



AFRICA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

THE UBUNTU CONCEPT AS A PANACEA FOR AFRICAN ECCLESIOLOGY: A
CASE STUDY OF HARVEST REVIVAL MINISTRY CHURCHES IN KENYA

BY
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ABSTRACT

The deficiency of theology in Africa has affected the theological progression in our continent and hampered the noble task of contextualizing the Christian message and lifestyle. The Gospel presentation has failed to appreciate the essence of communicating the Gospel in ways and means that are culturally relevant to the people of Africa. There has also been minimal attention accorded to the construction of an African ecclesiology even within the framework of African Christian Theology. This dissertation examines the intended contribution of the Ubuntu concept in the development and construction of African ecclesiology. It further studies the essence of capitalizing on the Ubuntu concept as a remedy to address ecclesiological problems witnessed in Africa.

The dissertation examines the approaches taken currently with regard to scholarship on ecclesiology from the patristic era the medieval era to that of the reformation and beyond. The study evaluates the various ecclesiological approaches that have defined ecclesiology over time. In progression the dissertation examines contextual ecclesiologies with focus on three specific cultural geographical environments of Africa, Asia and Latin America. This is because of the significance that these regions play in the current global shift within Christendom. The study concentrates on Africa with particular focus on a Pentecostal church setting studying the Harvest Revival Ministries Churches. Previous studies have failed to capitalize on the significant correlation that exists between a people's anthropological philosophies as an avenue to establish a contextual ecclesiology relevant for the said audience within a cultural setting.

The study argues on the theological postulations of Ubuntu concept and subsequently develops a significant thematic approach for an African ecclesiology using Ubuntu. The methodology used was the engagement of the respondents on an intensive and personal interview. The study proposes that the concept of Ubuntu if embraced has a potential to influence growth and stability of the church in Africa spiritually by its emphasis on corporate intercession, unity of the Spirit, strong fellowship units and complementary ministry. This will significantly influence the numerical and spiritual growth of the church in Africa. The implication for the study brought out the realization that for the African church to forge ahead she must restore her lost communal values for her to survive. For the African church to stabilize and experience exponential growth, she must embrace the spirit and practice of brotherhood. The study also proposes that for, African church to progress, she must restore the dwindling high reverence accorded to the institution of the eldership in traditional Africa that is reminiscent of eldership from the Pauline epistles.