

# Paternalism, dependency or partnership?

A case study on the Reformed Churches in South Africa

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## Abstract

In cross-cultural missions, there is always a danger of paternalism. Paternalism produces a culture of dependency in the indigenous church. This study aims to consider whether paternalism and resulting dependency also featured in the mission work of the Reformed Churches in Southern Africa. How were the principle and implementation of mission policy of the Synod, and how was the reality of mission work between the white and the black churches in the Reformed Churches in Southern Africa? The Reformed Churches in South Africa mission work will be investigated through a case study in the Klerksdorp, Orkney, Stilfontein and Hartbeesfontein area. As a result, the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika remains paternalistic and dependent, and needs a new strategy for missions to overcome them. Therefore, the relationship of biblical partnerships, as new strategy in the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika to overcome tendencies of paternalism and dependency in the missionary situation, may be suggested.

**Keywords:** biblical partnership, dependency, Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, Reformed Churches in South Africa, mission policy, paternalism, Synod

## 1. Introduction

In cross-cultural missions, there is always a danger of paternalism. Paternalism produces a culture of dependency in the indigenous church (Chikazaza, 1997:1). Paternalism can be defined as the relationship in which a father treats a child as if that child falls under the father's authority even if the latter is mature:

“This parent-child relationship is vertical and authoritarian. The missionary is automatically in charge. He is the example that the people must imitate and their source of knowledge” (Lewis, 1989:111).

Ultimately paternalism often develops when missionaries do not have a servant-leadership attitude. In this sense, the meaning of paternalism in missions has a negative connotation and application:

“In missions paternalism is often connected with colonialism, that period of time when foreign governments conquered and ruled over various parts of the

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world... under colonialism foreign powers determine how commerce and taxes are managed, how people are educated, and they usually invest funds for roads and other needed infrastructure” (Lederleitner, 2010:78).

Scholars have studied the implication of paternalism and dependency for the missionary enterprise throughout history. The modern Western missionary movement (since the 16th century), both Protestant and Catholic, coincided with the explosive phenomenon of Western colonialism. These dynamics brought into the “mission field” the “baggage” of Western military conquest and economic and (assumed) cultural and intellectual superiority. In such a context paternalistic relationships between older churches or mission societies, and the younger churches planted by them are, regrettably, quite understandable (Kritzinger & Saayman, 1994:19).

According to Ralph Winter, this first era of paternalism lasted well into the twentieth century. It is an unfortunate fact that remnants of such paternalism currently still exist (Bush & Lutz, 1990:35-6). In many ways paternalism was in fact a form of domination. It was imposed by the colonial powers, but Christian missionaries practiced this attitude as well (Hiebert, 1991:262; Schwartz, 2007:77). Kornfield (1999:1) explains how financial paternalism can hinder church growth. Therefore, missionaries should consider the danger of dependency when they support national churches or pastors financially.

This study aims to consider whether paternalism and resulting dependency also featured in the mission work of the Reformed Churches in South Africa (RCSA). The principles and implementations of the Synod about mission policy will be examined. How were the principles and implementations of mission policy of the Synod, and how was the reality of mission work between the white and the black churches in the RCSA?<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, the article will focus on a case study in the Klerksdorp, Orkney, Stilfontein and Hartbeesfontein (KOSH) areas of the RCSA, to determine whether its mission had paternalism and dependency. As a result, maybe such a holistic transformational model of missions, as a new strategy, can help overcome tendencies of paternalism and dependency in the missionary situation. In order to understand mission work in the RCSA, it is necessary to first consider a brief historical background of Reformed Missions in South Africa.

## **2. Historical background on mission work in South Africa**

### **2.1 The Arrival of first Europeans in South Africa**

The Dutch East India Company or the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOIC) established a half-way station at the Cape. The purpose of this station was to service its ships that traversed the passage around the Cape of Good Hope from Europe to the East Indies. The settlement at the Cape soon turned into a viable business ven-

<sup>2</sup> Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika.

ture for the VOIC. Among the first Europeans who settled in South Africa, was Jan Van Riebeeck, a Christian who arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. On his arrival, Van Riebeeck prayed that God would establish and extend his glory through the extension of a true reformed Christian faith. Van Riebeeck's prayer after he landed at the Cape of Good Hope on 6 April 1652 contained the following words:

“... time possibly tend to the propagation and spread of Thy true Reformed Christian Faith among these wild and brutal folk, to the glorification and honour of Thy holy Name and to the benefit of our Lords Principal, which we cannot do without Thy gracious help” (Leipoldt, 1936:103).

From that time, this place had been expanded by immigrants from Europe. The French Huguenots (1668) and the early German settlers a little later came. With few exceptions these settlers were Protestants and the Dutch and French were Calvinist (De Gruchy, 1986:1). There were three ecclesiastical alternatives for black Christians in South Africa by the turn of the twentieth century:

“The first thing could be members of mission churches which were under the control of white missionaries and their mission boards in Europe, North America, or, in the case of the DRC, South Africa, and which would only much later achieve their autonomy. A second possibility was that they could be members of multiracial denominations, those churches largely of British origin. But, the black members were dominated by white leadership, European customs, discrimination, and a great deal of paternalism. A third one could leave the mission and the multiracial churches and initiate their own” (De Gruchy, 1986:41).

## 2.2 Apartheid policies and paternalism in South Africa

When did apartheid begin in South Africa? Apartheid was the result of a long historical process. Even though the term “apartheid” was new in 1948, when the Nationalist party triumphed in the parliamentary elections, racial discrimination and far-reaching government intervention and social engineering in the economy were not new. In fact, the unequal treatment of Africans and non-Europeans began with the very advent of Europeans in South Africa in 1652 (Lundahl, 1982:1169-1179; Lundahl & Ndlela, 1980:106-132; Quoted in Petersson, 1998:22).

Die Burger (Cape newspaper) first used the term “apartheid” in 1943 when it referred to the “accepted Afrikaner viewpoint of apartheid”. In January 1944, D.F. Malan, speaking as Leader of the Opposition, became the first person to use this term in the South African parliament. A few months later he elaborated, “I do not use the term “segregation”, because it has been interpreted as a fencing off (afhok), but rather “apartheid”, which will give the various races the opportunity of uplifting themselves on the basis of what is their own” (Giliomee, 2003:374).

However, the idea was far removed from the racial ideology and xenophobia was rife at this time on the continent of Europe. Instead this idea was firmly rooted in the Cape Afrikaner<sup>3</sup> experience of slavery, with its ideology of paternalism, and British colonialism, with its stress on indirect rule and trusteeship (Giliomee, 2003:388).

The chain of segregationist legislation from 1910 to 1948, by multiplying whites' advantages over blacks, laid a solid foundation for apartheid. Many contemporaries foresaw positive benefits for blacks being segregated via such laws as the Native Land Act of 1913, the Native Affairs Act of 1920, the Mines and Workers Amendment (or "Color Bar") Act<sup>19</sup> and the Native Representation Act of 1936 (Elphick & Davenport, 1997:366).

Like the Afrikaners, Africans would have their own schools, churches, residential areas, homelands and governments on which they could make their own cultural imprint. Nationalists persuaded themselves that apartheid would be implemented much more "positively" than segregation, particularly because the Afrikaner nationalists had waged a long and bitter struggle against attempts to assimilate them (Du Plessis, 1940:8.1. 5. Quoted in Giliomee, 2003:385).

However, the numerous racial laws were such deliberate, calculated techniques of degradation that their effect has indelibly scarred South African society (Pillay, 1991:55).

### **2.3** Brief history of mission work of the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika

The Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA) or the RCSA were founded in 1859 under the leadership of Rev. Dirk Postma. It consisted mostly of the conservative people (the "Doppers") in the Hervormde Church in Transvaal.

It is clear that Postma experienced a very strong calling towards mission (Van der Vyver, 1958:394-418). Soon after the establishment of the RCSA he pleaded with the churches to do mission work, to raise funds for missions and to send out missionaries. In 1869, a mere ten years after the establishment of the first church in Rustenburg, the Synod decided that churches should pay attention to their missionary mandate.<sup>4</sup> From the outset the GKSA was mission minded, confessing the calling of the church to proclaim the Gospel to the nations. However, quite a substantial group opposed mission work within the RCSA in those early years. Based on some deterministic theological ideas from the Dutch Puritans (Nadere Reformasie) authors, they were of the opinion that certain signs of God's prevenient grace must first be seen in the lives of people as an indication of God's elective grace before a well-meant offer of the Gospel may be presented to them (Van der Walt, 1963:343-362, 465-468).

<sup>3</sup> Afrikaners are a Southern African ethnic group descended from predominantly Dutch settlers first arriving in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

<sup>4</sup> ACTA Sinode Potchefstroom van die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, 1869: Art. 96.

Seemingly, these theological undercurrents and its contribution towards feelings of racial superiority among the whites had an influence on the methods and strategies which the Reformed Churches later implemented in missions to black people within South Africa.

Evidence of how the apartheid ideology has influenced missiological thinking in the GKSA can be seen clearly in the doctoral dissertation of I.J. Van der Walt, who became the appointed Missiology professor, training pastors at the seminary of the GKSA. The apartheid philosophy does relate to homogenous units. I.J. Van der Walt (1963:343-362, 465-468), heavily defended “eiesoortigheid” (focusing on homogenous groups and indigenisation in missions) and reasoned that ethnic groups should be kept separate in their own churches in order for missions to be effective. He defended indigenisation in such a way that he actually defended “apartheid” in missions. Van der Walt heavily relied on German Missiology and was deeply influenced by its exponents. The Nazis held that the Germans were the most superior of the white races. The foundation for this view was not religion, but it was rather an ideology based on evolutionistic philosophies. The theory that whites are inherently superior to blacks was, nevertheless, widely believed (MacGavran, 1984:89) and clearly had an influence on the missiology used to support the overtones of apartheid in the missiology of I. J. Van der Walt.

During the apartheid era, the white churches of the GKSA might have had access to increasing financial sources and funding. Therefore, the churches had reached their mature stage and became self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating and self-theologising churches. Several local churches embarked on mission projects and planted Reformed Churches in the townships where black people resided. Most of the established black Reformed Churches were planted during the apartheid era<sup>5</sup> and have been fully supported financially by the white Reformed Churches. They bought land and built the black churches in the townships. They have supported pastors’ salaries, maintenance, water and electricity, rates and taxes, etc. of the black churches. Therefore, the black churches became financially dependent on the white churches from the time they were established.

### **3. Mission policies of the GKSA**

This study will examine the principles of the GKSA’s mission policies and practices. The synod shaped the underlying principles of the GKSA’s mission policies as they related to the “sending” church (older church) and “mission” church (younger church).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, 2010. Almanak: 31-215.

<sup>6</sup> GKSA’s Synod 1973:34.

### **3.1** The principles of the GKSA's mission policies

#### **3.1.1** The independent existence of the "mission church"<sup>7</sup>

When a mission church is established, the church is an independent church, according to Scripture and the Church Order. Churches should obtain their independency as they become self-sufficient, self-governing and self-propagating. Even if mission churches are financially weak and dependent on the sending churches for their material needs, they should not relinquish their independency. In fact, it often happened that churches required help, but in principle the churches are independent churches. Thus, the relationship between the sending church and the mission church should be seen from this point of view.<sup>8</sup> Therefore the church is established as an independent institution from the beginning whether it is assisted or not. This principle of the GKSA's mission policy is based on biblical directives.

#### **3.1.2** The meaning of independence of the mission church

The principle of the independence of the mission church, according to Confession and Church Order, means one church should not have control over another church. Every church is independent and is accountable to the King of the Church. The sending church should in no respect have control over the mission church. In the South African mission field and in the light of the nature of the black church's dependence on the white church, the danger of the mission churches' independence not being realised and acknowledged is ever present. It is to the disadvantage of the mission church to be governed by another church, in whatever nature or form. The mission churches are not an appendix to the sending churches, but independent churches in their own right. Equally, the mission church is not the black division or department of the sending church over which the church board or minister of the white sending church have oversight. Such guardianship in principle is wrong, because it clashes with the independence of young churches<sup>9</sup>. Thus, the mission church is not a division of the sending church. The mission church should not be controlled by the sending church and is accountable to the Lord.

#### **3.1.3** The relationship of the sending church to the mission church

The relationship of the sending church to the mission church should be of an advisory capacity of the old church to the young church. Such advice means a loving, serving, spiritual fatherhood. The representatives of the sending churches thus

<sup>7</sup> Mission church is a young church that is sent by an established church. It is called as a mission field church or a receiving church.

<sup>8</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1973:34.

<sup>9</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1973:35; 3.1.1.b.

advise the recently instituted and growing churches. They should constantly keep the independence of the young church in mind. They should respect the mission church as an independent church and offer advice at the highest level. The established churches should advise and lead the mission churches to positive self-development and build on the foundation of the Word of God, the Confession, Scriptures and the Church Order of the sending church. Simultaneously the mission church, with the realisation of their immaturity, will graciously and willingly accept advice under the leadership of the missionary, who is grounded in the Word, Confessions and the Church Order of the sending church. The mission church will aim for independence and indigenisation which will echo in the soul of the black church.<sup>10</sup>

### **3.1.4 A deficiency of mission churches to reach maturity**

The mission churches also fail to reach maturity because of their mind-set. The mission policy of the Synod reflected on the deficiency of mission churches to reach maturity as follows:

“The reason why this tendency is largely the result of the mindset of the black church, which depends entirely on the white church for support and the fear that the sending church fail in its efforts. In that way, the mission churches always remain incapable of becoming self-sustainable. No one ever learned to walk without falling. How will the mission churches realise their independence without them having the opportunity to exercise their independence?”<sup>11</sup>

The mission policy of the GKSA Synod shows that the deficiency of mission churches also comes from the mindset of the black churches which depend entirely on the white churches for financial support.

## **3.2 Implementation of the GKSA's mission policies**

This article examines the relationship between the “old” and “young” church in financial matters.

### **3.2.1 The practice of co-operation**

The agreement for co-operation between a local mission church and the sending church is set out as follows<sup>12</sup>:

- The sending church, through its designated representatives, for example the missionary or members of its mission commission, offers advice to the black church as required and when requested by them.

<sup>10</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1973:35.

<sup>11</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1973:36.

<sup>12</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1973:38-39.

- The sending church may support the local church with an amount of money determined from time to time. Otherwise it can help when required, or when requested to by the mission church.
- If the local church board is not capable of handling mission work, the churches can seek co-operation to proceed with mission work in a designated area.
- Concerning their work, all powers used by the sending church are operated entirely under the supervision of the sending church.
- Concerning discipline, helpers who are members of the local black church stand under supervision of the local church board which acts in consultation with the sending church.
- All those in the mission churches who were converted to Christianity will add their membership to the local church.

### **3.2.2** The financial relationship between old and young churches

The mission task of the sending church is completed when mission churches become self-sustainable financially and accept responsibility for mission themselves.<sup>13</sup> This is the participation stage in missions.

### **3.2.3** Steps to sustain the younger church

From the given situation, it seems that it will be necessary for mission churches to be sustained largely because the majority of their congregations locally do not reach maturity for a long period of time. To prevent it becoming an endless road, it is essential that at least the following steps be taken<sup>14</sup>:

- The mission churches should sooner, rather than later, control their own poverty relief funds and church funds, even if it is with the advice of the white supporting church.
- There should be an agreement between the mission church and the sending church that the mission church can grow to be financially self-sustainable. The procedures for requests and support of the Sustentation Fund need to be put in place.

### **3.2.4** Missionaries as the bond between the old and young churches

Meanwhile, the bond between the old and young churches is maintained through missionaries who regularly attend the different meetings in an advisory capacity.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1967:258-259; 1973:47-48.

<sup>14</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1973:48.

<sup>15</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1964:270; 1973:40.

### 3.3 Rights and duties of the church boards

#### 3.3.1 Sending-church boards are responsible for building projects.<sup>16</sup>

It was resolved that the sending church board, in co-operation with the other co-operating church boards, is responsible for the building projects as well as the maintenance and repair of buildings.<sup>17</sup> In the case of the Jouberton Reformed Church in the KOSH region, this church council recently got the title deeds for the church buildings. This was after the white churches had taken responsibility for maintaining the church buildings and paying rates and taxes since 1966.

#### 3.3.2 The GKSA Sustentation Fund<sup>18</sup>

The black churches of the GKSA could not apply for sustainable funds before. The white churches of the GKSA had two Synod funds<sup>19</sup>: (1) the Sustentation Fund for the pastor's salary; (2) the Duvenhage Fund to help with the support of missionaries' livelihood. When the churches were too small and poor to provide for the livelihood of their pastor, they could apply for support from the Synod Sustentation Fund. Recently, the Synod combined these two funds into one Sustentation Fund. Now any Reformed Church, whether black or white, can apply for support from this fund by submitting a motivated request to the classis. After the unification of the black and the white churches into one General Synod, these new arrangements for applying for support from the Sustentation Fund was made. Thus, although the church takes responsibility for its own running costs, it can apply for the fund if the church is struggling to pay the expenses of the maintenance and the salary of its pastor.

#### 3.3.3 Not applicable Sustentation Fund

It seems that the Sustentation Fund is not effective in supporting mission partnerships between churches. Expenses which are not covered by the Sustentation Fund include:

“Donations, maintenance and repair of buildings, gardener, honoraria, affiliation money, depreciation, shortages of previous years, contributions to funds such as Bible distribution, retirement fund, emergencies, entertainment allowance, study allowance, book purchases, Kerkblad subscription, estimates in arrears, capital expenditures, payments of loans or other debt liabilities”.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1955:126.

<sup>17</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1955:126; 1973:49.

<sup>18</sup> GKSA's General Synod 2012, Art 64, 66.

GKSA's General Synod 1970:357; 1973:52.

<sup>19</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1970:357; 1973:52.

<sup>20</sup> GKSA's General Synod 2012, 13.8 Report 2. 8.5.8.

The Sustentation Fund is limited to temporary and urgent cases. “Sustentation Fund is regarded as an exception and in case of emergency and not something to depend on ...”<sup>21</sup>

Accordingly, the Reformed Churches also began planting churches in the KOSH region townships.<sup>22</sup> They provided all the funding and administration to acquire sites and property for the churches as well as providing salaries and expenditures for the ministers. They also assisted those churches in need, but looking back it is a weakness in the mission work of the white Reformed churches that the emerging black Reformed churches were not making disciples properly and taught their own responsibilities to give generously and sacrificially right from the start.

### 3.3.4 The reality of application of mission policy in the GKSA

In reality, however, the township black Reformed churches in the KOSH region are still not independent financially, they are dependent on the Afrikaans-speaking churches. This means that this principle has not really become a reality for the missions in the KOSH region.<sup>23</sup>

Thus the white Reformed churches in the KOSH region have supported the mission churches only financially. It seems that the white Reformed churches have not taken care of and nurtured the black Reformed churches in a holistic way; rather, they seem to have refrained from introducing long-term discipleship partnerships and loving mentoring relationships. According to the principle of the Synod mission policy, churches in the KOSH region should change their mindset of dependency on the white churches.

If this principle is applied to missions in the KOSH region, the white churches should also carry on with mission work until the black churches have a missionary responsibility beyond the stage of just sustaining themselves.

After many years of consideration, the National Synod of 2006 decided to unify the black and white Synods.<sup>24</sup> One unified General Synod consisting of the black

<sup>21</sup> GKSA's General Synod 1967:251(3); 1970:358; 1973:56.

<sup>22</sup> Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, 2010. Almanak: 149-150.

<sup>23</sup> The evaluation of the qualitative research refers to answers on the question “Do you think Tswana-speaking churches can sustain themselves without the Afrikaans-speaking churches' support?” The “no” response was given 8 out of 12 times (2 black-white church groups, 1 white church group, 5 white individuals). The “yes” response was given 4 out of 12 times (3 white individuals, 1 black individual). Therefore, 67% of the participants responded no. The evaluation of the quantitative research refers to answers on the question (statement): “The Afrikaans churches should continue to support the Tswana churches financially.” Response: Both churches are positive about this possibility [the Afrikaans churches (66%) and the Tswana church (54%)]. Both congregations are of the opinion that the Afrikaans churches should support the Tswana church financially.

<sup>24</sup> Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, 2006, Handelinge: 19.2 Art. 275, 290:387-399.

and the white churches was established at the Potchefstroom meeting of January 2009. In the case of the KOSH region, the Gereformeerde Kerke Klerksdorp thereafter decided to discontinue its support to the Reformed Church Jouberton with the reasoning that all support to churches must now be given through the Sustentation Fund of the General Synod.<sup>25</sup>

When the church cannot sustain the pastor's salary or necessary expenditure, they can apply to the classis. To achieve this, the churches must complete forms and submit all necessary documents, which is hard for the young churches that are in difficult situations to proceed alone. They should be trained urgently if they are not familiar with the process. The churches in the KOSH region struggle with this particular process, even if they were allowed access to the Sustentation Fund. In principle, they should manage their churches by themselves, except for urgent cases. However, they still need help in maintaining properties, e.g. repairing buildings, fences, etc. The white Afrikaans-speaking churches know that the township churches need their support. Although they need help, if the white churches do not deliver aid, the township churches feel neglected and isolated. As a result, both churches cannot build a real partnership if some churches are left in desperate need.

#### **4. Findings of relevant missions field work of the GKSA**

The following conclusions of field work on mission, paternalism and dependency can be drawn.

##### **4.1 The study of the GKSA Synod policies**

The principles outlined in missions' policies of the Synod are biblical. However, a policy system or practice is not enough. The Tswana speaking churches still need help to meet the criteria set out in the decisions and guidelines of the General Synod to receive assistance from the Sustentation Fund. There is not enough practical guidance in the Synod's policy to assist missions in the region. The decision of the Synod and the policy is not communicated enough to the churches in the region. There is also not enough effort of the church councils of the churches in the region to fulfil their own duty to read and study the Synod decisions in order to follow the agreed upon procedures of the Synod on these issues. The training for administration at Synod level still needs to be expanded widely, very often and close to local churches in the region.

The Sustentation Fund of the Synod also does not make sufficient provision to satisfy the current needs of the township churches. The township churches don't have the ability to maintain and keep the church without more support from the Afrikaans-

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<sup>25</sup> Church Council's Minutes: Art 10.6 of 29th, Jan. 2009.

speaking churches. They need help in addition to the possibilities of assistance outlined in the Sustentation Fund. Therefore, the township churches cannot become self-sustainable without more and ongoing support of the Afrikaans-speaking churches at this stage. If the Afrikaans-speaking churches abruptly terminate the support to the township churches, the latter feel deserted by the former and the unity in Christ Jesus may be broken. Therefore, the relationship as family between the Afrikaans-speaking and the township churches should be continued with support. Until the township churches become more independent and self-sustainable financially, the neighbour Afrikaans-speaking churches should bear the burden of that which the township churches still lack. Accordingly, to abruptly stop the Afrikaans-speaking churches financial support to the township churches causes the township churches to feel that they have been cut off from fellowship from the Afrikaans-speaking churches in the region. There are difficulties in performing mission work as a partnership because it takes time to for the young churches to understand, know and process the systems prescribed by the Synod decisions. Therefore, the township churches in the region still need to be trained to adapt to the system.

The policy of sustentation of the Synod shows a lack of understanding of different cultures and contextualisation. Barriers (language, culture, political, and attitude) exist to form equal partnerships in missions between the Afrikaans-speaking churches and the township Reformed churches. Therefore, both churches should overcome these barriers to establish equal partnerships in missions and need to share common burdens in Christian fellowship. The researcher suggests that they should have fellowship for unity, i.e. reconciliation through camps, seminars, conferences, etc.

#### **4.2** The study of the GKSA's mission work in KOSH region

The researcher visited three churches [two white Reformed churches in the town and one black Reformed church in the township (one black Reformed church refused to participate in the research)] and surveyed the congregations by using a questionnaire. The researcher gathered survey responses from 250 individuals aged 15 years and above. Respondents were invited to remain after the Sunday service at their churches. The questionnaire was translated from English into Afrikaans, Setswana and Sesotho, thus it was easy for the respondents to understand it.

#### **4.3** Paternalism among the Afrikaans-speaking churches

The Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region supported the Tswana-speaking churches financially, which may have contributed to the Tswana-speaking churches not accepting full responsibility for supporting themselves. As an exam-

ple, the Tswana-speaking churches asked for financial assistance and were only supported by the Klerksdorp West, Klerksdorp, Orkney, Stilfontein and Klerksdorp North Reformed Church. The Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region have helped to pay the pastor's salary, the municipality rates and taxes and the telephone bill of the black church. This has led to the fact that half of the black churches participants replied that the Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region had a positive attitude towards mission work before 1994.

Although the members of the Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region did not think that they had an attitude of superiority, the majority of their Tswana-speaking counterparts responded that they perceived the whites to have such an attitude. Therefore, it seems the Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region did not succeed to show love and support beyond the financial input and did not succeed to show respect and a loving servant leadership towards the Tswana-speaking churches in the KOSH region. Accordingly, the black churches in the KOSH region revealed that they still believed that the whites held the attitude of superiority. From this we may also assume that the general attitude of the apartheid-context, the feelings that the whites were acting as superiors, have influenced the perceptions of the black Christians.

#### 4.4 Dependency of Tswana-speaking churches in general

One of the reasons given by Tswana-speaking church members in the KOSH region regarding their churches' poverty is based on apartheid's impact on the communities. By contrast, the Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region were not of the opinion that the Tswana-speaking churches are poor because of the apartheid legacy impact.

Participants of Afrikaans-speaking churches in the KOSH region expressed the opinion that other important reasons why the Tswana-speaking churches are poor are that they spend too much money on funerals, cleansing ceremonies, tombstones and religious consultations with witch doctors. By contrast, the majority of the Tswana-speaking churches in the KOSH region did not concur with that view. Many of the people, however, responded that they indeed are still heavily involved in such traditional religious aspects. Therefore, this points to a spiritual weakness and a lack of faith in God. The problem is that members of the Tswana-speaking churches in the KOSH region still overspend on such religious events. Such a state of affairs may lead to poverty and thus dependency. These findings of the vast different views of the white and black churches reveal that the whole issue of dependency is a complex issue that won't be resolved with a few simplistic answers. It is also clear that communication and mutual understanding must be improved.

The Afrikaans-speaking churches and their Tswana-speaking counterparts in the KOSH region expressed the opinion that another reason for the poverty of the Tswana-speaking churches is that church members do not give offerings and tithes. The majority of the Afrikaans-speaking and Tswana-speaking churches in the KOSH region expressed the opinion that the Tswana-speaking churches need the white churches' support because they are unable to sustain themselves yet. It will hence take time for them to be independent financially because they are used to being dependent in this manner on the white churches. It is clear that the black churches will remain dependent until they change this receiving mindset and become generous giving disciples of Jesus Christ.

As a result, the finding of this research showed that, if the black churches in the KOSH region could be trained as Jesus' disciples and be taught to give offerings and tithes, these churches may overcome dependency in terms of balance and effect, according to the biblical principles. This may lead to a situation in which they would be able to sustain themselves financially.

The township churches in the region have the mentality of just receiving and show a lack of responsible stewardship and entrepreneurship. They, therefore, need discipleship training about sustaining themselves. They also still need to learn how to exercise stewardship on a regular base and try to establish community development and entrepreneurship in missions. Both the Afrikaans-speaking and the township churches in the region lack understanding of each other's cultures, especially, and think mission is only to support the township churches financially. They need to transform the concept of mission into that of a holistic mission which includes discipleship training. The GKSA need a biblical partnership model as new strategy in missions. Perhaps such a holistic transformational model of missions could help to overcome tendencies of paternalism and dependency in the missionary situation.

## **5. Conclusion**

The principles and the implementation of the GKSA's mission policy were biblical but the application of it was inappropriate. Therefore, the failure result of the application caused paternalism and dependency. The Sustentation Fund of the Synod also does not make sufficient provision to satisfy the current needs of the township churches. The township churches don't have the ability to maintain and keep the church without more support from the Afrikaans-speaking churches. In addition to the possibilities of assistance outlined in the Sustentation Fund, they also need help. Therefore, the township churches cannot become self-sustainable without more and ongoing support from the Afrikaans-speaking churches at this stage. The GKSA established one unified General Synod among the black and the white churches at

Potchefstroom on January 2009. However, paternalism and dependency continue in many ways<sup>26</sup> in the relationship between the white churches and the black churches as the black churches depend on the white churches and the white churches only support the black churches financially. Therefore, the GKSA needs a new strategy for missions to overcome paternalism and dependency. The relationship of biblical partnerships as new strategy in the GKSA may be suggested.

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<sup>26</sup> To support the pastor's salary, retirement fund and study allowance or necessary expenditure, i.e. maintenance for properties, emergencies and rates and tax of the church site etc.

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