of conflict management:

2.1. Conflict Management

Refers to the handling conflict positively or constructively (Miall, 1990). The end results are: to achieve political settlements in case of powerful actors as per Miall and also 'to design practical, cooperative system and management of the difference' (Bloomfield & Reilly, 1998). It is more realistic to manage than to remove conflict (Bloomfield & Reilly, 1998). In a nut shell, it seeks parties to settle their differences amicably.

2.2. Conflict Transformation

Is a process deeper and also operates on an in-depth structural level than conflict resolution. According to Albert (2007), it changes the strategic thinking and the structure and ways of interactions. Transformation goes beyond containing the issue or dispute and in the verbatim words of Albert tries to 'reach the tap root and deactivate it'.

Following the plausible summary of Schrock-Shenk, conflict resolution focuses on the problem; conflict management focuses on the process while conflict transformation deals with deeper inter-personal relationships (Albert, 2007). Moreover, church conflicts are dynamic and complex. This directly leads to diverse ways of their management strategies and eventual transformation. In the researcher's context, in order to allow for deeper conflict analysis.

2.2.1. Trends in Alternative Dispute Resolution

There are many forms of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methodologies. But this research discusses four of them namely, bargaining, reconciliation, mediated negotiation which comes as a suitable replacement of traditional methods of dispute resolution (arbitration, resolution, adjudication, and conciliation) and transformative mediation. As per Honeyman and Yawanarajah (2003) this is the type that focuses more on relationships. Augsburger (1992) is of the belief that conflict can be constructive. He formulates this based on the premise of a 'productive conflict cycle that utilizes the conflict to strengthen the concord of the community' (Augsburger, 1992). He also outlines a continuum of mediator roles including observer, chair, enunciator, prompter, leader and arbiter are tabled. He is adept to point out that:

Effective mediation is built on a floor of basic commitments (context), built by a process of balanced concerns and understanding (process), and built through personal involvement in making agreements (contract).

The contrasting modern versus traditional mediation styles are keenly discussed. In terms of identity, modern ego-centric, self-directing individualism is contrasted to the traditional collective identity which is familio-centric and socio-centric. The preferred negotiation process for modern is rational, formal and business linear contracts are undertaken. For the traditional cultures, it is affective and informal; agreements are reached through social trust and relationship is at the core. In the modern, the negotiator is impersonal and from outside the community whereas in the traditional, he/she is personal and *part* of the community. For the modern cultures, time is money while for the traditional,

time is people. The leadership roles in modern are from technical experts while for traditional, they rely on experience and social position of the leaders in the community.

Augsburger (1992) is instrumental when he analyzes the multi-cultural and global dimensions of conflict. He concludes that conflict is distinct in every culture. Here he argues that 'mediation arises from different cultural expectations...as individualism increases, the preference for resolving conflicts by personal action also rise. These diverse cultural expectations are key for African contextualized mediation. Africans are not individualized; they are communal thus mediation will take on communal nature. To put the 'expectations' on the table will be foremost challenge for the African mediators. The researchers' synthesized presupposition is that if the church becomes an active agent of transformative mediation, the problem of church schisms in Africa Inland Church will be largely solved. Generally, the shift from arbitration to ADR in conflict studies should be discussed at length in ecclesiastical circles.

2.2.2. Bargaining

According to Johnson (1992) in his book *Negotiation Basics: Concepts, Skills and Exercises* discusses bargaining strategies. First, the author discusses soft bargaining strategy. The bargainers are flexible, adaptable and use effective arguments to win the other side while expecting 'a conciliatory attitude.' The author notes that, 'The relationship will be saved or enhanced if the other side is responds positively, and it will degenerate or end if the response is negative. The soft approach has benefits: it provides warm relationships to the sides, it confronts people with strong sense of self-importance and high status, and is more useful in times of impasse due to its consistency in bargaining. Secondly, the hard-bargaining strategy is where negotiators use tough tactics, 'tie the other guys' hands' which has 'take it or leave it' offers. Thirdly is the tit-for-tat bargaining strategy. According to Johnson (1992), 'a reciprocal bargainer makes the other side responsible for its own behavior and consequences'. Fourthly is the principled bargaining, a game plan outlaid with principles is its key ingredient. to Johnson (1992) employs Ury's principles of separating people from the problem, focusing on interests, generating options for mutuality, and using objective standards. Positively, it does not rely on the personality of the negotiator. It also focuses on problem solving.

The researcher concurs with principle bargaining for it is issue based and aims at problem solving. Ury is plausible in separating the problem at hand from the people. Soft bargaining bears fruit as seen above. But critically, hard bargaining in ecclesiastical circles puts the mediator at a biased stance.

On the other hand, Barsky advocates for dispute resolution rather than litigation. Of relevance to this research from Barsky is, transformative mediation, the decision tree approach for making rational decisions on resolution and restorative justice. To sum up, theologically, Christ Jesus is our overall bargainer before God. It is clear that while we were still sinners, he died for us. In the arguments of Martin on Gentiles and Jews in Ephesians context, 'it seems clear that the Ephesians author's basis is God's action in Christ the reconciler of sinners' (Martin, 2010).

2.2.3. Reconciliation

Reconciliation is both divine and human (Hutchinson & Mercy, 2010). Reconciliation is very broad since it brings out all elements line peace, peace building, forgiveness, justice and *shalom*. Reconciliation in Africa is mostly guided by Ubuntu philosophy of oneness. It has further social and political dimensions.

Forgiveness in African countries has been elusive with scholars like Wole Soyinka demanding for restitution and repression. This kind of reconciliation is highly shunned by the researcher. The researcher takes a different trajectory to reconciliation. A major voice in hurt and traumatized congregations in Africa is Faustin Ntamushobora. Further, the voice of Desmond Tutu became more refined as he argued for 'sifting of truth as a pre-condition for forgiveness' and that 'forgiveness is not pretending that things are other than they are' in his formulation of Truth and Justice Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. The researcher takes forth Tutu's sincere forgiveness and overall, the biblical reconciliation which is unconditional in *toto* for it complies with Jesus' mediatorial role.

2.2.4. Negotiation

Bernard Mayer brings out two types of negotiators and their interface (Mayer, 2000). Distributive negotiators slice up the pie value of the deal and try to get more from the pie. Integrative negotiators are interest-based and go for win-win situations. Most negotiators have an interface of the two; they combine distributive and integrative profiles. Negotiation is hard and complex when you deal with organizational hierarchy. The situation will be a power imbalance. Kritek (2002) highlights the current culture of manipulation in many organizations by using her own nursing organization as case study. She brings the 'awareness' from the onset that many negotiation tables are uneven meaning that parties are disadvantaged by those in power. This is an eye-opener to AIC negotiations when power and politics may be key triggers of the conflicts to be studied.

As an addendum, organizations in conflict must uphold pragmatism in negotiation. As per Gibbs (2000), these are the two paradigm shifts that need to be reckoned with. He argues that leadership styles are also changing from compartmentalization to connectivity and more specifically from hierarchies to networks; hence the Christian leader ought to unlearn the old styles. Gibbs paints the motif of the 'new' leader, who has healthy leadership traits. This connectivity strand will be vital for church leadership in conflicts; because of the ability to network with both in and out-groups. One monumental change will be moving 'beyond the inwardly focused church: leading a society-transforming community of disciples' to use Gibbs words.

On a different spectrum, congregational studies will mark the shape of the third decade in our century. Originally, the traditional hierarchy of leadership assumed the congregations as mere followers. All of that has been relativized by the

post-modern forces that are hitting the church hard. According to Gibbs of key relevance to this research are the following paradigm shifts:

The paradigm shifts can structurally help AIC congregations re-think their approach since most conflicts are systemic in nature. Congregations are changing hence the leadership of AIC has to. The system of AIC for instance is directly addressed in all the above four tenets hence the dire need for the shifts from Gibbs. The AIC church syndrome has been to concentrate much on tradition other than being missional. She argues not against tradition, but how the mainline churches can adapt to change in the 21st Century. A further keynote observation from Herrington is that creative tension is expressed when change leaders hold an uncompromising willingness to discern, acknowledge, declare, and act on the truth (Herrington et al., 2000). AIC's leadership and its unwillingness to embrace the changed congregations is a major challenge that needs to be addressed.

2.2.5. Mediation

In my words, a mediator is a go-between or intermediary who facilitates two warring parties to a settlement. He/she must be thoroughly informed of the issues in the conflict and also be neutral. He/she does not decide the outcome; his/her task is to facilitate the agreement. A critical task outlined by Slate is to *detach* emotionalism from the parties in conflict (Slate, 2007). This helps in addressing the conflict and not the emotions. The mediator defines the issues, the pros and cons of the conflict while seeking for creative solutions to the conflict at hand. Mediation differs with litigation in that it is consensual while the latter is adversarial. It also differs with arbitration in that the mediator is not a judicial officer (Carboneau, 2007). An arbitrator listens to both parties then decides. In cases that are uncertain, it works best. Several models have been prompted for mediation. Zumeta discusses these key mediation models. ZZ Evaluative model-parties' legal rights and entitlements come first. It is also called 'directive' since the mediator structures the mediation process and influences the outcomes. It utilizes court for remedies. Facilitative model parties' needs and interests come first. The mediator structures the mediation process but the parties are in charge of the outcome. The mediator using facilitative style does not propose specific options for settlement. He/she is non-directive. Settlement model –parties work towards a compromise and consensus. Transformative model- parties probe deeper into their underlying issues and aim for relational healing. It is this last model that the researcher anticipates for it does an iceberg kind of task; it unveils the underlying systemic and intrinsic issues in the conflicts.

2.2.6. Court Annexed Mediation

Court annexed mediation is done under the court umbrella. Some cases are screened if they are divorce oriented to see if they will be mediated in court or not. Both parties attend the mediation proceedings of court. There are no shreds of tenderness in court. In court mediation, the parties are exposed to the rule of the law. They have little control over the law. All they give is evidences and accusations against each other. This are weighed and justice is granted. It is pragmatic to note that from a Christian perspective, the court mediation does not warrant or guarantee reconciliation. In most cases, like the researcher's context, it triggered more enmity.

2.2.7. Victim Offender Mediation

This type of mediation (VOM) brings the victim and the offender in structured and safe settings. This is in cases where murder occurred like Rwanda genocide and South African apartheid. A sub type of it is therapeutic VOM where psychological healing is the aim. The mediator seeks to bring justice to the offended through apology and reparation. He/she tries to bring the needs and losses of the victims before the perpetrator. Reparation takes the form of monetary payments, settlements, or systemic ways of settling injustices done.

2.2.8. Unofficial Mediation

In highly volatile church conflicts, we can borrow unofficial mediation methods. Unofficial mediators have 'low visibility and gain access to the warring parties' (Wigell, 2012) They are not treated with suspicion like the already known RCC, DCC mediators. They have the important characteristics. They are neutral, less bureaucratic, they exercise creativity and flexibility. Visible mediators at times are affected by the sense of being treated as out group persons. But unofficial mediators creep in and understand the conflict dynamics from the in group. This creates a lesser tension as compared to the visible mediators. There are also insider mediators who are instrumental at the grass root level of conflict. They are within the warring parties but are neutral. Resolution agencies have argued for their efficacy. For instance, Emmanuel Bombande argues strongly that 'Insider mediators are committed to the outcome of the conflict...truly care about the outcome. [They] remain after the agreement; they will be there long time after the conflict.' Their need cannot be over-emphasized.

2.2.9. Triangular Mediation

This is a tripartite method which brings three parties together. In the researcher's context, the LCC, DCC and RCC ought to be brought together in one table. This is due to the complexity of tensions that will be caused when one key party misses out. The triangular relationship of LCC versus DCC versus RCC will make mediation easier in the KRCC context.

2.2.10. The Biblical Appraisal of Mediation

In biblical mediation, God takes the initiative. He acts and communicates with us humans through Jesus (see figure below). He comes to us in the Immanuel. This is clearly depicted in the prologue of John's gospel. Secondly, he invites us through the good news (gospel). Our response is done in *faith*. Faith is a life time journey.

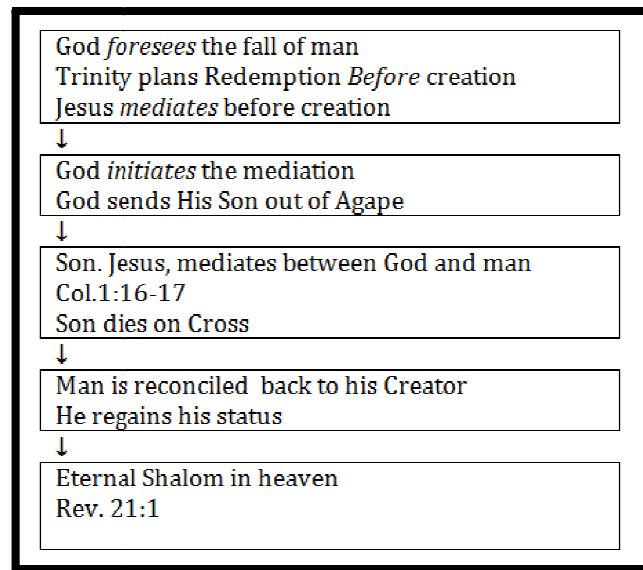


Figure 1

First, God initiates the reconciliation himself. By divine mercy, God accommodates us as depraved covenant breakers and serious sinners. As per Karl Barth, sin is so serious that it destroyed man...The human covenant breaker thus requires Jesus as the *priestly mediator* of all men. Following Barth, sin is the actual source of man's depravity and destruction. When humans reject the priestly mediation of Jesus, God's wrath descends on them. Martin Luther and John Calvin approach sin from the starting point of man's creation at Eden (protology) while for Barth sin begins at Christ. Barth is of the opinion that there was no golden age when man was 'sinless' at the garden, he was always a sinner and needed the mediation of the pre-existent Jesus. The scholars argue from their theological models. Barth's model is ontological but Luther and Calvin are proponents of the functional model. Whatever the model, the synthesis is that the broken relationship requires the priestly mediation of Jesus (Hebrews 7:27; 10:10).

Secondly, God does the mediative bargaining on our behalf. He places Jesus at the center of the equation of our wrongdoing. God is the perfect mediator since he picks up the task himself and in eternal terms purposes to end the rift between man and himself. Reconciliation has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. The first one is outworked by God through Jesus. Carl Henry elaborates,

That there is a Godward as well as man-ward aspect of reconciliation is integral to New Testament teaching. That Christ's death removes God's enmity against man—that a new relation exists of God toward the sinner no less than of the sinner toward God—is at the heart of the doctrine of salvation. Nowhere is the fact stated more succinctly than in 2 Corinthians 5:17 ff.: 'God . . . reconciled us to himself through Christ . . . be reconciled to God (Carl, 1999).

The second one, after man's enmity is removed by Jesus, men have to reciprocate it other fellow men. Reconciliation is an 'umbrella term' as used by Paul; it accommodates several doctrines and aspects in the research here (mediation, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, peace, forgiveness etc.) (Martin, 1997).

On the onset, it is plausible to touch on prudence virtue in mediation. It is that inner ability to reason, to give sound judgment or to perceive things in the Spirit. Prudence is best demonstrated by Paul in Phil. 1:1-17. Verse 5-6, Paul's prudence is clear when he urges the leaders in Philippi to persevere until the *parousia*. In verse 9-10, Paul *perceives* and reminds them again to 'prove things that are excellent' in matters of faith. He actually prepared the church for crisis moments that would come later. In Acts 20:29, he urges the Ephesian elders there will be savage wolves that will come and want to snatch the sheep. He always kept his congregations in mind.

Similarly, Jesus had prudence or what Aristotle called practical wisdom (*phronesis*). The Proverbs repeats prudence and prudent (cf. Prov. 14:8, 15.). Leading with prudence will mean discerning the tide, deciding and choosing the best for the organization. When leaders march forth in prudence, in times of crisis, followers perceive them positively, but when they fail, the views are negative.

2.3. Mediation in the Old Testament

Malone discusses two types of priests in the bible; individual and corporate. The functional role of the priest is to reduce the gap between the people and God. The Levites as priests did 'representation' and 'reconciliation' as per Malone. By representation he means teaching Israel what YHWH expected. By reconciliation he means offering sacrifices to bring Israel near to God.

God employs a range of individual mediators: Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Levitical priests, judges, prophets and so on as he seeks to reconcile with Israel. The agency of these Levitical priests is the sacrifices they made unto God in the

tabernacle and temple, while the judges, prophets predominantly did intercessions for people. In Gen. 50:15-21, Joseph receives evil from his brothers. They hate him, throw him into a pit, sell him as a slave and cheat their father Jacob. They later join him at Egypt and when he reveals himself, it humbles them to ask for forgiveness. Joseph on his part leaves it up to God although he is the victim.

The fate of Joseph was not in the brothers' hands; Joseph narrates. He sees the episodes from God's perspective. It was 'God who allowed it' for your profit, he tells them. He sees God's hand at the very outcome and he is ready to forgive them. This is a perfect model for KRC churches, RCC and DCC officials that were wronged. The mediators in OT work out for reconciliation between God and his *estranged* people Israel in different instances through covenants, prayers, reminders and pointing to Yahweh's doings in the past. In all case, God *initiates* the reconciliation talk as if he is the one wronged.

The corporate mediation in OT has to do with the nation of Israel precisely. When Israel and the church are viewed under the covenantal perspective, we can trace unpack the redemptive history better. God wanted to redeem Israel and through Israel redeem the world. Israel's place in this redemptive history is highly relevant today. As per Malone, Israel as a nation had a special role *within God's wider world* for the benefit of the nations (Malone, 2017). By God's wider world is meant the whole globe that includes the Gentiles. To illustrate, Jonah faces a boundary less God when he has to traverse Nineveh, a Gentile nation with the message of repentance. The book of Isaiah is replete with images on inclusion of Gentiles.

In the NT, the church goes beyond the Jewish boundaries with Jesus setting the pace (cf. John 4). The book of Romans oscillates between the Jew and the Gentile motif with the latter receiving divine redemption. Also, in Acts chapter 10, Peter was confronted by an unusual vision. Peter had to adjust his theological underpinnings of Jewish confinement. Peter's framework was expanded to include the gentile Cornelius and his family.

2.4. Priestly Mediation of Jesus

Jesus Christ is the *μεσότης*, the bridge between God and man. The agency of this priesthood is Jesus's sacrifice on the cross in his incarnate form. Four models of Christ's priesthood exist on New Testament academia. They are sacramental, functional, ontological, and historical. Their priesthood underpinnings are based on the understanding of humanity of Jesus and heaven:

The sacramental model assumes a timeless and spaceless divine reality. Thomas Aquinas is the key proponent of this model. Sin creates an ontological distance between God and man and hence the need for Jesus' priesthood. Sin is an anthropological disorder. This model implies then that redemption is a continuation of creation not a restoration per se. so man finds himself in a cosmological disorder and can't reach out to God. He is self-alienated from God. Consequently, this makes Christ's priesthood to be one-sided, in the sense of *only* bringing sinful men toward God, leaving out the other creation.

The functional model gets the sequence of Christ's earthly cross and connects the heaven's mediation that is done by the cross. Martin Luther and John Calvin are its key proponents. It dwells on two sequences of events: the earthly sacrifice at the cross and interceding with heaven for man. It emphasizes on the process. Sin is moral rebellion against God and it raptures God to react against mankind in divine wrath. Humans fear this wrath. Only through, Jesus then, can their guilt be purged. Sin here is being totally depraved against God. The result of man's inward sin is God's outward wrath on man. So, God becomes the primary target of mediation. Hence Christ in his mediation deals with God's wrath. The emphasis again is the propitiation of human sin. The incarnation of Christ is held as foundational for mediation. Jesus functions here include teaching the word, offering his sacrifice and interceding for mankind.

The ontological model is proposed by Karl Barth and Thomas Torrance. Here, the person of Christ (and God) is the primary object of the priesthood. It follows on the ruptured relationship between God and humanity. Sin is treated here as open rebellion against God and the alienation causes man to be disconnected from God. As per Torrance, there is a continuing priesthood of Christ.

The historical model bases its premise on study of Hebrews. Jesus does not only mediate in classical soteriology terms but also in general terms to include the rest of the cosmos. His mediation however resolves the sin problem. Christ does his sacrifice for sins (Heb. 5:1) and that sacrifice expiates sin (Heb. 2:17). Sin demands a cleansing or precisely purification (Heb. 9:14, 22-23; 10:2, 22). Here the emphasis is both vertical and horizontal relationship that sin destroys between God and man, man to man and the cosmos. It is clear that Christ performs also non-soteriological mediation.

The priestly mediation of Jesus evokes the theological and ministerial questions of ongoing priesthood. The main issue is should priests continue to mediate or not and in what functional capacity? The researcher takes the opinion of ontological model where there is continuing priesthood; Christ gave over the priestly ministry to the apostles and to us as the church.

Hebrews 12:24 explicates on the shed blood of Jesus. The emphasis is on the superiority of the blood of Jesus as compared to the blood of Abel. It is complete in its 'atoning' end result as per Alan C Mitchell in his commentary *Hebrews* (Mitchell, 2007). The idea of superiority of Jesus' blood is well supported by Hebrews 9:26 where it 'removes' sin.

2.5. Spirit Mediation in New Testament

The Spirit of God plays a pivotal intrinsic role in conflict transformation. Douglas Cambell discusses on 'radical ontological transformation' of a person. It is only God who can make this metamorphosis effectual (Cambell, 2002). He is the Spirit of renewal.

Mark Cartledge in his book too, *Mediation of the Spirit*, discusses the role of the Holy Spirit in mediation and pneumatically mediated soteriology. Of relevance is his chapter three where the role of the Holy Spirit in mediation is the

focus. He connects the triune elements and emphasize on the inner workings of the Spirit to bring about transformative mediation. In his final chapter, he also addresses pneumatically mediated soteriology. Soteriology is only best captured through the concept of Spirit mediation in and out of the church.

Migliore's (1984) argument dwells on the creative powers of the Spirit. He postulates that, 'the creative and re-creative Spirit of God continues to act everywhere, extending justice, building and restoring community, renewing all things.

It is the Spirit of God that aids the discernment process in mediation. A good majority of mediators have worked with different strategies and theories before. They still get outcomes. But ecclesial mediators need to be sensitive on mediation if transformation is intended. The reason why root causes in conflict will be unaddressed in my opinion is the neglect of the Spirit; he alone can de-activate the tap root of conflict leading to transformation. Jesus was a discerning mediator. He could see the hidden iceberg in men's hearts. As per J.C. Hutchinson the Christian leader is led by the Spirit (Hutchinson, 2009). It is this very inner leading that should guide the mediation process.

The RCC, DCCs and LCCs deeply require the mediating effects of the Spirit. On a deeper layer, the discernment from the Spirit in mediators is not an added tool; it is a necessity. The researcher believes that deep seated conflicts in KRC will be addressed through discernment.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This was a qualitative research. Mason Jenifa brings a fresh element of combining intellectual, philosophical and technical skills into qualitative research (Mason, 2002). In qualitative research design, human beings construct meanings as they engage with the world they are interpreting as per Crotty (Creswell, 2003). In other terms, descriptive research does not begin with hypothesis. P.M. Shields argues that 'the descriptive survey provides a clear explanation of the traits of a population or a situation being investigated' (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013). Creswell opines that, 'Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive. This means the researcher makes an interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2003).

3.2. Target Population

The research covered the eleven KRCC churches. The members of the congregations that were included in the research were inter-generational in that all groups (men, women, pastors, adult youth and leaders) for comprehensive feedback. The researcher targeted 100 respondents from the 11 churches, approximately 25% of the total churches selected.

3.3. Sampling

The researcher purposely selected small samples from the churches named. The quality and resourcefulness of the informants was a key ingredient to avoid waste of time (Dolores & Tongco, 2007). Purposive sampling aims at a smaller size of the overall sample (Welman & Kruger, 1999).

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The data was collected using primary data collection tools as questionnaires, focus group and narrative interviews. The researcher also used telephone interviews where the interviewees got busy as scheduled. Questionnaires were used in all categories of the participants. The researcher further used five focus group for mature Christians who analyzed the conflict issues at a deeper depth. The focus group targeted specific group discussions which brought better light to the research questions. The focus groups will give fair comparative analysis of the experiences in the KRCC conflicts.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection

The researcher using the insider approach vetted assistant researchers in the eleven churches. As it came to be, the insiders were better placed in matters of information on the ground. Though the COVID 19 pandemic affected the research process, the prior trainings led to comprehensive data gathering. Data was gathered in all the churches by midway changing to phone contacts when the pandemic hit hard.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used NVIVO 11 as prime analytical research tool. All data was transcribed and coded using this tool. The thematic analysis was done using the tool. NVIVO 11 has a major strength in coding of themes from research especially the narrative form. The NVIVO 11 has added advantage when it comes to semi-structured interviews. The narrative analysis was therefore done using NVIVO.

4. Findings

4.1. Conflict Resolution Strategies the Mediators Used in Handling the Conflict

According to the findings of the study, dialogue was mostly used for mediation according to respondents where there were negotiation between the LCC and the DCC. In certain instances, the DCC resorted to excommunication of the perceived trouble makers as a way of resolving the conflict. The respondents also said that there was avoidance by the two

groups as a strategy. There was also litigation where some groups sought the court intervention. Respondents indicated that in certain instances, the DCC resorted to closing of the churches. There were also cases of separation.

The study sought to determine the mediation roles of the pastors during the conflict. The results revealed that the pastors were directly involved in the conflict as they either aided conflict or was directly involved and as such their mediation role if any was very minimal. For instance, some respondents said that the pastor was very stubborn and would not listen to the DCC/RCC leadership. The respondents noted that the pastors were not sincere during the whole process of mediation but were full of lies and propaganda. According to DCC respondents, the pastor incited the LCC and the church while in another instance, the pastor sided with the LCC. The respondents noted that the pastors open sabotage as they leaked all the information from the DCC to the LCC. The DCC respondent said that the pastor was fully decided on breaking the church and thus played no mediation role. In another similar case, the pastor while avoiding confrontation resigned then went ahead to form a church before moving away with the members.

As to whether the pastor's mediation role was balanced or skewed negatively or positively, the respondents were asked to give their views. The results show that respondents largely noted that the pastor's role of mediation was largely negative. Only two respondents said that the pastors acted maturely, while another stated that the pastor channeled the elders' issues to the DCC. The rest of the respondents said that the pastors were inciters, saboteurs, sided with the elders. The respondents were also asked to state the mediation role of the elders. According to the responses, the elders did not provide solution to the conflict but were involved in fueling the conflict. For instance, some responses stated that the elders met in different places to incite the congregation rather than providing solution to the problem. Other respondents stated that the elders openly sided with the pastors and refused the mediation process. The results revealed that elders totally blocked mediation and did not do it themselves. The respondents stated that the elders were emotionally charged. Some respondents described the elders in a particular church as malicious as they planned to remove their charismatic pastor while he was on leave as they managed to influence the LCC negatively. Some respondents noted that the elders biasedly incited instead of mediating. Some respondents from another church said that their pastors practiced favouritism, noted that:

The elders in our church disliked one pastor and seeking another one, they divided the church instead of providing mediation.

The respondents noted that in some cases the elders sided with the DCC chair to cause revolution in the church. Thus based on these findings, show that to a large extent, the elders were involved in fueling the conflict but failed to provide mediation to resolve the conflict.

4.2. Conflict Resolution by the LCC

The respondents were asked to state how the conflict was resolved by the LCC and whether the LCC was involved in the conflict resolution. According to majority of the respondents, the LCC was to a large extent not involved in the resolution of the conflict. Respondents said that the LCC did not solve the conflict but made dialogue impossible. The LCC was accused of intolerance, rigidity, and lack of respect for the DCC/RCC. Adeyemo (2015) argues for negotiation as best strategy for conflict resolution in African contexts. He also adds that 'elders' are expected to resolve community conflicts through negotiation. However, against that grain of thought that elders pacify conflicts, the elders in the LCCs went contrary and blocked mediation processes. Respondents noted that they blocked mediation efforts by DCC/RCC. It was revealed that the LCC was involved in sabotaging and were ready to split up the church. Some respondents said the LCC to a large extent sided with the pastors and not the DCC and was in constant communication with the group in Nairobi. One respondent said:

The LCC leadership was inclining and communicating with factional groups in Nairobi for advice and as such they were more involved with external persons than finding solution to the conflict.

Some other respondents said that the LCC was double speak as they pretended when the DCC came but were prepared to join the splinter, AIC B. They noted that the LCC had a social behavior of pretending to be with the RCC but when they went away, they reverted to their rebellion.

4.3. DCC/RCC Mediation in Conflict Resolution

The respondents were asked to state how in their view the DCC/RCC mediation addressed the conflict. The respondents noted that the DCC made effort to find solution to the problem. For instance, respondents noted that the DCC really wanted reconciliation in the church and sought for dialogue. Other respondents noted that the DCC in their mediation used senior *wazee* to resolve the conflict which was very neutral. Respondents also said that the DCC intervened by bringing senior elders who showed respect to the church. However, some respondents said that the DCC showed favoritism as it favored the office only. Respondents also noted that the DCC used their powers to oppress the church and pastors and that their imposition of tight rules in a bid to curb more schisms fueled the wave of schism to other churches. On this third-party aspect, Awedoba (2009) provides a caution that in settling conflict if the third party aligns itself with any warring camp, there will be a failure. The goal of reconciliation, healing and restored relationships was thus not arrived at since there was no third party neutrality.

According to the respondents the RCC has been fair in looking for the solution to the problem. However, their fear to adjust to accommodate the LCC worsened the problem. While the DCC/RCC made frantic efforts to find solution to the problem, their efforts were met with hostilities and open hatred from the LCCs.

4.4. Effectiveness of the LCC, DCC/RCC on Conflict Resolution

The study sought to determine how effective the LCC, DCC/RCC were in solving the conflict. The respondents were therefore asked to state how the conflict was resolved by the DCC/RCC and the challenges they faced. The study established that to a large extent, the DCC/RCC were ineffective in conflict resolution. The results show that respondents noted that the DCC/RCC failed to bring the parties together. The DCC/RCC was met with booing and chaos which made them leave the venue. Respondents also noted that DCC/RCC would not allow for dialogue and would not give time to talk about the issues. The respondents also noted that the domineering position of the DCC/RCC made the conflict hard to resolve. It was revealed that the RCC/DCC failed to allow internal probing and by mistake they went for the pastors who became sacrificial lambs, which fueled the conflict even the more. However, some respondents thought that the DCC/RCC was fairly effective in the resolution of the problem, noting that in instances where the DCC/RCC saw the camps of dissent, they would send unofficial mediators instead of themselves. Respondents said that the RCC succeeded very well in DCC 1 where the sabotaging chair was removed from office and there were no church protests. One respondent noted that in church 5, the RCC found a senior pastor, an outsider who led to reconciliation of the LCC. Among the challenges that were experienced, respondents indicated that the churches were sabotage through night meetings. In another instance, one pastor resigned from his church and after some months carried members to a new Pentecostal church in the middle of reconciliation.

4.5. LCC, DCC and RCC Failed to Address the Conflict in Church

The study sought to determine if the LCC, DCC and RCC failed in addressing the conflict in the churches. The respondents were therefore asked to state whether the conflict resolution methods that were employed by LCC, DCC and or RCC succeeded or failed. Majority of the respondents stated that the methods employed by the LCC, DCC/RCC failed. In their explanation the respondents noted that dissent and lack of flexibility to listen to the voices in the LCC churches led to more friction. Other respondents noted that the DCC/RCC failed to do a comprehensive research on the breakaway movements. The RCC/DCC failed to understand the factitious group and went to court. The respondents cited the indecisiveness of the part of DCC/RCC leadership since the splits were rampant making DCC/RCC run here and there. The study was told that the DCC/RCC did not play a bipartisan role of arbitrator but believed in the lies by some LCC to rush and discipline the perceived errant pastors and that added more fuel to the conflict. Respondents also reported that some LCCs believed in the lies told by elders and got incited and rushed to court without second thought. The litigation strategies that were employed by the DCC/RCC failed. For instance, one of the respondents said:

The use of the law of the land by RCC to protect the church against land grabbers turned out to be a fail for the congregations reacted with violence.

4.6. Reasons for Success or Failure by LCC, DCC and RCC

In this section the researcher sought to determine what made the LCC, DCC or RCC to succeed or fail in their efforts of reconciliation. Respondents were therefore asked to state whether the LCC, DCC and RCC succeeded or failed in their mediation efforts. The general response was that the mediation process by the actors failed. The respondents explained that the LCC failed to cooperate with the DCC/RCC. Respondents further noted that the reason for the failure in the mediation process was because the DCC/RCC failed to accommodate the diversity of the opposite group and instead went for litigation. VanBinsbergen (1999) argues that 'reconciliation is only possible if the conflict is clearly and publicly discussed by those involved...such discussion creates a clarity which may well have a beneficial influence on future relations...' This implies open dialogue which lacked in the conflict resolutions in RCC/DCC personnel.

The study established that while the DCC/RCC made efforts to reconcile, the defiant pastors incited people against them and as said by one respondent:

The pastor preached sermons phrased with catchy labels like 'tūivandutūendete' (we are going nowhere) The respondents explained that among the reasons for the failure was the conflict of interest among the LCC, DCC and RCC. The attitude of war by the LCC whenever an outsider came to church made the mediation process difficult. The mediations were characterized by intolerance and lack of accommodation of others, uncontrollable tantrums of anger among others which made the mediation process difficult. The study established that the congregation was divided against each other and no amount of intervention could bring healing. The respondents noted that no probing of the issues from the grass roots and therefore the healing process was bound to fail as a lasting solution needed to come from the root course. It was noted that failure was as a result of lack of conflict transformation skills among the leadership parties.

4.7. Preparedness of LCC, DCC or RCC to Handle Church Conflict

In this section the study sought to determine whether LCC, DCC or RCC were adequately prepared to handle the church conflict. The respondents were therefore asked to state whether LCC, DCC or RCC were adequately prepared to handle the conflict. The study established that while the LCC had the knowledge of the conflict, the DCC and RCC had no clue and thus were inadequately prepared. As one respondent said:

The conflicts caught the DCC/RCC off guard; none was duly prepared. The reaction was to use police force and court mediation.

The DCC/RCC were not adequately prepared and also not trained on conflict resolution so when they came, they went for police reinforcement.

4.8. Pragmatic Way of Addressing and Handling Related Conflicts in the Future

The predominant strategies mostly employed by DCC/RCC going by the numbers in QSQ2 were litigation and police force. Litigation received more responses and thus was the mode. Mediation and arbitration were the second key strategy. The DCCs involved together with the RCC did these efforts to their LCCs according to the responses. But the nature of these mediations was highly critiqued by the LCC elders, pastors and congregants. The other strategies to curb the conflicts were expulsion of the pastors, dismissal of the DCC chair and closure of churches.

Litigation and court orders issued to churches were not balanced. Being authoritative and not giving the LCCs time to air their views was also imbalanced. On the side of LCC, sabotage and insubordination was an avoidance mechanism to face the real issues. The use of phone technology to mobilize and give wrong information from LCC was incitement. Also, the pastors disciplined got empathy and sympathy from their congregations. This emotional imbalance triggered the congregations to be militant.

The study established that the mediation roles of elders and pastors were overtly biased. They did no mediation at all, blocked mediation, apart from Church 8. This made the conflict resolution from DCC/RCC hard.

It will be prudent to distinguish resolution, management, and transformation of conflicts in KRCC leadership. What was on the ground was firefighting mechanisms. The lead questions in QSQ5 and FGQ6 probed to know if the LCC, DCC and RCC were adequately prepared for the conflicts at hand. The responses prove that the situation caught the offices off guard. There was inadequacy from the DCC and RCC in handling the conflict. The cases in QSQ5, FGQ6 only show conflict resolution and trying to manage them. The responses show that there was failure to manage the conflicts (LCC6-R2, LCC9-R1) since it was a wave.

There are many theological lessons that KRCC can learn from the current schisms. Our emphasis on church ministry and doctrine has often left a vacuum on the place of conflict in the church. Could this breakaway movement be the turning point of AIC church? The Protestant Reformation movement did a similar turning point in the history of Christianity. For some, it was a theological revolution.

The KRCC church can only solve her schisms through a responsive practical theology that addresses her spirituality and offers Christological strategy for the same. Leaders in KRCC should foster new thinking and new transformative leadership styles hence the strand of transformation in the Pastoral circle. By applying the researcher's formulated mediation and transformative continuum, it is evident that mediation demands and requires a reform process. Gracia Machel and Benjamin Mkapa (2014) in their co-authored book, *Back from the Brink: The 2008 Mediation Process and Reforms in Kenya* reinforce this idea. The major mediator, Kofi Annan, succeeded in balancing the two disputant parties through the reform and negotiation process and arriving at a consensus of coalition government. Though the church schisms may not arrive at a coalition per se, the principle of transformative reform process is commended. The kingdom of God, to use Mark Shaw, is still growing in KRCC. New churches are being formed everyday due to economic and commercial factors not spiritual, so let those who want to go and in the end they are winning souls to Christ in addition to their personal quest. The researcher treats schism as an organizational process not just a dispute in doctrine or leadership.

Accommodation of pastoral and ecclesial diversity must be an ingredient in KRCC. The pastors with descending voices and opinions will never end. Pastors who want to defect cannot be stopped. The main church has no control of these characters. However, the political culture needs to be addressed using the mediation culture initiated by Christ.

Adaptability and flexibility will bring a new organizational culture in KRCC. There is a generation of leaders in the traditional continuum of tradition while few are in the transformative continuum. Reacting slower to congregational changes has cost KRCC. Against this kind of backgrounds, KRCC became challenged.

Future mediators in KRCC need to be transformative and pragmatic. The Spirit of God can bring new stirrings for such inwardly born transformations. One characteristic element of the mediator ought to be mediator experience. Short lived experiences of the mediators made them go to hard bargaining to rescue the resurgent conflicts in the churches. Where the mediators were pooled from also emerged as critical for the local churches.

5. Conclusions

Mediation has been given thorough treatment in this study. Christological mediation has direct bearing on our mediation praxis in both missional Christianity and spirituality. Christological negligence on mediation will cost the African church but Christological praxis of mediation bears more promise for the AIC churches in my context. The pastors and the church must lead in mediation up to the grass root levels. To echo the words of Archbishop Nikola Eterovi, 'If the Church is to fulfill well the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to her by the Lord Jesus, she herself must become more and more a reconciled community, a place where reconciliation is proclaimed to all people of good will.' The paper anticipates that there will be more theologizing on mediation.

6. Recommendations

The last research question sought the way forward to conflict transformation. It is evident that KRCC has undergone drastic changes in the congregations' lives. This section provides some futuristic guidelines on the conflict terrain. The study recommends the following:

The LCCs should be made to participate in grass root mediation processes. In one sense, preachers need a re-schooling on peace building sermons and eschew provocative sermons. In the other sense, localized mediation forums should be organized since their level is the one mostly affected by conflict. The presence of the LCC brings the ordinary Christian to the mediation table. On this line, the study further recommends for pragmatic, neutral and unofficial mediators

to be engaged during church conflicts. It is evident from the data analyzed that mediation intervention is highly needed in KRCC.

Secondly, there should be national dialogues and outlined mediation policy procedures in AIC church concerning conflict, schisms, mediation, and conflict transformation. In the dialogue, the shift from adversarial to mediation method of conflict handling should be key agenda among others. Guiding policies on how to mediate are overdue and need to be deliberated upon and re-constituted in the AIC Constitution. To add, the type of third-party mediators to be engaged (pragmatic, facilitative, and insider) can be discussed for AIC context. Since AIC operates on hierarchical basis, the dialogue will implement uniformly the changes in the local churches.

Lastly, but most critically, theology of mediation must be re-emphasized in theological colleges and universities. Practical theology ought to include mediation, conflict management, and system-sensitive leadership as part of its curriculum. The universities can link up with the legal section of our country for critique and international appeal towards mediation.

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