

The Effect of Leadership Succession Planning on the Stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Omae, Kepha Nyamweya

Pan African Christian University, Nairobi, Kenya

ORCID

Kepha Omae <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-9164-7294>

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Abstract

In the realm of church leadership, succession planning facilitates the establishment of strong connections between leaders and their followers, ensuring a smooth transfer of leadership responsibilities and ultimately enhancing the performance and stability of evangelical churches. While various strategies exist for church leaders to bolster stability and growth among their congregants, the objective of this study was to establish the impact of leadership succession planning on the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study used a sample of 60 of the targeted 300 evangelical churches in Nairobi. Data was collected using a questionnaire from a total of 360 leaders picked from the 60 churches using four leadership levels: Presiding Bishops/General Overseers, General Secretaries, Senior Pastors, and Senior Deacons. Descriptive statistics as well as regression modelling were used to achieve the objective. SPSS version 27 was used to carry out the data analysis. The results indicate that among the succession planning variables examined, including mentoring, talent management, employee retention, and career development, mentoring emerges as the predominant approach adopted by leaders in Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County. Moreover, the findings indicate that succession planning contributes significantly to church stability, accounting for over 18% of the overall stability. Consequently, the study recommends the integration of leadership and management practices through a holistic approach encompassing mentoring, talent management, career development, and employee retention strategies, complemented by tailored training programs.

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Introduction

Organizations are started to achieve predetermined objectives. This includes churches and religious institutions. While succession planning is not centered on the church environment, it must be addressed in any context where leadership becomes a prime concern.

Therefore, Succession planning is a unique and deliberate effort guided by organizational leadership to invest in the presumed optimum expertise. Consequently, individuals selected for succession mentoring should demonstrate the potential to handle senior management functions and responsibilities if quality services and sustainability are to be achieved; this goes without mentioning the organization's stability (Chukwuma et al., 2021). A key aim of succession planning is ensuring that organizations have ready talent to take up senior roles whenever the need arises, ensuring leadership perpetuity and sustainability.

Succession planning is argued to be a broad-level concept that deals with the entire workforce, ensuring that the organizations have correct and sustainable quality and quantity of leadership skills. According to Hollinger (2013), succession planning focuses on the requirements of organizations based on the strategic direction. It looks at plans for acquiring, retaining, and effectively utilizing current and future leaders. The leadership of an organization should ensure that the needs of an organization for leaders are met in a timely and seamless manner.

According to Guise (2015), succession planning concerns itself with the leaders' ability to have a foresight of the future staffing needs of an organization and make the appropriate plans to fill them. Rothwell (2011) explains succession planning as the state of anticipating leadership changes and then developing a smart plan to identify talented employees with leadership potential. Further, it entails the articulation and identification of future human resource needs of an organization that is followed by an analysis to determine competence gaps and then provide

suitable training, mentorship, and coaching, allocation of special assignments, role-playing and mind games to make them suitably ready for new roles that may arise (Rothwell, 2011). Further, Rothwell (2011) defined succession planning as the process used by organizational leaders to ensure stability in employee tenure. It entails selecting and training internal employees in preparation for key leadership positions that might arise (Galbraith & Smith, 2011). This paper gathered literature from previous studies to examine the effect of leadership succession planning on the stability of evangelical churches in Kenya. According to Northouse (2013), in succession planning, leaders challenge their followers through intellectual stimulation to use creative ways in their work environment; by this, they can identify potential successors from the team. Pacho (2016) observed that, despite this noble task, the church was facing its own internal challenges, including democracy issues, poor governance, corruption, leadership struggles, poor succession plans, and poor management of resources. In Nigeria, Ajibnye et al. (2015) discovered that the administration and stability of the Church (Anglican Communion) had been hampered by poor records management systems. The matter was complicated because each parish used a different system, making it difficult to retrieve documents when needed. All these factors reveal that the church in Africa faces instability challenges that need to be addressed urgently, a solution that would be achieved through proper succession planning. This paper is guided by the strategic leadership theory, whose main aim is to ensure that organizations do not collapse as a result of poor succession planning, hence the need to maintain the stability of the evangelical churches.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a pragmatic research philosophy to collect quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) to establish the association that exists between succession planning and the stability of evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya, was established.

Research Design

The research employed a descriptive survey design. Carper and Schindler (2014) indicated that the main characteristics of descriptive research are found in its objectives. The design was chosen to describe the effect of succession planning on the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya, and to determine the moderating effect of transformational leadership on this relationship.

Target Population

The study's target population consisted of the 300 Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. Nairobi County was selected due to its high concentration of Evangelical church headquarters, offering a representative sample. Each church had respondents, including a Presiding Bishop or General Overseer, the General Secretary, the Senior Pastor, and a Senior Deacon, totaling 1200 church leaders from whom the study sample was drawn.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study's sample size was to be drawn from 300 registered church organizations and included leadership at four levels: Presiding Bishop or General Overseer, General Secretary, Senior Pastor, and Senior Deacon. These leaders were chosen because they were best suited to

respond to the leadership-related questions from the conceptual framework and were involved in decision-making for their church organizations.

The sample consisted of 60 church organizations, each contributing one Presiding Bishop/General Overseer and one General Secretary. Additionally, two Senior Pastors and two Senior Deacons from each organization were conveniently sampled. This resulted in 360 leaders from the four levels: Presiding Bishops/General Overseers, General Secretaries, Senior Pastors, and Senior Deacons.

Data Collection Instrument

The primary data collection tool for the study was a pre-developed and tested questionnaire containing both structured and semi-structured questions. The instrument was pilot-tested prior to the main data collection to ensure its effectiveness and content validity. Mugenda and Mugenda(2003) recommend including 1-10 percent of the sample population in the pretesting phase. Following this guideline, the study used 24 respondents, which is 6.6 percent of the 360-sample population, for the pretest. The pretest involved an expert assessment by four bishops and their church secretaries and leaders from established church organizations. Additionally, the questionnaire was reviewed by doctoral supervisors who provided feedback on various drafts.

Data Collection Procedure

In this study, five research assistants were trained on the subject matter to administer the refined questionnaire and assist with data entry. Respondents were guided with illustrated answers to ensure clear understanding and appropriate responses. The drop-and-pick-up-later method was used to improve the response rate. The questionnaires were distributed to church leaders at the various previously defined levels.

Reliability of Instruments

The study employed Cronbach's Alpha (α), a common internal consistency measure generated by SPSS Version 27, to assess the extent to which a set of test items could be treated as measuring a single latent variable (Cronbach, 1951). This measure was used for the five-point Likert scale items to evaluate internal consistency reliability and determine the cut-off point. According to Sekaran (2006), the closer Cronbach's alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. The study's reliability test of the 12 items yielded a coefficient of 0.7, which was considered the minimum acceptable level (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Ongeti (2014) found that reliability coefficients ranged between 0.661 and 0.891. In this study, Cronbach's alpha was computed from the composite indices of all the dependent, moderating, and independent variables, with each variable calculated as the arithmetic mean of all responses under each objective.

The alpha scores for each variable are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Leadership succession planning	.916	20
Stability of Evangelical churches	.788	20

Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis shows that leadership succession planning had 0.916 and the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya, had 0.788. These numbers indicate higher reliability, as they are above 0.7.

Validity of Instrument

The study employed both construct validity and content validity. The questionnaire was divided into several sections for construct validity, each was designed to assess information specific to a particular objective, which was closely aligned with the study's conceptual framework. To ensure content validity, each question was evaluated for its ability to collect the desired data. Experts were consulted to provide their opinions on the suitability of the data collection instrument. Based on their feedback, the instruments were adjusted appropriately before the final data collection. Their review comments were used to enhance content validity.

After data collection, it was edited to eliminate common mistakes and cleaned to ensure consistency. Further scrutiny of the completed questionnaire was done to ensure accuracy, uniformity, and consistency with other facts. The analysis did not include questionnaires that were returned with many missing values. Coding was done in SPSS by assigning numerals to the response to facilitate entry (Kothari & Garg, 2014); for instance, with the gender demographic, 1 was assigned to males and 2 assigned to females for ease of data entry and analysis.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used, with descriptive analysis involving absolute and relative frequencies (percentages). Central tendency and dispersion measures, such as mean and standard deviation, were utilized, along with minimum, maximum, and quartile values, and content analysis was employed for qualitative data. In inferential statistics, correlation and linear regression analyses were used to assess relationships between the independent variable (succession planning) and the dependent variable (stability of the Evangelical church). Multiple regression analysis was also employed to examine the combined effect of all independent variables

(Bryan, 2016). Correlation statistics, Chi-Square tests, and beta coefficients were computed to establish relationships between the variables.

The hypotheses were tested using SPSS version 27, and the regression model's fit to the data was assessed. The statistical significance of each independent variable was determined, and the goodness of fit was evaluated using Hosmer-Lemeshow's (H-L) test. Nagelkerke's R squared was utilized to gauge the goodness of fit of the linear regression model, while the hypotheses were assessed based on the p-value. Additionally, linearity and normality tests were conducted to ensure the normal distribution of the data. The study employed graphical methods such as histograms and the Jarque-Bera test to assess normality and ensure that the residuals of the regression models followed a normal distribution.

The study adopted linear regression analysis, as the residuals indicated that the data distribution met the assumptions of linear regression: residuals were approximately normally distributed (as depicted by normal p-p plot), and homoscedasticity was observed with few outliers, which were identified and removed to enhance the model's validity. Regression analysis tends to be robust to violations of normality assumptions, particularly with large sample sizes. The regression estimates remain reliable given the relatively large sample size (300).

Ethical Considerations

There are several ethical considerations that were considered in this study, such as not harming the participants, respecting their dignity, obtaining their informed consent, protecting their privacy, ensuring their confidentiality, keeping them anonymous, and being truthful about the aims of the study (Leedey & Orinrod, 2014; Bryman, 2016). Additionally, honesty was observed while communicating the research findings (Kothari, 2014). An introduction letter

was obtained from the Registrar of Academic Affairs at Pan Africa Christian University that was used to ascertain that the researcher is a genuine Postgraduate student at the University and that the research study was undertaken for any reason other than for academic purposes only. The introduction letter was used when applying for a research permit from NACOSTI, which is the government body mandated to ensure that all research activities adhere to all stipulated ethical issues and guidelines.

Upon receipt of the research permit from NACOSTI, the researcher took copies of the same to the County Commissioners and County Educational Officers of Nairobi County, where the study was conducted. Another ethical consideration was getting a letter from the Nairobi headquarters office of the Evangelical Churches of Kenya that allowed the researcher and research assistants to access the 60 churches sampled for the study. An individual introduction letter was prepared for all respondents to explain to them the purpose for which the study was being conducted and to seek permission from them, besides guaranteeing their confidentiality and anonymity (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012).

RESULTS

The study gathered responses from 300 church leaders from Evangelical churches in Nairobi, with the majority being male, highlighting the gender disparity among church leaders. Among the respondents, most were between 41 and 50 years old, with the youngest being below 30 years old. The data also revealed that the majority of the church leaders held an undergraduate degree as their highest level of education, indicating a moderate level of educational attainment among the leaders. Furthermore, the majority of the church leaders have had considerable tenure, potentially pointing towards an upcoming wave of retirements. This underscores the necessity to groom and prepare new leaders to assume their roles, emphasizing the significance of leadership succession planning in ensuring the stability and growth of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Leadership Succession Planning

The study sought to unearth the effect of leadership succession planning on the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. Various factors, behaviors, and practices were examined under the main variables (mentoring, talent management, employee retention, and career development).

Mentoring and Stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County

The study findings revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that churches offered mentorship programs for transferring skills to emerging leaders, with a mean score of 4.14. However, assigning mentors to support the growth of emerging leaders received the lowest mean score of 3.75. Notably, the statement "Upcoming church leaders are assigned mentors to help them grow in leadership" had the highest standard deviation ($SD=1.028$), indicating considerable

variation in responses around the average mean of 3.96. Although mentoring was identified as a positive predictor ($b=.102$, $s.e.=.044$, $p=0.126$) of church stability, it was not statistically significant. This suggests that while mentorship programs may enhance church stability, the assignment of mentors to mentees may not always occur.

The study indicates that evangelical churches in Nairobi County implement leadership succession planning through established mentorship programs despite inconsistencies in mentor assignments. This finding is consistent with Jakubik et al.'s (2016) study, which noted a lack of information sharing about mentoring practices. Additionally, a positive and significant correlation ($r=0.262$, $p<0.01$) was found between mentoring and church stability among evangelical churches in Nairobi County, suggesting that church stability increases with higher levels of mentoring. These results support Mundia and Iravo's (2014) findings on the significant impact of mentoring on performance.

Talent Management and stability of church organizations

The study found that the highest mean score ($M=3.89$) was associated with the statement "There are leadership development programs in the church," indicating that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County prioritize such programs as part of their succession planning to groom future leaders. Conversely, the lowest mean score ($M=3.78$) was linked to the statement "The best talents are identified, rewarded, and retained," suggesting weaknesses in talent management practices within these churches. These findings imply that while Evangelical churches in Nairobi County emphasize leadership development through programs, there are gaps in identifying, rewarding, and retaining talent that need addressing by church leadership. This aligns with Mahlahla's (2018)

study, which showed that leadership development programs and employee engagement positively influence performance.

Correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation ($r=0.279$, $p<0.01$) between talent management and church stability among Evangelical churches in Nairobi County. This indicates that effective talent management practices contribute to increased church stability, consistent with Jepchumba's (2021) findings on the impact of talent management practices on organizational performance.

Regression analysis further supported these results, identifying talent management as a positive and significant predictor ($b=0.156$, $s.e.=0.047$, $p=0.042$) of church stability. This suggests that adopting talent management initiatives contributes to the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County.

Career development and stability of church organizations

The study revealed that the highest mean score ($M=3.79$) was associated with the statements "Church leaders have programs for preparing the next generation of leaders" and "Church leaders encourage a culture of lifelong learning in the organization." This suggests that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County have established structured career development programs to groom future leaders and promote continuous learning within the organization. However, the lowest mean score ($M=3.60$) was linked to the statement, "Employees are encouraged to choose to work where they are most suited based on their skills," indicating a lack of emphasis on utilizing available skills and placing leaders based on their abilities for organizational benefit. These

findings align with Park et al.'s (2014) observation that continuous preparation of future leaders is essential for organizational sustainability and success.

Correlation analysis showed a positive and significant correlation ($r=0.295$, $p<0.01$) between career development and church stability among Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County. This suggests that church stability increases in tandem with the level of career development within these churches, consistent with Ayodo's (2022) findings on the positive association between career development and employee satisfaction, leading to improved performance.

Regression analysis supported these results, indicating career development as a positive but non-significant predictor of church stability ($b=0.126$, $s.e.=0.079$, $p=0.088$). This suggests that while career development contributes to the stability of Evangelical church organizations, its impact is not statistically significant.

Employee Retention and stability of church organizations

The study found that the highest mean score ($M=3.94$) was associated with the statement "Church leaders have a positive attitude towards their followers," indicating that leaders of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County value and appreciate their followers and workers, recognizing their significant role in advancing the gospel, as demonstrated by Singh (2019). However, the lowest mean score ($M=3.64$) was linked to the statement, "Church leaders have put in place mechanisms for employee welfare," suggesting that some church leaders have not implemented welfare mechanisms that could motivate their followers.

These findings suggest a need for church leaders to prioritize employee welfare alongside fostering positive relationships with their followers. Correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation ($r=0.301$, $p<0.01$) between employee retention and church stability among

Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. This implies that church stability increases with higher levels of employee retention within these churches.

Regression analysis further supported these findings, identifying employee retention as a positive and significant predictor ($b=0.189$, $s.e.=0.039$, $p=0.004$) in the model. This indicates that the mechanisms implemented by church leaders to retain employees significantly contribute to the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Church Stability

The study also investigated church stability as a dependent variable to understand its contribution to succession planning. This was measured using four elements: numerical growth, spiritual growth, financial growth, and turnover rate, which collectively represent the aspects of church stability.

Numerical Growth

The analysis of respondents' perceptions regarding numerical growth in the church indicated that the statement with the highest mean score ($M=4.04$) was "The number of church members has been growing during the past five years," suggesting that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County have experienced growth over this period. However, the lowest mean score ($M=3.74$) was observed for the statement "New church members join the church every Sunday," indicating that growth may not occur consistently on a weekly basis.

Regarding response variability, the statement "The church has opened a new branch in the last ten years" had the highest standard deviation ($SD=1.087$), suggesting respondents disagreed about this issue. Conversely, the statement "One's talents are considered during recruitment into

the church" had the lowest standard deviation ($SD=0.925$), indicating more clustered agreement among respondents. These findings are consistent with Mugambi's (2020) research, which also indicated rapid growth in church attendance across Africa

Spiritual Growth

The evaluation of respondents' perceptions regarding spiritual growth within the church indicated that the highest mean score ($M=4.09$) was for the statement "Preaching occupied a central part in the church," suggesting that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County prioritize preaching the gospel to foster spiritual growth. However, the lowest mean score ($M=3.84$) was observed for the statement "The number of conflicts in the church has been going down during the last five years," indicating that some internal conflicts persist within these organizations despite their focus on preaching.

Regarding variability in responses, the statement "The church has effective training programs for new believers" had the highest standard deviation ($SD=1.00$), indicating disagreement among respondents about the effectiveness of the church's training programs for new believers. Conversely, the statement "The belief systems of church members are very strong" had the lowest standard deviation ($SD=0.889$), suggesting more clustered agreement among respondents, implying that followers in Evangelical church organizations are spiritually nourished, leading to strong belief systems. However, some respondents perceived a lack of specialized attention to new believers despite the church's focus on preaching. These findings align with Mbewe's (2020) research, which emphasized the church's role in evangelizing to sinners and highlighted challenges posed by internal conflicts hindering growth within organizations.

Financial Growth

The assessment of respondents' perceptions regarding financial growth within the church showed that the statement with the highest mean score ($M=3.81$) was “The church collections have been growing for the last five years,” while the lowest mean score ($M=3.46$) was observed for the statement “The church has inadequate physical infrastructure.”

The average mean score of 3.67 coupled with standard deviations greater than 1 suggests that financial growth may contribute to the instability of Evangelical church organizations in Nairobi, Kenya. These findings are in line with Sigini's (2015) research on Pentecostal Assemblies in Malawi, which indicated that financial instability was a significant factor hindering the growth of Evangelical church organizations in Nairobi.

Turnover Rate

The evaluation of respondents' perceptions regarding the turnover rate within the church revealed that the statement with the highest mean score ($M=3.49$) was “There are churches that do not have trained Pastors,” while the lowest mean score ($M=2.95$) was observed for the statement “The rate at which members of the clergy have been leaving ministry is high.” These findings suggest that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County may rely on alternative methods rather than formal training to prepare their followers for leadership positions.

Overall, the average mean score of 3.25, coupled with standard deviations greater than 1, ($SD=1.323$). This indicates a greater dispersion of responses around the mean score of 3.25, suggesting disagreement among respondents regarding the turnover rate of clergy members. Conversely, the statement “indicates a low perception among leaders in Evangelical churches in Nairobi regarding the turnover rate.

Correlational Analysis

The correlation analysis on the effect of the four aspects of leadership succession planning (mentoring, talent management, career development, and employee retention) on the stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. These variables were computed by getting the average means of all the variables under each.

Mentoring, talent management, career development, employee retention, and stability of Evangelical Churches

Table 2 below presents the results of the correlation analysis between mentoring, talent management, career development, employee retention, and church stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Table 2: Correlation between mentoring, talent management, career development, employee retention, and church stability

Variable	Mentoring	Church stability
Mentoring	-	.262**
Talent management	-	.279**
Career development	-	.295**
Employee retention	-	.301**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results presented in Table 2 above show a summary that indicates a positive and significant correlation between the four variables (mentoring, talent management, career development, and employee retention) and church stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Leadership Succession Planning and Stability of Evangelical Churches

Table 3 below presents the results of the correlation analysis between leadership succession planning and the stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Table 3: Correlation between Succession Planning and Stability of Evangelical churches

Variable	Succession Planning	Church stability
Succession Planning	-	.366**
Church stability	.366**	-

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results presented in Table 3 above indicated the existence of a positive and significant correlation between leadership succession planning and church stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya ($r=0.366$, $p<0.01$). This could imply that an increase in leadership succession planning leads to a corresponding increase in church stability at the Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. The results agree with the findings of Sulernan et al. (2021), which found a positive and significant relationship between leadership succession planning practices and performance.

Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 27 to determine the effect of the independent variable (Succession Planning) on the dependent variable (stability of evangelical churches in Nairobi). The model

measured the effect of Mentoring, Talent management, Career Development, and Employee retention on the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County.

Tables 4 and 5 below show the results obtained from the analysis measuring the effect of succession planning on the stability of evangelical churches in Kenya.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.468 ^a	.219	.208	.42408	.219	20.640	4	295	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), BER_C, BM_C, CDV_C, TM_C

b. BER_C: Employee retention; BM_C: Mentoring; CDV_C: Career development; TM_C: talent management

Table 4.0 shows that the overall model was significant. This shows that succession planning affects the stability of church organizations in Kenya. The model explains 21.9% of the variance in the stability of Evangelical church organizations in Nairobi, Kenya. Table 4.27 displays the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 5: Model 1 Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.000	.024	-.012	.990		
	BM_C	.068	.044	.102	1.533	.126	1.671
	TM_C	.096	.047	.156	2.038	.042	2.205
	CDV_C	.079	.046	.126	1.714	.088	2.058
	BER_C	.114	.039	.189	2.897	.004	1.602

a. Dependent Variable: CS_C: Stability of evangelical churches

Table 5 above shows that only talent management ($b=0.156$, $s.e.=0.047$, $p=0.042$) and employee retention ($b=0.189$, $s.e.=0.039$, $p=0.004$) had a significant impact on the stability of churches in Nairobi, Kenya. This implies that a unit increase in talent management increases church stability by 15%, holding other factors constant. In comparison, a unit increase in employee retention successfully increases church stability by more than 18%.

Validation of Research Hypothesis

The results obtained show that succession planning had a p-value of less than 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that the relationship between leadership succession planning and the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi, Kenya, is statistically significant.

In conclusion, these results imply that succession planning accounts for more than 18% of church stability in Evangelical churches in Nairobi, Kenya.

Discussion

The study sought to unearth the effect of leadership succession planning on the stability of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. Various factors, behaviors, and practices were examined under the main variables (mentoring, talent management, employee retention, and career development).

Mentoring and Stability of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County

The study indicates that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County utilize mentorship programs for leadership succession, even though mentors may not always be assigned to mentees consistently. This finding resonates with Jakubik et al.'s study (2016), which noted a lack of

information sharing about mentoring practices. It suggests that church leaders recognize the importance of preparing younger leaders for future roles, as supported by Tams' (2014) findings on the correlation between mentoring programs and high performance.

Furthermore, there's a significant positive correlation between mentoring and church stability in Nairobi County's Evangelical churches. This suggests that stability increases with higher levels of mentoring, consistent with Mundia and Iravo's (2014) findings on mentoring's impact on performance.

While existing mentorship programs are acknowledged, the study identifies notable gaps in mentor-mentee pairings, potentially undermining these initiatives' effectiveness. It underscores the urgent need for church leaders to enhance mentorship practices through consistent pairing and regular mentor training, which could greatly improve the quality and impact of church-based mentorship programs.

Talent Management and stability of church organizations

The findings reveal that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County prioritize leadership development programs, including talent management, as part of their succession planning. Despite strong mentorship programs, gaps and weaknesses in talent identification, reward, and retention are identified within these programs. Correlation analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between talent management and church stability among Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, with regression analysis further supporting talent management as a predictor of church stability. This suggests that effective talent management practices contribute to organizational stability.

While past research (Mahlahla (2018) focused on mentorship programs, these results suggest potential gaps within program components, calling for a comprehensive review. This aligns with studies (Ali & Babu, (2015) and Jepchumba, (2021)) emphasizing comprehensive talent assessment and development practices and the significant impact of talent management on organizational performance.

Weaknesses in talent identification, reward, and retention within mentorship programs could undermine talent management effectiveness. To address these issues, robust talent management strategies are recommended, including regular assessments, personalized career plans, and competitive reward systems to attract and retain top talent.

Career development and stability of church organizations

The results confirm that Evangelical churches in Nairobi County have established structured career development programs to prepare their leaders for future roles. However, they also indicate a lack of a culture that promotes utilizing available skills and placing leaders based on their abilities for organizational benefit.

Statistical analysis sheds light on the relationship between career development and church stability. Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between career development and church stability among Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, implying stability increases with career development levels. Regression analysis supported this, identifying career development as a positive but non-significant predictor of church stability, indicating its contribution without statistical significance.

These findings resonate with Park et al. (2014), who stressed continuous leadership preparation for organizational sustainability. They're also consistent with Ayodo's (2022) study,

linking career development to employee satisfaction and improved performance, as seen in church stability.

The study underscores a cultural gap hindering skill utilization and effective leader placement, potentially impacting career development program effectiveness. Hence, there's a call to foster a culture that encourages skill utilization and optimal leader placement among church leaders. Future research should explore organizational cultures promoting career development programs, considering these findings

Employee Retention and stability of church organizations

The findings indicate that leaders of Evangelical churches in Nairobi County highly value and appreciate their followers and workers, recognizing their crucial role in advancing the gospel, as supported by Singh (2019). However, there's a revealed gap in the implementation of welfare mechanisms by some church leaders, which could serve to motivate their followers. This contrasts with Magaisa and Musundire's (2022) study, defining employee retention as coordinated activities ensuring employee welfare for retention.

Additionally, correlation analysis unveiled a positive and significant relationship between employee retention and church stability among Evangelical Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya, implying stability increases with employee retention. Regression analysis supported this, identifying employee retention as a positive and significant predictor, indicating its substantial role in bolstering church stability.

To address the identified gap, it is imperative to develop and implement effective welfare programs to enhance the motivation and well-being of followers and workers within these churches.

Recommendations

To enhance the church leadership, stability, and organizational performance, the following were the key recommendations proposed from the research study:

- a) Integrate leadership and management practices by combining mentoring, talent management, career development, and employee retention and succession planning. Implementing training programs to enhance leaders' effectiveness in understanding individual motivations and addressing individual issues will further improve individualized consideration and support.
- b) Foster a culture of continuous improvement by encouraging innovation, creativity, and learning, promoting tolerance for mistakes, and providing growth opportunities. Creating an environment that supports open communication, collaboration, and continuous improvement will bolster organizational stability and effectiveness.
- c) Implement structured and consistent mentorship programs to facilitate the development of emerging leaders, accompanied by training for mentors to enhance their effectiveness in guiding and supporting mentees.
- d) Optimize talent management practices by prioritizing talent identification, reward, and retention as part of the church's strategic planning and allocating resources to support talent management initiatives and address existing gaps in practices.
- e) Align career development programs with organizational needs by ensuring the alignment between the skills developed and the roles and responsibilities within the church and providing opportunities for ongoing skills assessment and alignment with organizational needs.

- f) Enhance employee retention practices by developing and implementing effective welfare mechanisms and incentives to boost employee satisfaction and retention. Provide challenging tasks and opportunities for leadership development to foster a culture of trust and empowerment.

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