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# Influence of Individualized Consideration among TCL Graduates on Church Performance in Kenya

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## **Abstract:**

*The study sought to investigate the influence of individualized consideration among TCL graduates on church performance in Kenya. The study used pragmatism research philosophy, descriptive research, and thematic designs. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were in play to facilitate in-depth knowledge and understanding of how the program is influencing the church leader's performance. A survey of a sample of 242 graduates, 80 congregants/members from 14 Counties in Kenya, and 10 senior leaders from church organizations that have been using the TCL program for training were interviewed to explore and determine if there existed a relationship between this transformational leadership training and church leader's performance. Primary data was collected through a structured survey and interview. The quantitative data were prepared and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 22.0). The recordings from the zoom interviews were transcribed using Otter.ai and transferred to Miner Lite for coding and organized into themes. Building on the themes made it possible for the researcher to gain a deeper insight into the data for analysis. The researcher ensured the participants' full consent and dignity. The researcher maintained the highest level of objectivity in looking at the collected data, discussions, and analysis throughout the study. The study found that a leader's individualized consideration had the strongest relationship with a church leader's performance among members/congregates, with a Pearson correlation of  $r=0.861$ . Church members/congregations identified church leaders' individualized consideration as the most influential component of transformational leadership. The study concluded that individualized consideration positively and significantly increased the performance of church leaders in Kenya. The study recommended that church leaders should work more towards identifying, developing, and encouraging the use of gifts and talents among members by mentoring and coaching to inspire them and enhance their performance and enable the church to achieve its goals and objectives.*

**Keywords:** Influence, individualized, church, performance

## **1. Introduction**

Successful leadership is only sustainable with the continued effective training and development of those in leadership positions (Kubátová&Kročil, 2022). All organizations face the problem of developing good leaders. This study helps to identify some approaches to leadership development that will enhance leadership effectiveness and organizational performance of the TCL graduates in the church in Kenya. Available literature points to the fact that there is a need for church leadership development (Barentsen, 2011; Baxter, 2011; Manala, 2010; Nkonge, 2012). The church has had to deal with a scarcity of transformational leaders around the globe since the coming of the Holy Spirit, and this scarcity of trained leaders has affected the growth of church (Bonnet & Henson, 2022; Joynt& Dreyer, 2013). Students who attend seminaries or Bible Colleges to be trained for ministry, graduate always feeling inadequate to take up the leadership roles in the church, for the emphasis of the training is on doctrine and Christian living without considering leadership (Barna Group, 2017; White, 2011). Mwambazambiand Banza, (2014) indicated that the most significant issue in the church today is the need for well-developed transformational leaders. Though Avolio, (2011) noted that transformational leadership could be taught, learned, and practiced, gaps exist in literature regarding the connection between training transformational church leaders and church leader's performance. The focus of this study was to explore

the perceptions of the TCL graduates, church members and senior church leaders on the influence of transformational church leadership training on church leader's performance in selected churches in Kenya.

Leadership within church organization is a very significant part which entails serious consideration. Deloitte, (2015), ascertain that leadership is significant to building sustainable organization's performance. Transformational leadership components have shown to produce positive organizational outcomes for churches (Fogarty, 2013). According to Martin (2020) 'Equipping People for Integral Mission' ascertain that theological training is needed for leaders in various services within the local church to meet the expected holistic growth. The church must review its role in training transformational leaders and invest more of their time and expertise in supporting a church-based training program that incorporates the leadership aspect to equip the trainees not just for growth but most importantly for leadership in the church (Strohbehn, 2020).

A positive pattern for the church leadership training is found in the example of Jesus Christ who started by selecting and training the leaders of the church that have influenced and transformed the whole universe. Training local church leaders using the Aware TCL program has not been proven to influence transformational leaders for church performance. This study therefore aims at finding out the shreds of evidence of the transformation of the church leaders who studied in the TCL program and their contribution to church performance.

## 2. Literature Review

Research by Stetzer and Bird (2010) on American churches indicated that 93% of church pastors view leadership training as essential, while Moss (2014), study showed the effectiveness of leadership hinge on training leaders. Watson (2012) study in South Africa church, who agrees the church needs to develop leaders, and calls out for additional research to be carried out to establish the influence of the church leader's ministry service in identification and utilization of personal spiritual gifts to contribute to the church performance, a gap this study intends to fill.

Individualized Consideration component of transformational leadership allows a church leader to identify gifts and talents and utilize them to serve the congregation while identifying the individual member gifts and in turn supporting individuals in the congregation to develop and practice their gifts for the benefit of the whole congregation (Wanger, 2012). Individualized Consideration contribute positively to a church performance.

Several studies highlight the positive impact of individualized consideration. For instance, (Awori, 2017; Ogola, Sikalieh and Linge; 2017 Ondari, Were & Rotich, 2018) study on individualized consideration resulted in a strong positive and significant correlation between individualized consideration and employee performance. Individualized consideration leaders spend time mentoring and instructing members, treat members as individuals and essential supporters to the organization growth and fulfillment in services to God. McCleskey 2014); Northouse, (2016); Renjinth, Renu, & George, (2015). Jesus is documented as a mentor to his disciples, whereas Apostle Paul is seen as a mentor to Timothy (Freeks & Lotter, 2014).

Clergy and lay leaders in the church hold pivotal positions in stirring the church in the direction that it needs to go (Drury, 2003; Oketch, 2022). However, this depends on how well they are trained to lead the way. Church leadership training is paramount (Mealey, 2022), it determines the way leaders engage in the church and society. Mwambazambi, (2011) stated, the church of God that is supposed to play the role of the light of the world and salt of the earth (Mt 5:13-16) has failed to do so by not training transformational leaders both for the church and for the society. Looking at a Kenyan church perspective Nkonge, (2012) pointed out that the church as the most trusted institution has failed to offer trained reliable leaders to the church and community, and recommended that the church re-thinks her training system to produce well equipped and reliable transformational clergy and lay leaders. This suggests that transformational leadership training is needed to help meet the basic need of having leaders who serve as mentors and coaches in ensuring the church grows. The church cannot manage to wait for leaders to walk in and take leadership; she must deliver the training for the gifted and talented leaders within the church to provide the permanence it needs. Church leaders must intentionally use gifts and talents, mentor and coach with the tenacity of expediting transformation and church performance (Banks, 2013).

It is perceived that the church leader's performance is measured by the transformation and growth of the leader, the church congregation, and the organization. Church leadership performance indicators include transformed ministry service where leaders identify spiritual gifts and use them for equipping and encouraging the congregation in identifying the same by mentoring and coaching them. All these are supposed to result to spiritual, social, numerical, and economic growth that bring about a stable healthy congregation (Bonem, 2012). Numerical growth takes place when church leaders share the gospel, people hear it, believe it, and obey it and get born again, thereby increasing the number in God's Kingdom (John 3:3,5). The church need to experience numerical growth today, church leaders need to be developed and trained to ensure this takes place. Additional numbers to the church is not enough, churches must grow spiritually too. The key to the church's spiritual growth is God's word and commitment to it (Acts 2:42). The fruit of social and economic growth in a transformed church is seen in the outworking of faith and sharing what God has given with those in need. Generally, a church leader's performance is measured by the fulfilment of God's vision and mission (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2011). To grow the church we need training.

The TCL program uses teachings in the Book of Acts, Power Ministry, and General Epistles to expose the church leaders to the power and the operation of the Holy Spirit with an expectation that they will recognize, appreciate, embrace and experience the working of the Holy Spirit in their own lives and assist members to do the same.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Individualized Consideration and Church Performance

The study findings provide strong evidence that TCL positively influences the church leader's performance within selected churches in Kenya. The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of transformational leadership training and church leader's performance in Kenya focusing on Pan Africa Christian University Diploma Program, following the research questions: In what way does individualized consideration impact TCL graduates church performance in Kenya? The findings are indicated in Table 1

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STDev
Identification and utilization of spiritual gifts	0(0%)	2(1.3%)	8(5%)	79(49.7%)	70(44%)	4.365	0.641
Individualized treatment of members	3(1.9%)	8(5%)	3(1.9%)	70(44%)	75(47.2%)	4.27	0.946
Individualized member development (talents and gifts)	2(1.3%)	1(0.6%)	4(2.5%)	68(42.8%)	84(52.8%)	4.44	0.76
Individualized identification of gifts and talents	0(0%)	2(1.3%)	2(1.3%)	48(30.2%)	107(67.2%)	4.635	0.578
Individualized mentoring and coaching	1(0.6%)	4(2.5%)	12(7.5%)	92(57.9%)	50(31.5%)	4.415	3.24
Composite Mean						4.425	0.649

Table 1: TCL Graduates/Church Leader's Individualized Consideration

The study data in Table 2 pointed out that church leaders have identified and utilized their spiritual gifts with a mean score of 4.37 and standard deviation of 0.64. Church leaders treated each member in the church as individuals not just as members of the team with a mean score of 4.27 and standard deviation of 0.95. The respondents identified individual member's needs, gifts and talents and helped them to develop individually with a mean score of 4.44 and standard deviation of 0.76. Church leaders were also seen to inspire members in the congregation to categorize their spiritual gifts and talents and assist them to establish the same in service to God and the church with a mean score of 4.64 and standard deviation of 0.58. It was indicated that church leaders spent time mentoring and coaching individuals in the congregation with a mean score of 4.42 and standard deviation of 3.24.

Church members were further asked to indicate their level of agreement on the following statements on church leader's individualized consideration. The findings are indicated in Table 4.

	N	A	SA	Mean	STDev
Identification and development and utilization of gifts and talents	10(17%)	23(40%)	25(43%)	4.26	0.739
Individualized mentoring and coaching	10(17%)	33(57%)	15(26%)	4.09	0.657
Composite Mean				4.175	0.698

Table 2: Perception of Church Members on Leader's Individualized Consideration

From the data in Table 2, the respondents agreed that leaders help the church members of the congregation to identify, develop and utilize their spiritual gifts for service in the church as shown by a mean score of 4.23 with standard deviation of 0.74. The leaders spend time mentoring and coaching the congregants as indicated by a mean of 4.09 with standard deviation of 0.66.

A visual impression of the distribution of the composite means as presented in Table 1 and Table 2 on individualized consideration composite score shows the descriptive statistics mean rating of individualized consideration by TCL graduates (Mean=4.42) was comparatively higher than the mean rating by congregants (Mean=4.17), implying that TCL graduates may have overrated their practice of individualized consideration dimension of transformational leadership.

The distribution suggests that on aggregate, respondents agreed that church leaders practiced individualized consideration. This means that church leaders helped members/congregations to ascertain, improve, and use their spiritual gifts and talents, considered individual member's needs, treated each person in the church as an individual and encouraged, mentor and coach individuals in service to God and the church.

Findings from key informant interviews showed further manifestations of a positive evaluation of the TCL program through the theme of individualized consideration. There was consensus that TCL graduates influenced positive transformation in themselves and their members/congregations through identification and utilization of spiritual gifts and

talents, encouraging and empowering, coaching and mentoring of individuals which translated to church growth. This was a recurrent theme across the responses by the key informants that were interviewed, as follows;

*'One of our pastors' gifts being realized, improved and grew he was appointed to be a sub-regional leader in Nyando sub region' 'An example of one of the graduate pastor in Ahero has grown and become passionate about the ministry after training, she is mentoring young people who have been able to work with her. Through her we have started churches and planted congregations' 'One of TCL graduate was a PAG church administrator who identified the gift in a young man that needed mentorship and took him on board in his office and started mentoring him, and now the young man has been employed as an administrator' (KII-2).*

*'This particular graduate has been able to identify member's gifts and encourage them to be able to serve, that I can attribute to the training of TCL' 'Once you assign somebody a responsibility according to their gifts or talents, they take the responsibility with a lot of seriousness and they are able to deliver results' (KII-3).*

*'Pastors that have trained have grown and helped their churches to grow as they encourage and empower them. Others who came into the training while lay leaders, have realized the call to full time ministry and have started churches' (KII-1).*

*'An example of one of the graduates pastor in Awasi has grown be become a Sub regional leader after training, has been able to mentor up other young people who have been able to work with him. Through him we have started churches in, Sondu, Katito, and Miriu and planted congregations' (KII-2).*

*'Once you assign somebody a responsibility, they take the responsibility with a lot of seriousness and they are able to deliver results' (KII-6).*

#### 4. Conclusion

The findings from the quantitative data on individualized consideration influence on church leaders performance was positive as they and the members identified and utilized their spiritual gifts the church experienced tremendous growth. Therefore, the study concludes that graduates/church leaders who practiced individualized consideration as they recognized and applied their spiritual gifts and talents affected the church performance. Church leaders who treated members as individuals by identifying their needs and working with each to encourage, equip, mentor and coach increased church performance. Supported by Metcalf, (2015) church leaders practice individual consideration to boost, and motivate members to realize the importance and the purpose for their existence and contribute to organizational performance. Both the congregations and the senior church leadership agreed that trained church leaders helped the members of the congregation to pinpoint, nurture and use their spiritual gifts and talents for service in the church. A previous research by Das (2017) concurs that church leader's individualized consideration will properly be understood in association to the entire perception of Christian service, by paying attention to personal needs and individual improvement and helping them in their congregation to use their talents effectively. This in turn results to the leader's performance.

#### 5. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, this study recommends that; graduates/church leaders have had significant contributions to the church performance, therefore the research recommends that churches need to put more effort in developing individualized consideration leaders to enable the stay relevant and effective in the growth of the church spiritually, numerically, socially and economically. In pursuit of the mission it would be recommended that churches seriously consider using the TCL program to train both their laity and clergy to enable them realize their gifts and talents for the use of serve to God and the church. If the church want to thrive in her efforts to build healthy and sustainable churches where both church leaders and congregates identify and use their gifts and talents to grow the church, it must continue to invest in the development of transformational leaders who understand the church's mission and contribute to its fulfillment.

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