



Developing African Christian Leaders for Global Transformation

Kimion Tagwirei¹ 

¹ The Unit for Reformational Theology and the Development of the South African Society, Faculty of Theology, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.

ABSTRACT

Christianity is growing massively in the Global South, while it is declining in the rest of the world. This has changed the trajectory of missionary work. Africans used to be recipients, but are now benefactors who promote the gospel and lead mega-churches beyond their motherlands. Correspondingly, African Christian leaders ought to develop their capacities. While some of them appreciate the importance of leadership development, as confirmed by publicized leadership seminars and conferences, few African churches have contextualized Christian leadership development frameworks. Most problematically, countless Christian leaders have been the subjects of disturbing controversies, and they age and die without having prepared people to succeed them. By failing to do so, they betray the mission of God and the Church. Although having a call is invaluable for ministry and leadership, continuous leadership development is highly necessary for effectiveness, as ministerial needs grow daily while the capacities of Church leaders are limited. Applying grounded research as theory and engaging with contemporary literature, this paper reviewed African Christian leadership, and drew on leadership development models from the Old and New Testaments, in view of Malphurs and Mancini's (2004) leadership development framework. This paper identified the necessity of contextualizing leadership development, appraising incumbent leaders, and addressing their situational challenges and needs, and recommends consistent holistic capacity enhancement in correspondence with changing times, contexts, people and places.

Correspondence

Kimion Tagwirei

Email:

kimion22tc@gmail.com

Publication History

Received: 22nd February, 2024

Accepted: 29th April, 2024

Published online:

21st May, 2024

Keywords: *Christian Leadership, Mission, Leadership Development, Sustainability, Transformation*

INTRODUCTION

Christianity is continuing to grow massively in the Global South. Manala reports that 'Christianity has indeed spread like wildfires in sub-Saharan Africa in the corresponding period in spite of the pessimism that followed as a result of the threat of rapid Islam advances.'¹ Granberg-Michaelson adds that 'the centre of Christianity has shifted from Europe to the global South.'² Interestingly, Kalu reports

¹ Matsobane J. Manala, "The Impact of Christianity on Sub-Saharan Africa," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 39, no. 2 (2013): 285–302.

² Wes. Granberg-Michaelson, "Think Christianity Is Dying? No, Christianity Is Shifting Dramatically," *The Washington Post*, sec. Acts of Faith, May 10, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2015/05/20/think-christianity-is-dying-no-christianity-is-shifting-dramatically/>.

that the African diaspora and other transmigrant congregations are rejuvenating Christianity in Europe through a ‘reverse flow’.³ This phenomenon is what Perry and Okyerefo refer to as ‘reverse missionization’ from the Global South.⁴ As Africans advance the gospel, they cross borders and plant churches in the former heartlands of missionary work, thereby globalizing African Christianity.

The impact of this paradigmatic shift in missionizing direction calls for African Christian leaders to build their capacities and meet rising demands for global transformation. Nyanni explains that ‘unlike their parents, who grew up in autochthonous surroundings in Africa, the second generation is now growing up in a multicultural society, a global village, a technologically connected culture and, as often put, a world without walls’.⁵ Providing ecclesiological leadership to an interconnected, dynamic and ever-changing world demands continuous leadership development. The challenge has been that countless African Christian leaders have fallen into duplicitous self-serving controversies, comedies and failures, such as fraudulent, sexual and financial scandals-in and outside their churches.⁶ Furthermore, many of them age and die in office, without having prepared their successors.⁷

Considering the ever more vocal local and global demands for transformational leadership, in light of incumbent leaders’ questionable characters, convictions and competencies, this paper explores circumstantially necessitous aspects that African Christian leaders should develop if they are to be effective globally. Founding and senior leaders may not be keen to humble themselves and learn something new, leadership development can transform upcoming leaders so that they can make the desired transformational difference within and outside their motherlands. This paper starts by conceptualizing leadership development, then overviews Malphurs and Mancini’s leadership development framework, reviews African Christian leadership and studies leadership development in view of the Old and New Testaments.⁸ Thereafter, it explores situationally relevant aspects that should be developed and concludes that Christian leaders must continuously upgrade themselves and their successors, to enhance their capacities for transformational leadership in a dynamic world.

CONCEPTUALIZING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Global Leadership Network provides an overview of the problem investigated by this paper:

Without strong leadership, the spiritual vitality of a church begins to crumble. When this happens, not only do those who are a part of the church begin to lose steam, the community that surrounds it does not see the church as a beacon in the community, or worse, they reject the church all together. The stakes are high. Which is why investing in the leadership of a church is so critical.⁹

Therefore, understanding what leadership development means matters a great deal for Christian leaders, and all stakeholders should pursue it from an informed position. Krispin explains that leadership development includes the development of individual and collective capacities to enable the efficacious execution of missions.¹⁰ Similarly, Kets de Vries and Korotov explain that leadership development transforms current and future leaders so that they possess the requisite abilities and approaches to perform their roles fruitfully.¹¹ Given the overlapping concepts of leadership development and leader development, this submission considers leadership development collectively

³ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁴ Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo, “African Churches In Europe,” *Journal of Africana Religions* 2, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 95–124, <https://doi.org/10.5325/jafrirel.2.1.0095>.

⁵ Caleb Opoku Nyanni, “Changing Lanes: Second-Generation African Pentecostals in the United Kingdom,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 40, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 32–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/18124461.2020.1721683>.

⁶ Thomaso. Clavarino, “Inside the Dark, Opulent World of Ghana’s Churches,” Pulitzer Center, n.d.

⁷ Mangaliso Matshobane and Maake J. Masango, “Understanding Power Struggles in the Pentecostal Church Government,” *HTS Theologese Studies / Theological Studies* 74, no. 1 (October 22, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4949>.

⁸ Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church* (Baker Books, 2004).

⁹ Global Leadership Network, “Trying to Fuel Church Growth and Outreach? 6 Reasons to Invest in Leadership Development” (May, 2017).

¹⁰ Keith R Krispin Jr, “Christian Leader Development: An Outcomes Framework,” *Christian Education Journal* 17, no.1(2020):18–37.

¹¹ Manfred F.R. Kets de Vries and Konstantin Korotov, “Developing Leaders and Leadership Development,” *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1684001>.

as activities through which individuals and groups of people are equipped, upgraded and transformed to profess and propel *missio Dei* and *missio Ecclesiae* within and beyond their contexts. Under this view, founding and senior leaders should extend their leadership development beyond themselves, to accommodate emerging leaders. When that is done, the mission and institution of the Church can be sustained holistically and globally. Therefore, leadership development, in this paper, focuses on equipping outgoing leaders to welcome, nurture, empower and transform incoming leaders and sustain the Church beyond borders, so that it can meet global demands for transformational leadership.

Malphurs and Mancini's (2004) Leadership Development Framework

Malphurs and Mancini suggest four core leadership competencies that should be developed in a Christian leader: being, knowing, doing, and feeling.¹² The first competency, 'being', deals with the development of a Christ-like character through biblical teaching, learning and grounding. The competency of knowing attends to developing the knowledge of a leader in line with their respective positions, by developing leaders' knowledge of God, the Bible, theology, themselves and people. It also comprises knowing how to pray, believe and lead people. The doing competency focuses on the development of practical abilities, such as strategic planning, teaching, preaching, mentoring and managing conflicts and peace. The final competency of the framework is feeling, which refers mainly to personal and other-centred emotional awareness and management. This competency calls on leaders to develop their awareness of their own and others' emotions and to manage them in Godly and progressive ways. Malphurs and Mancini's framework is insightful and helpful and commended by Krispin.¹³

However, the competencies are not comprehensive, as the framework omits other aspects that require development in different contexts. Drawing from the shortcomings of this framework, leadership development should be contextualized to be effective, as leaders experience manifold problems and needs in different contexts. Bearing in mind grounded theory, on which this submission is based, it is recommended that African leadership development is contextualized by, first, appraising leaders, identifying and addressing their contextual challenges, and developing Malphurs and Mancini's four competencies. The following section reviews African leadership as it relates to this exploration.

Reviewing African Christian Leadership

African Christian leadership has helped to grow the Church into mega-sized dimensions. However, the history of the massive expansion of Christianity, in its diverse evangelical and Pentecostal forms, is not complete without credit to departed and present leaders. However, the globally publicized entanglements of Christian leaders in multifarious syncretism, corruption and conquest, retention and abuse of power and followers spoil their reputation. It is disturbing that African Christian leaders are involved in deep-rooted and multi-layered social, cultural, religious, financial and political crises. Stauffacher asserts that, socially and culturally, Africans struggle with reconciling African cultures with the gospel.¹⁴ Tagwirei explains that, in a religious context, syncretic practices are entrenched, real and common in Zimbabwean Pentecostalism and many other African contexts.¹⁵ Several leaders of mega-churches have been entangled in sexual scandals, for example, recent disturbing revelations by the BBC of enduring physical and sexual abuse of men and women by the late, greatly charismatic and globally known Nigerian Synagogue of All Nations church leader, Temitope Balogun Joshua.¹⁶ Although the allegations may not be wholly true, the fact that increasing numbers of Church leaders

¹² Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church*.

¹³ Krispin, "Christian Leader Development: An Outcomes Framework."

¹⁴ Robert W Stauffacher, "Christian Leadership in a Malawian Context: A Practical Theological Evaluation of African Bible College" (PhD, Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch University, 2013), <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/37420455.pdf>.

¹⁵ Tagwirei, "Weeding Syncretism from Pentecostal Wheat in Zimbabwe."

¹⁶ C.Northcott and H. Spooner, "TB Joshua: Megachurch Leader Raped and Tortured Worshipers, BBC Finds," *BBC News*, January 8, 2024, sec. Africa, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67749215>.

are accused of preying on their followers for selfish sexual and financial satisfaction is cause for concern.¹⁷

In spite of being challenged by these and other problems, few ecclesial leaders want or have succession plans;¹⁸ instead, they choose to die in office. Furthermore, their spouses tend to ascend to power after the leaders' death. This phenomenon is exemplified by Evelyn Joshua, who took up her husband, TB Joshua's position after his death.¹⁹ Some leaders, who do decide to prepare their successors to take over, prefer to appoint family members or close friends or followers, to secure their influence and financial and material benefits. This trend is problematic in and beyond African ecclesiology and leadership. Tagwirei reports that family dynasties are multiplying in African independent churches,²⁰ and Cornwall uncovers the same in Western contexts.²¹ Furthermore, some leaders, especially those of neo-Pentecostal churches, prefer authoritarian leadership styles over Christian servanthood, mainly so they can serve themselves instead of serving others.²² Given this, we can ask whether the growth, internationalization and establishment of African-led churches are advancing *Missio Dei* or personal interests. Since all missionary African church leaders claim to be ambassadors of God, is the state of their spiritual formation and leadership capable of meeting global demands of leadership? Stauffacher describes African Christian leadership as fraught with poor spiritual formation and describes an overwhelming and domineering hunger for power and hypocrisy. He calls for reformation through ongoing analysis, prayer, honest self-reflection, listening, and taking and applying lessons from others.²³ Tagwirei, in turn, argues that scores of failing Christian leaders operate with erroneous hermeneutics and wrong theology.²⁴ Consequently, while the growth of African Christianity is massive and remarkable, its depth and sustainability are problematic, hence, the need for situational leadership development to achieve global transformation.

Relearning Leadership Development from Biblical Models

Leadership development is recommended in various biblical stories. The Old and New Testament Scriptures reflect a great deal about the development of leaders. The Old Testament explains the exemplary education, empowerment and development of Moses in the household of an Egyptian pharaoh (Acts 7:22) and the mentorship of Joshua by Moses and Elijah.²⁵ In the New Testament, the gospels report that Jesus Christ assigned authority and power to his disciples, to drive out evil spirits and heal all diseases, and gave direction about where and how they should serve God and conduct themselves. Overall, Jesus Christ enlightened, empowered and developed his disciples' conviction, character and capacities. The same relates to Barnabas, who enhanced Paul's entry into the ministry by dispelling believers' prejudices (Acts 9:26–31). Similarly, Paul later prepared, worked with, mentored and empowered Timothy to minister effectively (Acts 1; 1 Timothy 1). As Krispin argues, 'though not intended as a leadership development manual, the Scriptures recognize the importance of leadership development'.²⁶

Despite acknowledging the significance of Christian leadership development, African ecclesiological leadership development lacks publicly clarified strategic frameworks. Yet,

¹⁷ Stella Mapenzauswa, "Church 'prophets' Prey on Africans Eager for Better Lives," *News Decoder*, December 7, 2020, sec. Africa, Religion, <https://news-decoder.com/church-prophets-prey-on-africans-eager-for-better-lives/>.

¹⁸ Kurebwa and Nhumburudzi, "Leadership Succession in Zimbabwe's Pentecostal Churches The Case of Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa ZAOGA and Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe AFM."

¹⁹ Mohammed Momoh, "TB Joshua Church Re-Opens as Embattled Widow Takes Charge," *Nation*, December 6, 2021, sec. News, <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/africa/tb-joshua-church-re-opens-as-embattled-widow-takes-charge--3642744>.

²⁰ Kimion Tagwirei, "Serving the Needy from the Greedy: Reviewing Diakonia in African Neo-Pentecostalism," *In Die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 57, no. 1 (a2981): 2023, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v57i1.2981>.

²¹ Robert Cornwall, "Family Dynasties in the Church," *Ponderings on a Faithful Journey* (blog), June 27, 2009, <https://www.bobcornwall.com/2009/06/family-dynasties-in-church.html>.

²² Tagwirei, "Serving the Needy from the Greedy: Reviewing Diakonia in African Neo-Pentecostalism."

²³ Stauffacher, "Christian Leadership in a Malawian Context: A Practical Theological Evaluation of African Bible College."

²⁴ Tagwirei, "Serving the Needy from the Greedy: Reviewing Diakonia in African Neo-Pentecostalism."

²⁵ Jerusha Drummond, "Leadership Formation Through Mentoring in the Old Testament," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1, no.9(2019), <https://www.regent.edu/journal/journal-of-biblical-perspectives-in-leadership/moses-and-joshua-relationship-leadership-formation-through-mentoring-in-the-old-testament/>.

²⁶ Krispin, "Christian Leader Development: An Outcomes Framework."

exemplarily, Jesus' teaching and leadership development of his Apostles is rooted in the Old Testament.

The practice of serving under and literally following around the master-leader to learn by observation and servanthood, the call to discipleship was rooted in the Jewish practice of literally following a rabbi around for a length of time to become like the religious master in belief, attitude, and actions. All in all, each apprenticeship enabled leaders to teach their successors various theoretical and practical lessons on the meaning of leadership, the essentials of leadership; embodiment of the mission, values, methodologies and manners of leadership.²⁷

Furthermore, Jesus also modelled principles of leadership, such as stewardship, servanthood, communication, mentorship, discipleship and diligence. Since the Church exists to advance the mission of God, leadership development should be formed and framed from what Jesus exemplified. As suggested by Barton et al. holistic spiritual formation that transforms Christian leaders is needed.²⁸ This notion is supported by Henson and Mizzel, who assert that the need for transformational leadership development exists now more than ever, to make a difference in the world.²⁹ Building from Malphurs and Mancini's leadership development framework, the following section explores contextually relevant capabilities that African Christian leaders should be empowered with to transform the world.

Exploring African Christian Leadership Development for Global Transformation

Appraising Leaders – Identifying and Addressing Issues

Since time immemorial, the Church has been permissive about and accommodating avoidable leadership failures, arguably because leaders are not evaluated. It is recommended that leaders are appraised regularly, for example, every six months, or annually. Such appraisals can affirm and empower leaders by identifying their weaknesses and strengths, successes and failures. It can identify areas that need correction or appreciation for others to follow. Appraisals can also inspire further development, to achieve desired transformation. Evaluating leaders can also identify external factors that the Church should tackle to enable leadership effectiveness and development. This recommendation is supported by the findings of Gözükar, Hatipoğlu and Güneş in relation to secular leadership, that

appraisal systems are beneficial not just because they provide detailed information on employee performance, but because they also foster employees' attitudes and skills, leading to greater efficiency. As they review the work, methodologies, successes and failures, appraisals facilitate and improve the development of employees while informing the mitigation or removal of barriers to effectiveness.³⁰

O'Brien suggests that the doctrine, character, accountability and content of a leader should be evaluated.³¹ Therefore, progressive leadership evaluation should include assessing the ministry, theology, character, conviction, leadership styles and competence of a leader. An executive team of a denomination, or a fully neutral evaluation team that can be engaged from an ecumenical body, can interrogate and get answers to questions such as; Is the theology of the leader still biblically and contextually sound? Is the character of the leader still Christly? Is the conviction of the leader still theocratic? Is the leader still competent to execute their given roles? The idea is that if these or related questions are answered, they will inform the development of ecclesial leadership for individual and collective transformation and effectiveness.

²⁷ Dave Keehn, "The Old Testament Roots of Jesus' Leadership Development Methodology," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 9, no. 1 (2019): 133–48.

²⁸ Ruth Haley Barton et al., "Spiritual Formation in the Church," *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 7, no. 2 (November 1, 2014): 292–311, <https://doi.org/10.1177/193979091400700212>.

²⁹ Joshua Henson and Nathaniel Mizzell, "Spiritual Formation and Leadership Development Published," *Theology of Leadership Journal* 3, no. 1 (2020): 83–97.

³⁰ Izlem Gözükar, Zeynep Hatipoğlu, and Ozlem Oncel Güneş, "The Impact of Perceived Leadership Style on Performance Appraisal Satisfaction and Organizational Diagnosis in Terms of Turnover Intention," *International Journal of Business and Management* 12, no. 9 (August 15, 2017): p104, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v12n9p104>.

³¹ Paul O'Brien, "How to Evaluate Christian Leaders? | in X," *In X* (blog), accessed February 21, 2024, <https://newcreationinx.com/2020/11/03/how-to-evaluate-christian-leaders/>.

Developing the Knowledge of Leaders

The researcher agrees with Malphurs and Mancini that knowledge is one of the pivotal competencies that applies to African Christian leaders.³² Every Christian leader ought to develop their knowledge of God, the Bible, Christian theology, and contextualization, as well as know how to pray, preach, and serve particular people and places and accomplish leadership tasks in correspondence with their positions and locations. No one can lead others to God unless they know Him, especially in today's context of highly publicized syncretism. Therefore, every Christian leader should seek Him, as Peter and Paul say:

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18, NIV)

That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. (Philippians 3:10, NIV)

When leaders continuously seek to know God, they will keep upgrading their biblical knowledge and enhancing their leadership roles by observing the model of Jesus Christ. In that way, they can pursue servant leadership, instead of secular autocratic and or dictatorial leadership. Furthermore, following Godly and Christly leadership leads to other-centeredness in a world that idolizes self-centredness. The same applies to knowing the Bible. Studying it – in addition to preparing sermons – improves personal knowledge, faith and the capacity to answer the difficult questions of the world, such as why evil prevails and why, if God exists, Christians suffer. Similarly, creating time to visit and fellowship with congregants enriches the leadership knowledge of followers and informs their ministerial strategies and engagements. The same applies to knowing places. Different contexts are different from each other and demand different approaches. How people dress and address others in Zimbabwe differs from practices in China, due to different cultural, religious, political and economic factors. As stated by Tagwirei, faith should be complemented by research.³³ In this case, leaders should be taught to improve themselves by continually researching roles, strategies and contexts, and serving accordingly. As people, places and issues change constantly, it is prudent for African Christian leadership development to include perpetual improvement of knowledge to achieve the desired realization of global transformation.

Developing the Being of Leaders

According to Malphurs and Mancini's second focal competency, of requiring development, the character of leaders in Africa requires attention. As explained by Tagwirei, increasing numbers of African Christian leaders have fallen into duplicitous comedies and controversy.³⁴ For example, Prophet Shepherd Bushiri made waves across and beyond Africa by making various extreme claims, namely, that he could walk on air, as Jesus did, and that his wife had been impregnated by the Holy Spirit and would give birth to the second Jesus.³⁵ In South Africa, Paseka Franz Motsoeneng who calls himself Prophet Mboro claimed that he had visited heaven and had seen Jesus Christ with a Black wife,³⁶ and Prophet Alph Lukau claimed to have raised a man from the dead.³⁷ Other African Pentecostal Church leaders forced their followers to drink petrol or Dettol (a disinfectant and antiseptic liquid), ordered them to eat grass, live rats, ants, or snakes; ordered some to undress, fondled their

³² Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church*.

³³ Kimion Tagwirei, "The Identity of the Church and Quest for Her Economic Sustainability: A Case Study of the AOG BTG Church in Zimbabwe" (PhD, Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch University, 2022).

³⁴ Tagwirei, "Weeding Syncretism from Pentecostal Wheat in Zimbabwe."

³⁵ Isaac Dachen, "Malawian Prophet Claims Wife Impregnated by Holy Spirit," *Pulse Nigeria*, August 1, 2016, sec. gist, <https://www.pulse.ng/gist/blasphemy-malawian-prophet-claims-wife-impregnated-by-holy-spirit/ejb9rjy>.

³⁶ Isaac Dachen, "SA Pastor, Prophet Mboro Claims Jesus Has a Hot Black Wife," *Pulse Ghana*, 25:07 200AD, <https://www.pulse.com.gh/filla/blasphemy-sa-pastor-prophet-mboro-claims-jesus-has-a-hot-black-wife/6xbkp1s>.

³⁷ Nehanda Radio, "Pastor Alph Lukau Claims to 'Raise' Dead Man during Church Service - VIDEO and PICTURES," *Nehanda Radio*, February 25, 2019, <https://nehandaradio.com/2019/02/25/pastor-alph-lukau-claims-to-raise-dead-man-during-church-service-video-and-pictures/>.

private parts, and sprayed insecticide in their faces.³⁸ South African, Zimbabwean, Zambian, Nigerian, Ghanaian and other African prophets indulge in various rituals, commoditize and commercialize the gospel and defraud congregants.³⁹

African diasporan Church leaders, such as Prophet Chris Oyakhilome, Eubert Angel, Passion Java and others have been involved in miscellaneous malicious and controversial issues. Zimbabwean-British Eubert Angel was entangled in a Zimbabwean gold smuggling and money-laundering syndicate that also allegedly involved the Zimbabwean president, Emmerson Mnangagwa,⁴⁰ Passion Java is known in Zimbabwe for posting pranks on social media, flaunting expensive paraphernalia, being a court prophet for the ruling Zanu-PF party, and using funny street language, sexual innuendo and the Shona language as glossolalia in his church services in the United States.⁴¹ Mega-church Pastor Chris Oyakhilome has been entangled in various scandals.⁴²

The researcher concurs with Krispin that the competency of being is important, as ‘it addresses the development of Christ-like character, based on biblical requirements for leaders, as well as the need for a teachable spirit’.⁴³ Claiming to have never sinned is deceitful (1 John 1:10); therefore, Christian leaders, who ought to be exemplary, should continuously develop their being. Quintessentially, personal mentorship can be useful, as it allows someone to speak reformation and transformation into leaders’ lives. Thus, African Christian leadership development should encompass the being of leaders. Development should involve the collective facilitation of leadership seminars, workshops and conferences, to which speakers from a variety of churches or ecumenical bodies can be invited to minister about transformational leadership. If such development is effected regularly, leaders will continue learning and developing.

Developing the Feeling of Leaders

Regarding Malphurs and Mancini’s third competency, feeling, the context of Africa and the African diaspora demands that leaders develop their awareness of their own and others’ emotions, as well as the ability to manage these emotions. Given the various emotive challenges such as dynamic advances in technology, erosion of moral and cultural values, political intolerance, and the scramble for economic survival and resultant conflicts posed by globalization,⁴⁴ leading the Church today demands continuous development on understanding and managing personal and others’ emotions. To engage the Church as the believers, people of God and institutional denominations,⁴⁵ Christian leadership requires constant capacity development for leaders to appreciate the potential of emotions to blow up into conflicts, learn, relearn and continue learning about managing emotions, conflicts and peace in Godly love that accommodates others:

¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command.

¹⁵ I no longer (John 15:12 – 13) (NIV).

Such love accepts being wronged and dismisses revenge as advised by Luke 6:29–36:

³⁸ Dachen, “SA Pastor, Prophet Mboro Claims Jesus Has a Hot Black Wife.”

³⁹ Tagwirei, “Weeding Syncretism from Pentecostal Wheat in Zimbabwe.”

⁴⁰ Al Jazeera Investigative Unit, “Who Are the Gold Mafia?”

⁴¹ Tagwirei, “Weeding Syncretism from Pentecostal Wheat in Zimbabwe.”

⁴² Nicholas Ibekwe, “UK Govt’s Probe Uncovers Massive Fraud in Oyakhilome’s Christ Embassy,” *Premium Times*, December 24, 2019, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/369651-uk-govts-probe-uncovers-massive-fraud-in-oyakhilomes-christ-embassy.html?tztc=1>; Daniel Orogun and Jerry Pillay, “African Neo-Pentecostal Capitalism through the Lens of Ujamaa,” *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (August 19, 2021): 8, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6577>.

⁴³ Krispin, “Christian Leader Development: An Outcomes Framework.”

⁴⁴ Elizabeth A Odey and Boniface E Bebia, “Christianity in the Age of Globalization,” *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 2011, 1, no. 1 (132 127AD): 2011; Nathan H Chiroma and Jane A Chiroma, “The Impact of Globalization on the Spiritual Development of Urban Youth in Africa,” *International Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education* 8, no. 4 (2021): 139–45, <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0804012>.

⁴⁵ Christopher Magezi and Kimion Tagwirei, “A Critical Assessment of Church and Political Engagement in Zimbabwe under the New Dispensation,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 43, no. 1 (2022): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v43i1.2527>.

²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them.

³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.

³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that.

³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full.

³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful (NIV)

As Segundo advises, “No matter the cause, conflict must be handled appropriately to minimize its destructive potential as a conflict not only involves disagreeing parties but could also hinder the ministry in and of the church.”⁴⁶ By reimagining James 1:19–20, which cautions believers to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry for the sake of righteousness, it becomes clear that, if leaders develop themselves and are guided towards living with such attentiveness, being cautious in responding and slow in reacting, they would be able to manage their feelings and others wisely, peacefully and progressively. Conflict management is, therefore, a crucial skill for African Christian leaders, as confirmed by Matshobane and Masango, and Beta.⁴⁷

Developing the doing of Leaders

The doing competency of Christian leadership focuses on the development of leading and pastoring skills, such as developing and executing the vision, mission, and working plans of the church, teaching and preaching, being a disciple, doing conflict management and accomplishing other duties of church leaders. Though churches have many leaders, such as pastors, elders, deacons and department heads, essential areas in need of development for pastors, in particular need to be considered. Stitzinger conceptualizes a pastor as someone who is a shepherd assigned by God to feed and take care of people.⁴⁸ Stitzinger traces the history of pastoral ministry from the Old Testament and quotes the attributes of a pastor from the viewpoint of God in Psalms 23:1, which states that

¹ The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters,

³ He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. (NIV)

Psalms 23 describes a pastor as someone who demonstrates tender, loving care and courage, and who displays a self-sacrificing attitude. A shepherd is also depicted in the New Testament, in John 10:11–16, 14 and 1 Peter 5:4, as a humble, caring, selfless and glorious person. Basically, a pastor is a person who is called by God to serve Him by advancing His holistic mission by feeding and leading people under the leadership of Jesus Christ, in word and deed, for their total transformation and the glory of God.

Considering that some African pastors and other Christian leaders (such as elders and prophets) have been feeding the Church with deviant theologies, there is a serious need for the being of leaders

⁴⁶ Michelle G Segundo, “Servant Leadership and Conflict Management in the Faith-Based Organization,” *Regent Research Roundtables*, n.d., 36–64.

⁴⁷ Matshobane and Masango, “Understanding Power Struggles in the Pentecostal Church Government”; Takesure Beta, “An Exploration of Splits in African Independent Churches in Zimbabwe (2012-2014),” *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications* 5, no. 7 (July 2015): 1–5.

⁴⁸ James F Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History,” *Masters Seminary Journal* 6, no. 2 (1995).

to be developed. For example, a much-debated issue is that of seeding, about which some pastors teach and manipulate their congregants to sacrifice and give them (the leaders) large amounts of money, big, movable and fixed assets, and that the congregants can, in turn, expect blessings and miracles assets,⁴⁹ they do this based on poor hermeneutics. Instead of leading by serving the Church as Jesus Christ exemplified by washing His disciples' feet (John 13:1–17), many African Christian leaders serve themselves at the expense of the Church.⁵⁰ Thus, the competency of Christian leadership needs to be developed. It is expedient for Church leaders to sit down, alone, and sometimes in consultation with leaders of their respective ecumenical bodies, and Christian theologians of their choice, in seminars or conferences and revise their hermeneutics, theologies, ecclesiologies and governance regularly, to improve how they serve in their various capacities.

Developing the Sustainability of Leaders

Countries in Africa and in general, most countries in the world, grapple with innumerable political, religious and socioeconomic problems that affect financial, material and human resources. According to a research article featured in the United Nations report, *Recovering Better: Economic and Social Challenges and Opportunities*, Ocampo states that after the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the global economy, 'the global economy experienced the slowest growth (2.3 per cent) since the recovery that followed the North Atlantic financial crisis... Developing economies were also experiencing a slowdown before the COVID-19 crisis and are now headed for a widespread recession.'⁵¹ Consequently, some people no longer have fixed abodes, but migrate from one country to another in search of greener pastures. The International Organization for Migration explains that migration patterns today are increasingly complex, and are driven and impacted by the changes seen in the world, such as conflict, climate change, environmental degradation and uneven development,⁵² which drive displacement and irregular migration. Conventional interpretations of African migration as essentially driven by poverty, violence and underdevelopment are generalized and misguided, as clarified by Flahaux and De Haas, who found that processes of development and social transformation have increased young Africans' capabilities and aspirations to migrate.⁵³ As a result, it can be argued that migration is dynamic and it makes dependence on conventional financial, material and human resources unsustainable.

Christian leaders must appreciate the uncertainty and volatility of global resources. They should frequently develop strategic ways to sustain their mission in particular contexts. For example, those serving or intending to minister in Zimbabwe, should study the economics, politics and sociology of this country, and understand Zimbabwean political and socioeconomic crises. Such a study will inform leaders about the multiple problems that citizens grapple with and the unsustainability of conventional sources of ecclesial income (such as tithes and freewill offerings). It will also enlighten them about the mass exodus of Zimbabweans to other countries, which necessitates situational strategies to raise and sustain human, financial and material resources in an unstable context. The same applies to the dependence of the church on donations for foreign missions. Investigating the sustainability of donations can enable leaders to make informed considerations and decisions. Due to a global economic recession, the unsustainability of conventional sources of income, and increasing operational and missionary costs, Christian leadership development should include guidance on ecclesiological economics, to capacitate leaders for ecclesial and self-sustainability.

⁴⁹ Tenson Muyambo, "Material/ Spiritual Seeding? Problematising Religion and Gullibility in Zimbabwe," *Alternation - Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of the Arts and Humanities in Southern Africa* 35 (January 1, 2020): 18–34, <https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2020/sp35a2>; Gladys N. Akabike, Peace N. Ngwoke, and Onyekachi G. Chukwuma, "A Critical Analysis of Tithe and Seed Sowing on Contemporary Christianity in Nigeria," *HTS Theological Studies* 77, no. 1 (2021): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i1.6485>.

⁵⁰ Tagwirei, "Serving the Needy from the Greedy: Reviewing Diakonia in African Neo-Pentecostalism."

⁵¹ José Antonio Ocampo, "Uncertainties Surrounding the Global Economy and Their Implications for the Global Development Agenda," in *Recover Better. Economic and Social Challenges and Opportunities* (New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020), 14–33, https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2020/11/recover_better_final.pdf.

⁵² International Organization for Migration, *Global Appeal 2024* (Geneva: IOM, 2024).

⁵³ Marie-Laurence Flahaux and Hein De Haas, "African Migration: Trends, Patterns, Drivers," *Comparative Migration Studies* 4, no. 1 (January 22, 2016): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-015-0015-6>.

The Church should continue teaching stewardship, giving and collecting freewill offerings and donations, while praying that God continues to provide more labourers for the growing fieldwork (Mathew 9:36–38). However, African Christian leadership development should also deliberately facilitate economic empowerment for contextual sustainability. It matters how a gospel minister or a church can sustain itself in a particular context. For example, a church could survive well on donations, freewill offerings and tithes in a certain location while other contexts demand diversification of income sources, possibly through doing business. Without such enlightenment, some people reject or delay answering the call of God to the ministry, because they fear suffering and failing to meet the costs of running a church and keeping their families while they serve God. If they are enlightened, leaders, upcoming leaders, followers and their families can prepare to sustain themselves without fear of failure.

CONCLUSION

This paper referred to the massive growth of Christianity in Africa and the rise of African Christian leaders who advanced the gospel outside Africa with their limited capacities. There is a need for capacity development to meet growing demands for global transformation; therefore, incumbent and upcoming leaders need transformational leadership development. By referring to the Old and New Testaments, the leadership development framework of Malphurs and Mancini and the volatile African context, it became clear that developing African Christian leadership requires contextualization. It is prudent to appraise leaders and identify and address their challenges while developing their knowledge, being, feeling, doing and economic sustainability in alignment with their contextual needs. This paper deems contextualization and constant upgrading as paramount for enhancing leaders' capacities to cope with the escalating demands of leadership while times, contexts, people and places change.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akabike, Gladys N., Peace N. Ngwoke, and Onyekachi G. Chukwuma. "A Critical Analysis of Tithe and Seed Sowing on Contemporary Christianity in Nigeria." *HTS Theological Studies* 77, no. 1 (2021): 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i1.6485>.
- Al Jazeera Investigative Unit. "Who Are the Gold Mafia? Godmen, Conmen and the President's Niece." *Al Jazeera*, 2023. <https://www.ajjunit.com/article/who-are-the-gold-mafia/>.
- Barton, Ruth Haley, Diane J. Chandler, Siang-Yang Tan, Judy Tenelshof, and James C. Wilhoit. "Spiritual Formation in the Church." *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 7, no. 2 (November 1, 2014): 292–311. <https://doi.org/10.1177/193979091400700212>.
- Beta, Takesure. "An Exploration of Splits in African Independent Churches in Zimbabwe (2012–2014)." *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications* 5, no.7(July 2015): 1–5.
- Chiroma, Nathan H, and Jane A Chiroma. "The Impact of Globalization on the Spiritual Development of Urban Youth in Africa." *International Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education* 8, no. 4 (2021): 139–45. <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0804012>.
- Clavarino, Thomaso. "Inside the Dark, Opulent World of Ghana's Churches." *Pulitzer Center*. Accessed April 26, 2024. <https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/inside-dark-opulent-world-ghanas-churches>.
- Cornwall, Robert. "Family Dynasties in the Church." *Ponderings on a Faithful Journey* (blog), June 27, 2009. <https://www.bobcornwall.com/2009/06/family-dynasties-in-church.html>.
- Dachen, Isaac. "Malawian Prophet Claims Wife Impregnated by Holy Spirit." *Pulse Nigeria*, August 1, 2016, sec. gist. <https://www.pulse.ng/gist/blasphemy-malawain-prophet-claims-wife-impregnated-by-holy-spirit/ejb9rjy>.
- . "SA Pastor, Prophet Mboro Claims Jesus Has a Hot Black Wife." *Pulse Ghana*, 25:07 200AD. <https://www.pulse.com.gh/filla/blasphemy-sa-pastor-prophet-mboro-claims-jesus-has-a-hot-black-wife/6xbkp1s>.
- Drummond, Jerusha. "Leadership Formation Through Mentoring in the Old Testament." *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1, no. 9 (2019). <https://www.regent.edu/journal/journal->

- Muyambo, Tenson. "Material/ Spiritual Seeding? Problematising Religion and Gullibility in Zimbabwe." *Alternation - Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of the Arts and Humanities in Southern Africa* 35 (January 1, 2020): 18–34. <https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2020/sp35a2>.
- Nehanda Radio. "Pastor Alph Lukau Claims to 'Raise' Dead Man during Church Service - VIDEO and PICTURES." *Nehanda Radio*, February 25, 2019. <https://nehandaradio.com/2019/02/25/pastor-alph-lukau-claims-to-raise-dead-man-during-church-service-video-and-pictures/>.
- Northcott, C, and H Spooner. "TB Joshua: Megachurch Leader Raped and Tortured Worshipers, BBC Finds." *BBC News*, January 8, 2024, sec. Africa. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67749215>.
- Nyanni, Caleb Opoku. "Changing Lanes: Second-Generation African Pentecostals in the United Kingdom." *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 40, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 32–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18124461.2020.1721683>.
- O'Brien, Paul. "How to Evaluate Christian Leaders? | in X." *In X* (blog). Accessed February 21, 2024. <https://newcreationinx.com/2020/11/03/how-to-evaluate-christian-leaders/>.
- Ocampo, José Antonio. "Uncertainties Surrounding the Global Economy and Their Implications for the Global Development Agenda." In *Recover Better. Economic and Social Challenges and Opportunities*, 14–33. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2020/11/recover_better_final.pdf.
- Odey, Elizabeth A, and Boniface E Bebia. "Christianity in the Age of Globalization." *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 2011, 1, no. 1 (132 127AD): 2011.
- Orogun, Daniel, and Jerry Pillay. "African Neo-Pentecostal Capitalism through the Lens of Ujamaa." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (August 19, 2021): 8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6577>.
- Perry, Michael, and Kweku Okyerefo. "African Churches in Europe." *Journal of Africana Religions* 2, no. 1 (n.d.): 95–124. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jafireli.2.1.0095>.
- Segundo, Michelle G. "Servant Leadership and Conflict Management in the Faith-Based Organization." *Regent Research Roundtables*, n.d., 36–64.
- Stauffer, Robert W. "Christian Leadership in a Malawian Context: A Practical Theological Evaluation of African Bible College." PhD, Stellenbosch University, 2013. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/37420455.pdf>.
- Stitzinger, James F. "Pastoral Ministry in History." *Masters Seminary Journal* 6, no. 2 (1995).
- Tagwirei, Kimion. "Battling with the Baton: (Dis)Connecting Today and Tomorrow's Leaders in African Pentecostalism." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2023): a9179. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.9179>.
- . "Serving the Needy from the Greedy: Reviewing Diakonia in African Neo-Pentecostalism." *In Die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 57, no. 1 (a2981): 2023. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v57i1.2981>.
- . "The Identity of the Church and Quest for Her Economic Sustainability: A Case Study of the AOG BTG Church in Zimbabwe." PhD, Stellenbosch University, 2022.
- . "Weeding Syncretism from Pentecostal Wheat in Zimbabwe." *Pharos Journal of Theology* 105, no. 1–21 (December 1, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.10532>.

ABOUT AUTHOR

Kimion Tagwirei (PhD) is a Postdoctoral Research fellow at North-West University, The Unit for Reformational Theology and the Development of the South African Society, Faculty of Theology, Potchefstroom, South Africa. He studies African spiritualities and leadership, integral mission for sustainable development, and inclusive wellbeing.