THE ROLE OF CHURCH LEADERS IN ADVANCING CHURCH GROWTH

An Action Research Project

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ABSTRACT

 In one (1) page, explain and summarize the Social Action Research Project.

**SECTION I**

**PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION**

The role of leadership is essential in incorporating values and inspiring followers and colleagues to advance professionally and personally. Bolden et al. (2023) asserted that “Leadership is one of the most sought-after yet elusive qualities in contemporary organizations and society” (p. 1). Daft (2022) asserted that “Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes” (p. 7). Leadership is about trusting the leader’s vision, competence, and character. Effective leadership ensures positive progress (Daft, 2022; Sexton et al., 2018). World-renowned leaders have well-developed communication skills and can inspire others to follow their leadership (Keow Ngang, 2021). Leadership skills can be developed and continuously improved by anyone. Enhanced skills strengthen leadership quality (Kouzes & Posner, 2023; Liu et al., 2021).

Leadership in the church is essential as leaders have a critical role in shaping their followers’ values, beliefs, and practices.  Church leaders form the backbone of the leadership structure in the church (Dodson, 2018; Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). The congregation looks to its leaders for spiritual guidance and interventions (Branson & Martinez, 2023; Day et al., 2021). Influential church leaders can spur a solid belief in their followers, enhancing the unity and growth of the church (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020; Ugwu, 2021). The research will define and describe different leadership styles, their qualities, and their impact on church growth.

This research will provide an analysis of the report outcomes of the role of church leaders in advancing church growth in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP). Section One introduces the problem and purpose statements, the research significance, background, best practices identified in the literature, the research question, and professional relevance regarding the study performed.

Problem Statement

Whether or not a church grows or declines depends on the church’s leadership. There is insufficient knowledge about what church leaders need to do to evoke the substantial expansion of the church and its congregations. Church growth may depend on the church’s historical, sociological, societal, economic, and spiritual status and the leadership and its practices. Further, various churches have different practices and principles that can aid their growth (Schulz et al., 2019). To achieve church growth, church leaders must transcend overarching differences.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this action research project is to identify the role that church leaders play in the growth of the church.

**Significance of the Research**

Church leaders have a vital role in advancing the expansion of the church. As such, church leaders have a critical role in shaping their followers’ values, beliefs, and practices (Toby et al., 2020). The findings from this study will inform the church authorities on what church leaders can do to ensure the church's growth. The results will also offer insightful information about the current relationship between church leaders and the church’s expansion in society. The findings will increase church leaders' knowledge base and skill set to equip the saints to advance the church through evangelism, discipleship, team-based leadership, and adaptability.

Background And Best Practices Identified In Literature In Advancing Church Growth

The church has always placed a high value on leadership. According to the earliest church traditions evident in the Gospel of John 17, Jesus Christ is the Master Leader (King James Version, 2017). Effective leadership is vital to the success and growth of organizations (Daft, 2022; DuBrin, 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 2023). Church growth is an essential indicator that the church is fulfilling the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 4:11-13). Growth in the life of believers should be the outcome of effective leadership (Eph. 4:12-25). Jesus Christ was a faithful servant leader (Resane, 2020). The role of church leaders in advancing church growth is a topic of great importance to the expansion of Christian communities (Jordan, 2019).

 The church plays essential roles in worship, teaching, fellowship, evangelism, and community service (Sastrohartoyo et al., 2021; Cooper & Cooper, 2021). The church spreads love and the gospel among people, and the advancement of an organization and instructions to support the people (Patterson & LeBaron, 2022). Therefore, the church’s growth is essential to enable the church to reach out to more people, impact the lives of more people, and spread the gospel to them. The church’s growth is also an important indicator that demonstrates that the ministry of the congregation is not stagnant (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021). Church growth is in tandem with the Great Commission, where Christians should spread the gospel worldwide (Matthew 28:16-20; Milner, 2022). While the church’s growth may take many forms, including more people or activities, the role of church leaders in ensuring church growth is vital. This paper highlights the best practices displayed in the literature by church leaders in advancing church growth.

**Sources Consulted**

The literature review includes online peer-reviewed journals, printed journals, and books. The sources were predominantly selected from publications within the past five years. These selections are relevant for reviewing the best practices identified in the literature on the role of church leaders in advancing church growth. Selected journals specialize in theology, leadership, and Christian studies, including research papers, thesis projects, and literature reviews. The databases searched included but were not limited to the Library of Congress, ProQuest, JAMA, EBSCO, Questia, and Google Scholar.

**Church Leadership and Church Growth**

**Biblical and Theological Definition and Description of the Word Church**

 Understanding the meaning of the word “church” in Biblical and Theological contexts is crucial to comprehend what church growth means. The meaning of “church” is “εκκλησία,” a Greek word that refers to an assembly or congregation of people (Chia et al., 2021; Yi, 2019). Different people have different understandings of the meaning of the church, with some regarding it as a building and others as the people who gather to worship God and serve God’s people (Chia et al., 2021; Yi, 2019). A definition from the Bible is essential to standardize its meaning (Pillay, 2020). The Bible refers to the church as a gathering or an assembly of people (Toh, 2019; Yi, 2019). The church is first mentioned in Mathew 16:18 and speaks of those whom God has summoned out of this world (Irawati, 2021). Therefore, the church refers to all believers who worship God (Zarns, 2023). Theology draws its description of the church from the scriptures, and it defines the church as the community of believers in which the entire revelation of God’s connection with humanity in Christ can be seen (Verster, 2022). These descriptions are imperative to understand the growth of the church.

**Definition and Description of Leadership**

 Understanding leadership is essential to appreciate the scope of individuals ensuring the church’s growth. While God mandates all Christians to spread the gospel, the task heavily depends on the leaders because of their ability to organize and coordinate activities that the congregation follows. According to Howieson (2019), a leader is an individual who guides other people. Gregory (2019) describes a leader as an overseer or a person charged with ensuring that the things done by others are done correctly. Leadership in the church is serving or influencing others out of Christ’s interests to achieve God’s purpose (Dyer 2022). The leaders are tasked with mentoring and encouraging people and furthering their faith to ensure the congregation has a positive church experience.

**Definition and Description of Church Growth**

Understanding the definition of growth is essential to relate it to the church context. Growth is an increase in size, progression from simple to complex forms, becoming more prominent or significant, and progress toward achieving one’s goals (Cameron, 2022). Growth implies increasing, developing, or expanding. In the church context, church growth means the church’s increase, development, or expansion (Krispin, 2020; Ngele & Peters, 2019). Church growth may be measured numerically, spiritually, and geographically (Jordan, 2019; Quainoo, 2020). Numerical growth occurs when people spread the gospel and others believe and obey it. Numerical growth is illustrated in the book of Acts, which states that believers and disciples increased significantly (Estes, 2022). Spiritual growth occurs when the congregation grows in love, grace, and knowledge (Estes, 2022; Ginting et al., 2022). Since Christ commands Christians to proclaim the gospel to all countries, geographic growth involves the development of new churches in various regions of the world (Reeve, 2022).

**Church Growth Theories/Principles**

 There are various principles that research has shown to enhance church growth.  Some examples are small holistic groups, functional structures, energizing leadership, gift-focused ministry, and passionate spirituality (Mazzalongo, n.d.).  The church’s growth requires empowering leadership, where the leaders focus on empowering their church members for ministry. The leaders help the church members to develop their gifts, growing them and the church (van Wingerden et al., 2021). Gift-oriented ministry helps the church’s growth as people serve in areas where they are gifted, which results in them engaging in ministry according to God’s will and not their own (Dever, 2021; Branson & Martinez, 2023). Passionate spirituality, where the members care deeply about their relationship with God, promotes the growth of the congregation and the church (Brandt & Frederick, 2021). Functional structure is the church organization that supports church life, practical ministry, and clear communication (Thayer, 2023). The members of small holistic groups are encouraged to use their gifts, share their experiences, minister to one another, and support one another, all of which contribute to their and the church’s growth.

**Summary**

 A church is a gathering or an assembly of people. The church is not the building where people gather to worship but the people who gather to worship. The community of believers in which the complete revelation of God’s relationship with humanity in Christ can take place is how the church is described theologically (Zarns, 2023). A leader is an individual who guides other people. Leaders are responsible for leading a group of people with similar goals and objectives. Leadership in the church context is serving or influencing others out of Christ’s interests to achieve God’s purpose (Howieson, 2019). Church growth may be numerical, spiritual, and geographical. Some examples of concepts include empowering leadership, gift-focused ministry, passionate spirituality, functional structures, and small holistic groups (Quainoo, 2020).

**Biblical and Theological Foundations**

**Biblical and Theological Foundations of Leadership**

Leadership in the Bible is portrayed via iconic figures who guided God’s people and believers, ranging from the days of Noah during the Great Flood (Genesis 6:9-9:17; Gnuse, 2022), Moses in leading the Israelites from Egypt (Adebomi & Omotosho, 2022; Exodus 14), and many other leaders in the Old Testament to the New Testament like Jesus Christ and His Disciples (Ewa, 2022; Luke 6:12-16). Hah (2019) stated that leaders like Moses in the Bible are imperative figures who demonstrated effective leadership and how to serve people according to God’s command.  The first book of the Bible, Genesis, lays the groundwork for leadership, and the final chapter of Revelation establishes a kingly leadership role (Niemandt, 2019). The books of Exodus through Jude also illustrate narratives about influential leaders and those who were ineffective in doing God’s will (Cook, 2022; Gatlin, 2022). The Bible shows the massive deterioration of leadership in Lucifer’s rebellion against God and the incredible demonstration of leadership by the Messiah (Whitehead, 2019). Both extremes provide essential insights to leaders in the church. The model of leadership that Christ demonstrated is that of service, as he emptied himself of all desire for honor and glory to serve people (Mark 10:45). The compelling Biblical portrayals of leadership provide the values, virtues, and models of leadership applicable to the church, and which can influence masses in a direction that follows God’s Word (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Church leaders are encouraged to serve their members with love and humility, just like Jesus Christ (Friedman & Mizrachi, 2022).

The theological foundations of leadership are principles that construct the basis, processes, goals, and outcomes of Christian leadership (Knoetze, 2022). Principles of theological leadership include Christlike qualities such as humility, compassion, integrity, love, and prayerfulness (Branson & Martinez, 2023). Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020) noted that theological principles of leadership are vital for people’s understanding of God’s nature, the church’s origin, the church’s role in human life, the future of the church as aspired by Jesus Christ, and the practices of leadership that is compatible with servant leadership. Theological and biblical foundations provide Christians with a practical framework for leadership and establishing standards that can assist the church and enhance the lives of its members. Theological leadership involves a deep devotion to God and an intimate relationship with God to help others (Branson & Martinez, 2023).

**Old Testament Principles and Examples of Leadership**

 The Old Testament contains leaders who demonstrated their ability or inability to serve God’s people according to His will.  God chose the leaders, and some who effectively performed the will of God included Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Noah, the Judges, David, Solomon, and the Kings who ruled after the division of the Northern and Southern kingdoms (Geyser-Fouche, 2023). These leaders in the Old Testament provide essential information on what effective and ineffective leadership entails, evident by observing those who followed God’s commands diligently and those who failed to heed God’s orders. Nehemiah, for example, provided principles of good leadership as he left his position as the King’s cupbearer to return to Jerusalem to build a wall around the city (Nainggolan et al., 2022). Christians derive sound leadership principles from Nehemiah: compassion, a clear plan of action, readiness for the opposition, continued seeking God’s guidance, and delegation of responsibilities. Other leaders guided the Israelites into victory through God when they diligently followed God’s instructions. However, the Old Testament shows leaders fail when they stray from God’s guidance, as Solomon did.

**New Testament Principles and Examples of Leadership**

The central figure in the New Testament that Christians aim to emulate is Christ. Christ’s leadership was perfect, and it is the reference point that all Christian leaders infer from when providing services to people (Morgan, 2022). Although other apostles like John, Peter, and James showed good leadership, they also gleaned from Christ, making Christ the ultimate leader and the reference point for all Christians (Boaheng & Osei, 2022). In Matthew 20:25-28, Jesus instructed His disciples that leaders should not exercise authority over the people, and whoever wishes to become a leader must first become a servant. Jesus affirmed that leading with a servant’s heart enabled leaders to lead with a pure heart, free of pride or arrogance (Reid, 2022). Other principles of leadership that Jesus displayed included honor and submission to God’s authority, caring for the people, and prayer (Morgan, 2022).

**Summary of the Biblical and Theological Foundations of Leadership**

Leaders like Moses in the Bible are imperative figures who demonstrated effective leadership and how to serve people according to God’s command (Hagos, 2021). The books in the Bible illustrate narratives about leaders who were influential and ineffective in doing God’s will (Hah, 2019). The Bible shows the massive deterioration of leadership in Lucifer’s rebellion against God and the incredible demonstration of leadership by the Messiah. Both extremes provide essential insights to leaders in the church (Whitehead, 2019). Leaders in the Old Testament who effectively performed the will of God included Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Noah, the Judges, David, Solomon, and the Kings who ruled after the division of the Northern and Southern kingdoms (Geyser-Fouche, 2023). Nehemiah was compassionate, had a clear plan of action, the readiness for the opposition, and continued seeking God’s guidance and delegation of responsibilities (Nainggolan et al., 2022). The central figure in the New Testament that Christians aim to emulate is Christ, whose leadership was perfect. Christ said that leaders should not exercise authority over the people, and whoever wishes to become a leader must first become a servant (Morgan, 2022).

**Biblical Expectations of Church Growth**

The Bible provides essential insights on church growth that Christians and church leaders should infer from when aiming for church growth. In Mark 4:26-29, Jesus provides insights on church growth (Robinson, 2021). Jesus used a farming analogy to explain how the kingdom of God grows. God affirmed that the church resembled a man who scattered his seed and reaped it when the time was right (Mueller, 2020). The Bible expects the church to grow by Christians spreading the word of God (Alawode, 2020). Romans 10:14-15 asks how people will hear the word of God without someone preaching to them. The church is commanded in 2 Peter 3:18 to increase in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus. To him be glory both now and forever.

**Autocratic Leadership**

**Definition and Description of Autocratic Leadership**

Church leaders use a variety of leadership philosophies to lead their congregations. Autocratic Leadership is an example, and it involves the leader having control over all the decisions and taking minimal input from other leaders (Khan et al., 2021). Autocratic leaders do not ask for advice, information, or recommendations from others; instead, they base their decisions on their views. Autocratic Leadership is more common in business and only works where quick decisions are required.  In church, autocracy is based on God providing a single leader to the church at a time (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Churches that embrace the Autocratic leadership style view the leader as the sole authority overseeing the church’s activities.

Additionally, autocratic leaders are highly efficient if the leader is effective, but it has inherent disadvantages if the leader is ineffective. If the leaders can get things done, the church benefits significantly from their drive and demand (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Therefore, influential church leaders can be enormously beneficial in propelling the church toward achieving its goals, including growth.

**Qualities of Autocratic Leadership**

 Various qualities of autocratic leadership make it distinct from other leadership styles. Autocratic leaders accept very little input from others concerning administration (Jony et al., 2019). Autocratic leaders make almost all the decisions, boosting efficiency because decisions are made quickly without consultations. However, the morale of the subjects severely deteriorates because their inputs are usually not welcomed by the leader (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020). Another quality of autocratic leadership is that it has a highly structured environment. This structure results in rigidity, which has an upside because the members know the person in charge and, therefore, where to obtain instructions to perform tasks. However, the highly structured organization may result in a stringent environment because of concerns of the members that they are being monitored continuously (Jony et al., 2019). Autocratic Leadership clearly defines rules and processes because the members know the leader has the final say (Zheng et al., 2021). Autocratic Leadership also leaves little room for initiative, cooperation, and creativity among the members. Therefore, a church that uses autocratic leadership highly depends on the leader to make crucial decisions, and it benefits from their efficiency and suffers from their inefficiency (Zheng et al., 2021).

**Biblical Examples of Autocratic Leadership**

In the Bible, various leaders used autocratic leadership styles. Despite its closeness to dictatorship, some scenarios indicate its effectiveness, leading to its preference by multiple leaders. For instance, the Bible highlights that Elisha spent many years serving Elijah before leading in his own right (Argonauta, 2022). In this context, autocratic leadership was essential because it enabled Elijah to guide Elisha on how to lead through the ways of the Lord. In some instances, in the Bible, autocratic leadership proved ineffective. Pharaoh, for example, used autocratic leadership as he was in control of every aspect of his kingdom and did not consider the inputs of any other person (Gultom, 2022). It is evident through the way the Israelites suffered in Egypt. Pharaoh’s arrogance and disobedience to God, compounded with his autocratic leadership style, led to massive losses for the Egyptians through the ten plaques. Autocratic Leadership works best when the leader is competent and works in their subjects’ best interest.

**The Impact of Autocratic Leadership on Church Growth**

Autocratic leaders operate on a do-as-I-say basis, expecting the congregation to perform activities as instructed (Klahn Acuña & Male, 2022). Autocratic leadership retards the church’s growth because it creates a hostile environment that restricts the freedom of the members to perform activities in ministry that they would enjoy (Zheng et al., 2021). Autocratic leadership hinders the church’s numerical growth and lessens the effectiveness of its members in sharing the message with others (Nyakundi & Ayako, 2020). Small holistic groups, fervent spirituality, functional structures, and gift-focused ministry, all essential for church growth, may suffer from internal revolt inside the church due to feeling left out of vital decisions. The autocratic leader may also make the congregation engage in worship in ways they deem fit, which may not appeal to the congregation (Fowler et al., 2020). Autocratic, experienced, efficient leaders make important decisions that may help grow the church in all aspects.

**Summary of Autocratic Leadership**

An autocratic leader makes all the choices and rarely gets input from their team members (Khan et al., 2021). Autocratic leaders do not ask for advice, information, or suggestions from others; instead, they base their decisions on their views. In the church, autocracy is based on God providing a single leader to the church at a time. Churches led by autocratic leaders view the leader as the sole person overseeing the church’s activities. Autocratic leaders accept very little input from other people concerning leadership. Autocratic leaders make almost all the decisions, boosting efficiency because decisions are made quickly without consultations. However, the morale of the members severely deteriorates because their inputs are usually not welcomed by the leader (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). In the Bible, autocratic leadership was effective and efficient for Elijah when Elisha worked under his tutelage (Argonauta, 2022). However, the arrogance and disobedience of Pharaoh made it an ineffective method to govern, wreaking havoc for the Egyptians. Autocratic leadership may inhibit the church’s growth because the congregation may not perform activities to spread the gospel to others, and their morale to worship may reduce (Gultom, 2022).

**Authoritarian Leadership**

**Definition and Description of Authoritarian Leadership**

Authoritarian leadership is another style that various leaders apply to manage and provide guidance to their members. Authoritarian leadership resembles dictatorship more than autocratic leadership (Leber et al., 2023).  In authoritarian leadership, the leaders have complete control and make all the decisions without consultation from the members. While autocratic leaders may consider the members minimally when making decisions, authoritarian leaders do not consider the interests of others. Factors like the social norms of individuals in certain areas influence authoritarian leadership style. Some societies view authoritarian leadership as the standard form of leadership; therefore, leaders in some societies practice authoritarian leadership with minimal resistance (Du et al., 2020). Authoritarian leaders require absolute obedience from their subjects, and the members perform tasks under close supervision while the leader has unlimited authority. Authoritarian leadership has a clear divide between leaders and followers Obi et al. (2021).

**Qualities of Authoritarian Leadership**

Authoritarian leadership has various qualities that distinguish it from other forms of leadership. Authoritarian leaders think their decisions are the best and the only ones to steer the organization forward (Alblooshi et al., 2021). The leaders describe their vision and goals to their followers, and they provide clear instructions on how the team should achieve these goals. The leaders expect the results to be task-oriented, and therefore, they require the followers to follow the procedures they outline strictly and without fail (Akanji et al., 2020). The leaders control the organization absolutely, and there is usually no room for the subordinates’ suggestions or input. The subordinates are only implementers of the decisions as they are generally not considered in the decision-making process (Kim & Villace, 2019). In the church, the rarity of authoritarian leaders extending grace may identify authoritarian leaders to others as leaders with little compassion, failing to delegate responsibility, and being untouchable (Olorunnisola, 2021). Therefore, authoritarian leaders do not express the qualities of Christ of humility and service (Haruna, 2022).

**Biblical Examples of Authoritarian Leadership**

 Authoritarian leadership in the Bible is primarily destructive. According to Dodd (2021), Rehoboam and Jezebel are examples of leaders who practiced authoritarian leadership. The Israelites suffered under the reign of Rehoboam, and although he might not be responsible for all their suffering, it is evident that the subjects reflect the King’s leadership. Rehoboam’s authoritarian leadership is apparent in 1 King 12:8, which illustrates that Rehoboam rejected advice that the elders provided him and instead sought advice from young people who had grown up with him. These young people were an extension of himself because they would only tell him what he wanted to hear. Rehoboam’s leadership resulted in the division of Israel and the wickedness of Judah. In Matthew 20:25-28, Jesus instructed Christian leaders not to exercise authority over their subjects as the Gentiles did (Breen, 2023). Jesus encouraged His disciples to be servants to their followers, just as Jesus was a servant to the people.

**The Impact of Authoritarian Leadership on Church Growth**

 According to Haruna (2022), authoritarian leadership affects church growth. Although the authoritarian leadership style may be effective in other businesses because it results in the creation of consistency, improvement of time management, provision of direction, and reducing mistakes, it is not the case for the church. The church behooves a friendly atmosphere where the congregation interacts freely without fear to attract new members and retain the old members (Marius, 2022). A friendly atmosphere also encourages worship and fellowship, ensuring Christians’ spiritual and church growth. A church led by authoritarian leadership can result in fear among the congregants and feelings of a hindrance to their activities. New members may be discouraged from joining the congregation because they may feel that the leaders are too strict (Rainer, 2022). Dependence on an authoritative church leader’s decision may reduce decision-making ability. The failure to delegate duties results in inexperience among new leadership, and when the leader is unavailable or leaves, the whole structure may collapse and result in backtracking of the progress that the church made in its growth (Haruna, 2022).

**Summary of Authoritarian Leadership**

In authoritarian leadership, the leaders have complete control and make all the decisions without consultation from the members (Du et al., 2020). Authoritarian leaders require absolute obedience from their subjects. The members perform tasks under close supervision, while the leader has unlimited authority. Authoritarian leaders think their decisions are the best and the only ones to steer the organization forward. Authoritarian leaders require their followers to follow the procedures they outline strictly and without failure. Authoritarian leadership results in reduced autonomy as the followers are not permitted to make independent decisions (Akanji et al., 2020). Examples of biblical leaders who practiced authoritarian leadership were Rehoboam and Jezebel. The Christians endured a lot of suffering under the reign of Rehoboam (Dodd, 2021). Authoritarian leadership is not suitable for the church, and it may result in retarded growth. Authoritarian leadership creates an atmosphere that leads to fear among the congregants and feelings of hindrance to their activities (Haruna, 2022).

**Transformational Leadership**

**Definition and Description of Transformational Leadership**

Vale (2019) defines transformational leadership as a form of leadership that focuses on inspiring and motivating followers toward their full potential and exceeding their expectations.Theprimary focus of transformational leadership is change, and the leaders work beyond their self-interests to inspire the followers to become better in maturity and to achieve their personal goals (Siangchokyoo et al., 2020). It is about aligning the believer’s self-identity with the church’s goals, and the leader acts as an inspiring role model for the believer. The followers develop ownership of the tasks that the leader assigns them. When posting the functions for the followers, the leader also assesses the strengths and weaknesses of those followers to make sure they capitalize on the former while addressing the latter (Bakker et al., 2022). Transformational leadership promotes independence, enabling followers to be innovative and bring about change that may help the organization achieve its objectives, in contrast to autocratic and authoritarian leadership, which deny followers any autonomy to make decisions. The leaders give their followers the freedom to solve problems and trust them to decide their tasks (Alegbeleye & Kaufman, 2020). In the church, transformational leaders listen to their congregation and empower them to make decisions to solve their concerns concerning the church.

**Qualities of Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leaders have distinct characteristics that distinguish them from leaders adopting other leadership styles.  Transformational leaders motivate and encourage positive development for their followers and consider their followers’ interests and goals when leading and making decisions (Bojovic & Jovanovic, 2020; Gregory, 2019). Transformational leaders align the followers’ interests with the organization’s goals as they utilize the followers’ strengths and improve their weaknesses (Sehgal et al., 2021). The leaders act as coaches and mentors as they guide the workers on what to do while allowing them to make their own decisions. In church, transformational leaders encourage the members not to give up and to continue pushing while providing guidance (Lokol, 2023).

**Biblical Examples of Transformational Leadership**

In the Bible, various leaders use transformational leadership to guide their followers. Abraham is a prominent example of a transformational leader (Lewis, 2019). Abraham’s qualities of creating a vision, courage, confidence, caring about others, and a strong sense of justice demonstrated his transformational leadership style. Genesis 17:5 says that Abraham left everything behind to become the father of many nations (Ofori, 2021). Christians consider Abraham the father of faith. Christians also have a transformational leader in Jesus Christ (Muthuku et al., 2023). Abraham invested in people by preaching to them the gospel, despite resistance because it was for their good. Abraham entrusted others to minister to different places, felt people’s needs, and provided help whenever possible (Hart, 2023).

**The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Church Growth**

Transformational leadership affects growth (Gaib et al., 2023). While autocratic and authoritarian leadership styles may discourage new members from joining the fellowship due to hostility, transformational leadership may encourage new members to participate because of its friendly atmosphere (Momeny & Gourgues, 2019). Under the guidance of transformational leadership, the members can devise new ways to help the church grow. Delegation of duties by the church leaders enables other members to utilize their talents and gifts to help the church grow (Dunaetz, 2019). Freedom encourages the members to worship more, resulting in spiritual growth. Transformational leadership leads to retention of the followers, as they relate with the leader and remain loyal because of their focus on helping the members achieve their goals. As leaders identify their followers’ strengths and weaknesses, they can utilize these strengths to achieve the purpose of expansion. For instance, a church leader may locate the power of a member to be evangelism and provide guidance and responsibilities that the member would utilize this talent to grow the church numerically (Wise, 2020).

**Summary of Transformational Leadership**

The primary focus of transformational leadership is change, and leaders work beyond their self-interests to inspire their followers to become mature and achieve their personal goals. It involves fusing a follower’s sense of self with the church’s goals, and the leader inspires the congregation (Siangchokyoo et al., 2020). Transformational leaders motivate and encourage positive development for their followers. Transformational leaders consider their followers’ interests and objectives when leading and making decisions. The leaders inspire the followers to imitate their behavior by serving as role models (Bojovic & Jovanovic, 2020). Transformational leaders foster a work environment with clear values, priorities, and standards. Abraham is a famous example of a transformative leader, shown by his vision, courage, assurance, care towards others, and profound belief in fairness (Lewis, 2019; Ofori, 2021). Jesus was also a transformational leader (Muthuku et al., 2023). Transformational leadership can influence new members to join the church because of the friendly atmosphere that it creates. The members can also devise new ways to help the church grow (Wise, 2020).

**Servant Leadership**

**Definition and Description of Servant Leadership**

Craun and Henson (2022) defined servant leadership as a leadership model rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ. In servant leadership, the main goal of the leader is to serve. Unlike other leadership styles where the leader aims to achieve the organization’s objectives, the servant leader’s focus is helping other people (Wu et al., 2021). The leader puts the followers’ needs, growth, and well-being before his/her own and those of the organization. The leaders’ ability to serve others is natural and innate, and their leadership is a conscious choice that only comes after service. Their followers’ growth and development are top priorities, and their needs rank last (Craun & Henson, 2022). Servant leadership may be envisioned as an upside-down pyramid, while the other leadership styles are regular pyramids (Daniels, 2021). In the other leadership styles, the leader is at the top as the employees serve them (Wu et al., 2021).

**Qualities of Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership contrasts other leadership styles in significant ways. The leaders are described as “Servant as a Leader” to describe their characteristics better. Because they are humble and altruistic, they prioritize the needs of their followers. Servant leaders are not interested in power, and the leadership might have been bestowed on them due to their ability to serve others (Saleem et al., 2020). The leaders are community-focused, and they put the considerations of the community first when making decisions.  Servant leaders are highly empathetic and always willing to help others whenever possible. The followers develop trust in their leader and are not afraid to fail as the leader guides them appropriately (Asamoah, 2019; Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Like transformational leadership, Servant leadership encourages innovation and collaboration. A servant leader delegates duties, even to the extent of sharing power with others, to promote the growth and development of the organization and its people (Acuña & Bledsoe, 2023; Muzira & Muzira, 2020).

**Biblical Examples of Servant Leadership**

 The Bible has many characters who lead by serving other people. The most significant servant leader was Jesus, the role model of Christian leadership (Hurt & Long, 2023; Locke, 2019). Luke 22:42 says that Jesus submitted His life for sacrificial service under God’s will (Wright, 2023). John 10:30 also says that Jesus sacrificed his life freely out of service for others. Jesus, despite being the Son of God, led by example in service to other people. Jesus never boasted, but He washed the feet of His followers, which was the epitome of a demonstration of leadership by Jesus (Zentner-Barrett, 2023). Examination of John 13:1-17 shows that Jesus’ motivation to serve His disciples was love. Jesus was fully aware of His position as leader, voluntarily became a servant, and wanted to set an example for His disciples and Christian leaders (Mark 10:45). Moses was also a servant leader. Despite the significant challenges he received before freeing the Israelites from Egypt, Moses remained adamant and diligently followed God’s will. Despite being adopted by the royal family, Moses chose to fight for the Israelite’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Roundtree, 2023).

**The Impact of Servant Leadership on Church Growth**

Servant leadership leads to church growth (Nidin, 2023). The level of satisfaction among church members tends to rise as servant leaders put their followers’ needs first, which is linked to higher retention. New members may be encouraged to join the congregation because of how they relate to the leader as a servant who has their best interest at heart (Andoh-Mensah, 2021). As Christians connect servant leadership with Christ, they may view their servant leaders as close to Christ and therefore heed guidance that the leaders may provide regarding the Bible (Firestone & Firestone, 2020). Servant leadership leads to congregation increase, as people prefer to attend church in areas where the leader engages and serves the congregation. Caring for the well-being of the congregants results in increased membership (Dami et al., 2022).

**Summary of Servant Leadership**

 In servant leadership, the leader’s primary goal is to serve, and unlike other leadership styles where the leader aims to achieve the organization’s objectives, the servant leader’s focus is serving other people (Wu et al., 2021). Servant leaders are dedicated to putting other people’s needs ahead of their own. Because they are humble and altruistic, they prioritize the needs of their followers (Saleem et al., 2020). Servant leaders are highly empathetic, and they always help other people whenever they can (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Moses was also a servant leader who helped deliver the Israelites from bondage (Roundtree, 2023), but the most significant servant leader was Jesus, the role model of Christian leadership (Hurt & Long, 2023).

**Humble Leadership**

**Definition and Description of Humble Leadership**

 As the name suggests, humble leadership is where the leader applies humility in leadership (Kelemen, 2023). According to Luo et al., 2022, humble leadership leads through humility. Humility is a central concept in Christian leadership, requiring a measured and non-combative approach to issues, conflicts, and initiatives (Torsu & Quacoe-Takrama, 2020). Humble leadership considers other people’s opinions, acts self-aware, and ensures generosity towards followers instead of being narcissistic (Luo et al., 2022). A significant characteristic of humble leaders is their emotional intelligence (Maldonado et al., 2021). Other leadership styles may treat their employees to an end, as they become obsessed with results and achievement of the organization’s goals (Du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Although humble leadership may be like servant leadership in many ways, the significant difference is that humble leadership models the process of becoming, and servant leadership models serving others (Kelemen et al., 2023). In humble leadership, the leader considers the followers in each decision (Naseer et al., 2020).

**Qualities of Humble Leadership**

Humble leaders have qualities that differentiate them from other leaders. Humble leaders desire to learn, even from their followers, and do not over-inflate their abilities (Sadler-Smith, 2021). Naseer et al., 2020, noted that the qualities of humble leadership include selflessness, empathy, a willingness to listen and learn from others, and a focus on the well-being of those they lead rather than their own personal gain. Humble leaders have excellent listening skills, acknowledge their limitations, and are open to collaborating with others to accomplish tasks (Kang & Hua, 2023). Humble leaders lead a life of surrender, a life of preparation and are faithful in their endeavors to help others (Kelemen et al., 2023). According to Friedman (2023), humble leaders are compassionate, modest, open to receiving advice, ready to implement changes when necessary, and willing to admit mistakes.

**Biblical Examples of Humble Leadership**

Various leaders in the Bible are an embodiment of humble leadership. Jesus Christ was the ultimate example of a leader who showed humble leadership. Despite being the servant of God, Christ was humble. Christ is considered the most powerful man to walk on earth and yet the most modest man (Wilkins, 2020). Kind David was also a humble leader. David recognized that his authority came from God, and he sought to lead God’s people with humility and compassion (Psalm 78:70-72). Similarly, Moses, the leader chosen by God to lead the Israelites from Egypt to their “Promised Land,” was described as the humblest man on earth (Numbers 12:3). Friedman (2023) asserted that Moses was a great and humble leader.

**The Impact of Humble Leadership on Church Growth**

Humble leadership has mostly positive effects on church growth. The leaders embody Christ, attracting new members and retaining the old members (Dunaetz, 2023; Martin, 2019). The leaders following Christ’s example also encourage the members to follow Christ, which enables them to grow spiritually. The spiritual growth of the congregants leads to the development of the church. Humble leaders are open to feedback, which allows them to provide better service to the congregation (Kang & Hua, 2023). Humility in leadership is God’s command, and practicing humility would lead to God helping to grow the church and blessing the leader and the congregation (Kelemen et al., 2023). According to Plow (2023), humble leadership is the best leadership style for church leaders, especially in the age of celebrity church leaders and materialism, because it enables the church leader to be grounded and focus on the word of God. Instead of seeking material wealth, the humble leader seeks spiritualism, which he extends to through congregation through fellowship (Plow).

**Summary of Humble Leadership**

Humble leadership is where the leader applies humility in leadership (Kelemen, 2023). The leader considers other people’s opinions, acts self-aware, and ensures generosity towards followers instead of being narcissistic (Luo et al., 2022). Humble leaders desire to learn, even from their followers, and do not over-inflate their abilities (Sadler-Smith, 2021). Despite being the servant of God, Christ was humble. Christ is considered the most powerful man to walk on earth and yet the most modest man (Wilkins, 2020). The leaders embody Christ, attracting new members and retaining the current members. Church leaders should model the leadership examples set by Jesus Christ in ministering to the church (Kang & Hua, 2023).

**Research Question**

The research question will guide the study and bring uniformity within the research process, promoting the reliability and applicability of the research findings.

RQ: How much of the decline in church growth in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP) is attributable to church leaders, and what can church leaders do to facilitate the church’s growth?

**Professional Relevance**

The researcher is an ordained pastor in the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP). The Moravian Church is diligent in providing excellent theological training for the men and women who accept the call of God on their lives to serve in ministry. For persons who are called to the full-time ordained ministry, they are trained at the United Theological College of the West Indies (UTCWI), in Jamaica, for four (4) years. Supplementary or second-career ministers are trained for a shorter time, depending on their age and prior training. Ministers in the past received training from other theological schools or colleges, but it is not a common practice for ministers to be trained at various institutions (Book of Order, 2022). Despite the initial training and investment in educating ministers of the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (EWIP), the church has been challenged with a decline in church growth.

 The Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province, is struggling with Human Resource Practices in continuing education, duties and responsibilities of staff, accountability, evaluation, and ethics. Whereas the Church legislates specific dynamics about its personnel, it sometimes fails to execute decisions that promote the well-being of the personnel and the organization. The Church encourages continuing training or education of its staff. Unfortunately, not enough staff members pursue continuing education or training, and neither does the church adequately assist its staff in that training. The church can ensure that its staff receives adequate support for continuing education to remain on the cutting edge of ministry and fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20).

 Understanding the concept of “saved to serve” is critical for the life, health, and future of the church. Ephesians 4:12 reminds humanity that they were called “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Rick Warren (2012), in his national best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, acknowledges that God has shaped us for ministry (p. 251). When people use their gifts to edify or build up one another, it causes the body of Christ to expand. Church leaders can constantly ask themselves, “What has God called me to do so that I can edify others?” The decline in church growth is a result of people no longer doing the work of ministry that God has called them to do (Comiskey, 2023; Rainer, 2022). The church and its leadership have a responsibility to live out its faith while equipping, empowering, and releasing leaders to advance God’s Kingdom on earth.

**Conclusion**

This paper highlights the best practices highlighted in the literature on the role of church leaders in advancing church growth. The Bible describes the church as a gathering or an assembly of persons. A leader is an individual who guides other people, and they are responsible for leading a group of people with similar goals and objectives. Church growth, the expansion of the believers, may be measured numerically, spiritually, and geographically. The church’s growth requires empowering leadership, where the leaders focus on empowering their church members for ministry. The biblical foundations of leadership begin in the book of Genesis and conclude in the book of Revelation with the declaration of a kingly leadership position. Church leaders should model the examples set by Jesus Christ in ministering to the church.

**SECTION II**

**ACTION PLAN**

The action research plan will address the role of church leaders in advancing church growth. A participatory action research strategy will be used to examine strategies and practices that can enhance church growth. The approach will be anchored on humanistic and theological theories. The plan of action is consistent with the humanistic theory of structural functionalism. This theory emphasizes the significance of functional coordination, social norms, and values in maintaining social control and soundness. The action plan will help reinforce the practical coordination of church leadership and advance the traits and beliefs essential for the growth of the church community. The observational method will be critical in enhancing the data collection process. The action plan will enable the research to meet its objectives promptly.

**Research-based Intervention**

The research will address the role of church leaders in advancing church growth in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP). The approaches to intervention will depend on the nature and extent of the organizational milieu (evangelism, discipleship, team-based leadership, and adaptability). A demographic survey and questionnaires will be utilized as the research-based intervention that will be used to identify the problem in the action research (Elg, 2020).

 The intervention will take place in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP) over two weeks. The participants in the research will be the clergy of the respective congregations in the Moravian Church (EWIP), lay ministers of Christian education, lay pastors, supplementary ministers, acolytes, members of the executive boards, and the provincial board. Consent will be obtained from the provincial board before conducting the research.

The Moravian Church was chosen due to its history of evangelization, and missions work as well as the present decline in church growth. The demographic survey and questionnaires will gather data on the numerous leadership procedures and techniques that can contribute to the church's growth. The thematic analytical method will be employed to categorize concepts and ideas into different themes, sub-themes, and properties. Categorizing concepts and sub-concepts will produce major themes and sub-themes that will serve as the foundation for analysis. The researcher will secure all the required resources, and advanced preparation will be completed for implementing the intervention.

The action research project will be described to further the fulfillment of the Great Commission and to advance personal and collective church growth. Information will be disseminated to the selected participants through a demographic survey, and questionnaire responses facilitated through Survio, a web-based survey software. The survey and questionnaires will collect supplementary data regarding the leadership of the church, including, but not limited to, their age, gender, leadership status, and the number of years in leadership.

 The survey and questionnaires allow for the collection of information in a structured and organized manner. The information acquired from the intervention can give church leaders the information they require to draw judgments about improving their leadership practices and growth approaches. A successful outcome of the research intervention will be the participants’ observation and commitment to become equipped and empowered to make disciples who make other disciples as they advance the growth of the church while fulfilling the great commission. Other measures to be determined will also be indicators of a successful outcome. The intervention comprising a demographic survey and questionnaires are functional and practical instruments with which to gather information on the leadership practices and strategies that can advance church growth (McGraw et al., 2019).

**Sociological Integration**

The humanistic theory, also known as structural functionalism, is the theory most suited to undergird the study. According to functionalists, society is a complex system whose components are interdependent, interconnected, and interrelated (Ameyaw et al., 2021). The functionalists contend that several aspects of society work in concert to foster unity and stability. Political, religious, educational, marital, economic, and health institutions are viewed by theorists as organizations that collaborate to advance stability. Ameyaw et al., 2021, asserted that,

A defect in any part of the structure leads to social intractability, which ignites social instability. Herbert Spencer linked the structure of society to the parts of the human body (Turner, 2012; Rumney, 2017). He argues that the various parts of society (Social Institutions, social norms, values, or beliefs and behaviors) work together to keep society functioning, just like the organs of the human body work together to keep the body active **(Durkheim, 2014).**

**Émile Durkheim was a renowned sociologist who was known for his theories on the nature of society. Durkheim had an acute interest in the growth and operation of traditional and contemporary cultures. Social facts, which were defined as societal norms, beliefs, and institutions, served as the foundation for Durkheim's theories (Malik & Malik, 2022).**

**Durkheim supported Spencer’s analogy of the good functioning of the human body with society’s ability to function well (Durkheim, 2014).** Theologians can assert that Durkheim’s theory of the functioning of the human body may be grounded in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, that references unity and diversity in the Body [of Christ]. 1 Corinthians 12:12 states, “Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ” (New International Version, 2011).

The thought known as structural functionalism suggests that society should be visible as a multi-dimensional organization of interconnected pieces that safeguards society, its social framework, and its union. In this light, the church is perceived as a social framework that assumes a part in the upkeep and protection of social requests and dependability in society (Jo et al., 2021). The decline in church membership in the Moravian Church (EWIP) is a reflection of the methods and sustainability factors in the Moravian Church (EWIP). For example, how new members are welcomed and discipled, continuing education for leaders in the church, and periodically assessing and re-assessing population change in the society and the church are essential in ascertaining the progress and sustainability of the community of faith (Chenin, 2021; Fowler, 2019).

The structural functionalism school of thought identifies strong points in social designs that call for practical coordination (Fowler et al., 2019). When applied to the church setting, the idea of practical coordination alludes to the most common way of ensuring that the leaders and members of the church help each other understand the process of advancing church growth. The research-based intervention will gather data on the leadership teams in the Moravian Church (EWIP) using a demographic survey and questionnaires. The research results can provide vital data that can be utilized to advance church growth.

Furthermore, structural functionalism places an accentuation on the meaning of social norms and values during the time spent maintaining social requests and strength (Perry et al., n.d.). The church’s foundation is built on Jesus Christ, and believers embrace shared values and beliefs. The church’s values and beliefs play a significant role as they impact the lives and direction of the church members and leaders. Researched-based intervention can be used to analyze and enhance social norms and values that are fundamental for the development of the church community (Namunyuka et al., 2022).

Structural functionalism recognizes the meaning of social institutions as a fundamental part of the upkeep of social demands and consistency (Rathmell et al., 2019). The church is a social organization that contributes to developing cultural norms on both the cultural and social levels. Researched-based intervention can add to the conservation of social demands and security in society by encouraging the joining of practical cycles inside the church and cultivating church growth (Kim, 2021).

As a rule, the structural functionalism theory offers a supportive system for grasping the issue of decline in church growth and formulating interventions to resolve the issue (Martin, 2021). Structural functionalism centers around the connection between design and capability. Structural functionalism theory can assist us with grasping the mind-boggling elements of the church as a social framework and devise fruitful techniques for reinforcing its growth and effect in society (Ameyaw et al., 2021; Scott, 2023). The theory centers around the meaning of practical incorporation, social norms and values, and social institutions. The theory assists us with understanding the church's capabilities as a social framework (Scott, 2023).

**Theological Integration**

Advancing church growth requires going back to basics, the Word of God. The Bible reflects the blueprint for growing the church (Kinori & Nteere, 2021). According to the Bible, the church is Christ's body, and its growth is crucial to achieving God's mission for the world (Genesis 12:2-3; Matthew 28:19-20). The research-based intervention accentuates evangelism discipleship, team-based leadership, and adaptability. Advancing church growth requires good leadership. The concept of leadership was first introduced by God, modeled by Jesus, and adopted by humanity (Chauke, 2020). Good leadership styles can enhance society and the church. Biblical leaders like Moses and David exemplified vital characteristics for effective church leadership, like vision, boldness, and lowliness in their daily routines and interactions with others (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021). The research-based intervention would gather information on the leadership qualities that add to church growth and give valuable experiences that can be utilized to fortify leadership within the church (Bochere et al., 2021).

Examining the church's theological foundations and beliefs is fundamental for the growth of the church. For example, a church with more accentuation on the legalistic regulations that should be followed may drive individuals away (Alawode, 2020). In contrast, a church that places a more significant amount of accentuation on the adoration of God and service to its members can attract new members looking for spiritual satisfaction (Alawode, 2020). When church leaders have a good comprehension of the theological thoughts and values that help their members, they can make more intentional decisions about how to encourage church growth (Bochere et al., 2021). Spiritual growth and maturity will result in the expansion of the church locally and globally.

**Summary**

Churches are struggling with fulfilling the Great Commission and advancing church growth. To advance church growth, a plan of action has been fostered that accentuates evangelism, teaching, leadership, and flexibility. The intervention is grounded in research that pinpoints leadership approaches that add to the expansion of churches. The intervention will include the utilization of a demographic survey and questionnaires. The tools will enable church leaders to acknowledge and embrace the areas of concern that require improvement and devise a plan to advance church growth. Moreover, the plan offers a comprehensive answer to the issue by including a social and theological perspective.

The survey will incorporate inquiries regarding the leaders' level of involvement and dedication in their positions and responsibilities within the church as well as whether they feel valued by their peers. Once the data has been acquired, it will be analyzed employing descriptive procedures and creative methods to identify patterns, examples, and subjects. The findings can then be used to develop approaches and action plans to address the identified areas for improvement in advancing church growth. The results can also serve as a standard for future assessments and evaluations.

The proposed intervention can extend church leaders' information base and range of abilities, which can aid in the advancement of church growth. The implementation of this plan will also foster a culture of innovation and change, both of which are essential for the church's growth and development. A starting point to advancing church growth can be found through the blend of humanistic and theological perspectives and leadership development.

**SECTION III**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

 Permission to conduct the action research intervention will be secured by the researcher; evidence of permission is in the form of a letter *(see Appendix A).*

 Participants will be protected by agreeing to an Informed Consent Document *(see Appendix B)* prior to completing the data collection tool.

Location and Duration

 The research will be based in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP). The Moravian Church was selected due to its history in missions and evangelism and the current decline in church growth. Complete access to the church leaders will promote the amount and quality of data gathered from the research.

 The duration of the intervention will be two weeks. The participants in the research will be the clergy of the respective congregations in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (EWIP), lay ministers of Christian Education, lay pastors, supplementary ministers, acolytes, members of the executive boards, and the provincial board. Consent will be obtained from the provincial board before conducting the research.

Data Collection Tools

The data collection tool consists of questionnaires and a demographic survey. Open-ended questionnaires *(see Appendix D)* will be used to collect data from participants prior to and following the intervention.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Contact will be made with the Chairman of the Provincial Board of the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (EWIP). The chairman will be provided a letter of introduction written by the researcher that will be shared with all participants in the research. The introductory letter will briefly describe the study and the importance of the church leaders’ participation.

Data will be collected for a period of two weeks. Approximately fifty participants are expected to engage in the research process. The data collection tool consists of questionnaires and a demographic survey. The forms will be distributed among the church leaders. They will be allowed to remain with the documents for up to two weeks. It will give them sufficient time to reflect on their responses before giving answers. Surveys/Questionnaires are favorable since they facilitate the collection of copious amounts of data from the research participants (Thabtah, 2019). The survey/questionnaires will utilize a mixture of both open-ended and closed questions. The questions will be organized logically to promote the transition from question to question.

 The researcher is expected to maintain the integrity of the data during the research process. Data integrity can be ensured by collecting information from the church leaders; leading questions must be avoided. Further, bias needs to be limited. Maintaining the respondents’ integrity will be done through blinding, where the research participants will not be made aware of the other participants’ responses.

 This action research will evaluate the researcher’s engagement in an advisory role to the denomination’s leadership during the period of one month in introducing strategies to curb attribution and promote church growth in the aftermath of the recent COVID-19 crisis. The researcher will organize the data for analysis, which will be coded using Survio, a web-based survey software to host online surveys and questionnaires. Participants will be provided with an email link with a distinct code identified with each of the surveys and answer a short survey consisting of questions connected with church leadership *(See Appendices I through K).* Participants will be asked to enter a unique code that will be associated with data collection and analysis. A key will be created for each survey/questionnaire that will identify the questions in the survey/questionnaire. The data collected will be analyzed and reported.

The study will commence in May 2023 and conclude in May 2023.

 Results of the pre-intervention and post-intervention data will be evaluated for patterns and themes.

Expected Outcomes

 If the intervention adequately addresses the problem, data should indicate at least three points. First, an understanding of pastoral leadership practices that can enhance church growth. Second, the need to adequately equip the saints for the work of ministry. Third, the effects of team-based leadership in growing the church.

Summary

The research will be based in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province (MCEWIP). The quantity and caliber of the data acquired from the research will be enhanced by full access to the church leaders. The participants will be members of the clergy and lay leaders in the MCEWIP. Data will be collected with a demographic survey and questionnaires. The intervention will last for two weeks. The study will commence in May 2023 and conclude in May 2023. Successful problem-solving measures include a grasp of pastoral leadership techniques that can promote church growth. Effectively equipping the saints to fulfill the Great Commission or Discipleship Training and promoting and imaging team-based leadership that can result in church growth.

SECTION IV

REFLECTION

(This section should be approx. 3-5 pp)

Introductory paragraph

Results and Evaluation

The intervention was implemented on…

Data were analyzed according to…

The following themes were identified between the pre-intervention and post-intervention data…

The results of the intervention suggest…

The research question can be answered as follows…

Personal and Professional Reflection

The results of this action research project affected me through…

Implications for Leadership

The results of this action research project are relevant to leading change in society because…

Leadership theories that support the results of this action research project include…

Implications for Social Change

The results of this action research project can help advance constructive social change because…

Recommendations for Future Research

Future action research projects might consider…

Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, the problem was… the research question was answered… this study was significant because…

APPENDIX A

TITLEContent

APPENDIX B

TITLE

Content

APPENDIX C

TITLE

Content

APPENDIX D

TITLE

Content

RAW DATA

Content

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