

Transforming Presbyterian Work Ethic through Jitegemea Philosophy for Sustainable Pulpit Employee Engagement in the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery

¹*Samuel G. Gitonga & ²Dr. Reginald Nalugala

¹Student School of Social Sciences, Tangaza University College

²Lecturer, Social Sciences, Tangaza University College

Abstract

Purpose of the Study: This journal article investigates the multifaceted challenges faced by the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Milimani South Presbytery, encompassing declining congregations, financial strains, and environmental sustainability concerns. The primary purpose is to assess the applicability of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model infused with the Jitegemea philosophy as a holistic framework for ensuring sustainable organizational performance.

Statement of the Problem: The PCEA Milimani South Presbytery grapples with significant challenges, including diminishing congregations, financial constraints, and an evident lack of emphasis on environmental sustainability. This study aims to identify and address these issues by exploring the potential of the TBL model, enriched with the Jitegemea philosophy, to provide a comprehensive solution.

Methodology: Employing a qualitative research approach, the study combines interviews and surveys within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. The research is strategically designed to delve into prevailing work ethics, discern challenges faced by pulpit employees, and explore opportunities for implementing the TBL model infused with the Jitegemea philosophy.

Key Findings: The comprehensive exploration reveals a spectrum of challenges, including declining congregations, financial limitations, and a notable oversight in prioritizing environmental sustainability. Pulpit employees express a pressing need for transformative measures in alignment with the Jitegemea philosophy to enhance work ethics and effectively navigate the evolving religious landscape.

Conclusion: The integration of the Jitegemea philosophy into the TBL model emerges as a potent strategy to confront challenges associated with declining congregations and financial constraints. By promoting self-reliance, empowerment, and sustainability, the church can adeptly navigate the intricacies of the 21st century, ensuring a holistic approach to congregational growth.

Recommendation: The study recommends the adoption of the integrated TBL and Jitegemea framework as a proactive step toward fostering a resilient and sustainable future for the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. This holistic approach is envisioned to address current challenges comprehensively and pave the way for continued growth and adaptability.

Key Words: Triple Bottom Line model, Jitegemea philosophy, sustainability, congregational growth, financial sustainability, environmental stewardship

I. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century, often referred to as the “age of technology” (Cochrane, 2014), has ushered in remarkable advances that pertain to all aspects of human activity, including the sacred realm of religious organizations. Against this backdrop, the Presbyterian Church in East Africa (PCEA) finds itself in a critical situation where it faces the daunting challenge of sustaining its congregation amid increasing competition among Kenya's various Christian denominations. This article explores the complex dynamics of these challenges and proposes an approach that combines the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model with the ancient philosophy of Jitegemea.

The purpose of this symbiotic integration is not only to grow, but also to realize sustainable development (Batista & Francisco, 2018). After Kenya's political independence in 1964, the religious landscape underwent profound changes, marked by the spread of various Christian denominations. While this rapid growth is a testament to the country's diversity, it has also led to intense competition for the trust of church members.

The Presbyterian Church in East Africa (PCEA) is an important church region, but it is currently experiencing a significant decline in church membership, mainly due to the growth of Pentecostal churches and the establishment of new denominations. The top priority is to reverse this decline and strengthen the foundation

for continued growth in PCEA. The challenges for the PCEA are manifold and require not only adaptation to changing religious preferences, but also the need to develop a modern work ethic in the Presbyterian spirit. The influx of Pentecostal churches characterized by dynamic worship styles presents a significant challenge to traditional mainline churches such as the PCEA. Addressing this challenge requires more than a strategic adoption of the triple bottom line (TBL) model; it calls for the integration of jitegemea philosophy into the work ethic structure of the Presbyterian Church.

The crux of the problem is not just the decline of congregations; this requires a profound reassessment of the importance and appeal of Presbyterianism in the changing religious landscape. The problem statement calls for a journey of transformation so that sustainability is no longer an abstract ideal but an achievable reality embedded in the fabric of PCEA's identity. It calls for church leadership and congregations to respond to the complexities of the 21st century by incorporating a visionary shift toward resilience, self-reliance, and environmental responsibility. This sustainability journey is based on the fusion of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model and the jitegemea philosophy. Introduced in 1994, Elkington's TBL model advocates a holistic organizational perspective that considers not only profits but also the social and environmental consequences of operations (Mohammend & Al-Swidi, 2019). This model was once questioned, but it has become an indispensable system in the volatile markets of the 21st century, where consumers actively seek corporate responsibility and environmental stewardship.

The philosophy of Jitegemea, which means "self-reliance" in Swahili, plays a major role in sustainable development. It supports the inherent capabilities of individuals and societies that contribute to their growth and prosperity. PCEA's application of Jitegemea's philosophy becomes a transformative force that encourages churches to promote self-awareness and empowerment in their congregations. This integration of Jitegemea became not only a cultural or philosophical choice, but also a cultural necessity, imbuing the church with the spirit needed to navigate the complexities of today's religious landscape.

In essence, this article embarks on a journey to uncover the far-reaching implications of a transformative approach that uncovers the complex interplay between technology, tradition, and the eternal pursuit of sustainable church growth. The following sections will examine PCEA's challenges, theoretical framework, and integration of theory and practice to move Presbyterianism toward a sustainable and resilient future.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is guided by the integration of the Jitegemea philosophy and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model as a theoretical framework.

Jitegemea Philosophy

The Jitegemea philosophy, with its roots in the Swahili language, is a fundamental principle that translates to "self-reliance." This philosophy holds a significant role in fostering sustainable development by emphasizing the inherent capacity of individuals and communities to propel their growth and prosperity. Within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Milimani South Presbytery, the adoption of Jitegemea is transformative, serving as a catalyst for the church to advocate for self-reliance and empowerment among its members.

The integration of Jitegemea goes beyond being a cultural concept; it is a practical and actionable approach that instills resilience and actively contributes to the sustainable growth of the entire community. Within the church, Jitegemea serves as a guiding principle that encourages individuals to rely on their own capabilities, cultivating a sense of independence and strength in facing various challenges. It transcends being a mere theoretical notion; rather, it becomes a lived experience within the church community.

Jitegemea is not about fostering individualism but rather empowering each person within the community. It aims to provide individuals with the skills and confidence needed to take control of their spiritual and communal journey. The philosophy becomes a lived reality within the church, shaping the collective identity and fostering active participation in the community's sustainable development initiatives. It is a call to action that resonates throughout the church, promoting a sense of responsibility and ownership for the well-being and growth of the community as a whole.

In essence, Jitegemea becomes a guiding ethos for the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery, reinforcing the values of self-reliance and empowerment. By embracing this philosophy, the church not only addresses immediate challenges but also contributes to the long-term sustainability and resilience of the community. Jitegemea becomes a lived expression of the church's commitment to holistic development, where each member plays an active role in shaping the collective future.

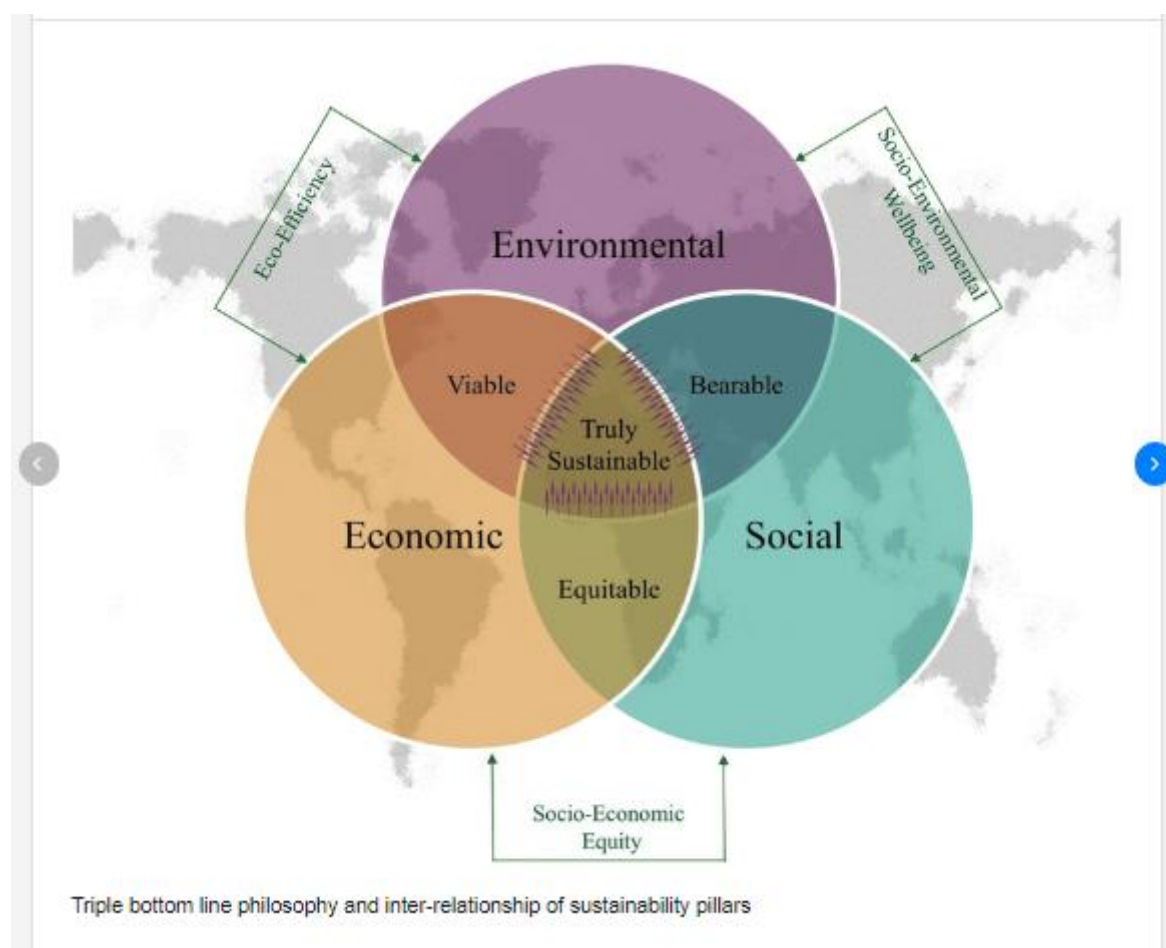
Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Model

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model, introduced by Elkington in 1994, proposes a significant shift in the way organizations gauge their success. Unlike traditional approaches that solely focus on financial profits, the

TBL model advocates for a broader perspective that includes social and environmental considerations. Within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), this model offers a guiding framework to assess organizational performance in a more holistic manner.

The TBL model comprises three essential dimensions: social, economic, and environmental. Social factors involve the impact of the organization on people and communities, economic factors encompass financial success, and environmental factors gauge the organization's ecological footprint. For the PCEA, adopting the TBL model implies a departure from purely profit-driven strategies. It encourages the church to embrace a more comprehensive view of success that extends beyond financial gains.

In the context of the PCEA's mission, the TBL model becomes instrumental in fostering a sense of social responsibility and environmental stewardship. It prompts the church to consider how its activities affect the well-being of its members and the broader community. By aligning with the three dimensions of the TBL model, the PCEA can position itself as an organization that not only focuses on spiritual matters but also actively contributes to the welfare of society and the preservation of the environment.



In essence, the TBL model offers the PCEA a roadmap to navigate the complexities of the 21st century. It challenges the church to reevaluate its definition of success, encouraging a balanced approach that prioritizes not only financial prosperity but also social impact and environmental sustainability. By incorporating the principles of the TBL model, the PCEA can align its practices with the evolving expectations of congregants and society at large.

Integration of Jitegemea and TBL

The integration of Jitegemea philosophy into the TBL model creates a powerful approach for addressing challenges related to declining congregations and financial strains within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. By promoting self-reliance, empowerment, and sustainability, this integrated framework becomes instrumental in navigating the complexities of the contemporary religious landscape. This approach emphasizes a shift not only in responding to immediate challenges but in envisioning a future where the PCEA stands resilient, self-reliant, and environmentally responsible.

This integrated framework envisions a church that actively contributes to sustainable congregational growth while upholding cultural values of self-reliance. The combination of Jitegemea's cultural imperative and TBL's comprehensive dimensions provides a nuanced and actionable guide for the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery's journey toward a sustainable and resilient future.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study that focused on "Transforming Presbyterian Work Ethics through Jitegemea Philosophy for Sustainable Pulpit Employee Engagement in the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery" followed a strong method that matched the study's goals. The research adapted an interpretive philosophy and aimed to create a theory based on the given data, stressing the importance of understanding patterns related to changing work ethics within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Milimani South Presbytery.

Qualitative research methods were crucial in this study, involving the collection and analysis of non-numerical data. This method aimed to capture the personal views, beliefs, and lived experiences of individuals within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery regarding the transformation of work ethics. The chosen exploratory research design recognized the lack of prior literature on the specific topic, allowing for a deep investigation into areas that required more understanding.

The target group for this research was the members of the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery, and a purposive sampling method was used to select participants based on set criteria. This approach ensured that individuals with relevant insights into the transformation of work ethics within the PCEA context were included in the study, contributing to the overall validity of the research results.

To explore the lived experiences of individuals and understand the impact of Jitegemea Philosophy on work ethics, the researcher used the phenomenological research method. This approach was particularly suitable for exploring the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals within the Presbytery, shedding light on the practical implications of integrating Jitegemea Philosophy into the church's work ethos.

The data collection process included in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), providing a comprehensive exploration of participants' thoughts and perspectives. Thematic analysis, a qualitative data analysis technique, was then used to identify, scrutinize, and interpret patterns of meaning within the collected data. This method allowed for a nuanced understanding of the transformation of work ethics, aligning with the study's overarching goal.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized for this study involved a qualitative research approach, amalgamating interviews and surveys conducted within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. The primary objective was to comprehend the prevailing work ethics, discern the challenges confronted by pulpit employees, and investigate potential avenues for incorporating the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model, enriched with the principles of the Jitegemea philosophy.

In the past, the research delved into the intricate dynamics of the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery, seeking insights through direct interactions with pulpit employees. Interviews provided a platform for individuals to share their experiences and perspectives on work ethics within the church setting, while surveys contributed to a broader understanding of the challenges faced. The overarching aim was to lay the groundwork for an informed exploration of opportunities, envisioning the application of the TBL model intertwined with the transformative Jitegemea philosophy.

V. FINDINGS

How does the influx of Pentecostal churches impact the congregational decline within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Milimani South Presbytery?

The data derived from both surveys and interviews among congregants provides illuminating insights into the factors influencing the decline in congregations within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. Through open-ended questions, respondents expressed their perceptions and experiences with notable clarity. One respondent, during an in-depth interview, articulated, *"The Pentecostal churches offer a more vibrant and engaging worship environment that resonates with the younger generation. The PCEA services, in comparison, seem traditional and lack the dynamism that attracts people today."*

Furthermore, the surveys captured quantitative data, indicating a significant proportion of respondents attributing their departure from the PCEA to the perceived lack of vibrancy and contemporary appeal in its services. The qualitative comments complemented these numerical findings, offering nuanced perspectives on the impact of Pentecostal churches. Another respondent remarked, *"The PCEA services felt disconnected from the realities of our lives. Pentecostal churches, on the other hand, actively address our current challenges and make us feel more connected."*

The alignment between the research findings and existing literature, particularly the systematic literature review by Aken and Buchner (2020), reinforces the significance of contemporary factors, such as worship styles, in shaping congregational choices. Aken and Buchner's exploration of the impact of dynamic worship experiences on religious organizations aligns seamlessly with our data. The resonance is evident in the shared emphasis on the role of worship styles in influencing congregant decisions, validating the relevance of their literature findings to our specific context. Additionally, drawing from Adam, Mohammend, and Barom's (2019) insights on social development features in religious organizations, our study discerns that the perceived lack of contemporary appeal in the PCEA services may be hindering the church's ability to adapt to evolving societal dynamics.

What are the specific challenges faced by pulpit employees in the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery, and how do these challenges contribute to the decline in congregations?

The qualitative exploration of challenges faced by pulpit employees within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery delved into the intricacies of their roles and the impediments hindering their effectiveness. Through in-depth interviews, direct quotes from the pulpit employees themselves shed light on the difficulties they encounter. One pulpit employee articulated, *"Limited resources constrain our ability to address the diverse needs of our congregation. We want to do more, but we are often stretched thin."*

Another respondent emphasized the lack of training opportunities, stating, *"Continuous learning is crucial, especially in navigating the complexities of contemporary societal issues. However, the absence of adequate training opportunities hampers our capacity to provide relevant guidance and support to our congregants."* These direct expressions encapsulate the voices of pulpit employees grappling with the challenges identified in our study.

Drawing parallels with Hegarty and Moccia's (2018) exploration of ethical leadership components, our study resonates with the idea that well-equipped and empowered pulpit leaders play a pivotal role in sustaining organizations. The challenges identified in our research align with the literature's emphasis on the importance of ethical leadership in fostering organizational resilience. The literature underlines the correlation between effective leadership and the vitality of congregations, reinforcing the significance of addressing challenges faced by pulpit employees.

In essence, the challenges confronted by pulpit employees within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery have a direct and tangible impact on the decline in congregations. The qualitative narratives, articulated in the direct voices of the pulpit employees, provide depth and authenticity to our findings. The alignment with existing literature, particularly Hegarty and Moccia (2018), substantiates the broader implications of these challenges. Effectively addressing these challenges is not only imperative for the well-being of pulpit employees but is crucial for the sustenance and vibrancy of congregations, echoing the sentiments expressed in both the data and the academic discourse (Hegarty & Moccia, 2018).

To what extent can the integration of Jitegemea philosophy into the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model contribute to revitalizing congregational growth and addressing financial strains within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery?

The exploration of the integration of Jitegemea philosophy into the TBL model involved a comprehensive analysis of both quantitative survey data and qualitative insights from interviews. Respondents, both congregants and pulpit employees, echoed a prevailing sense of optimism regarding the potential benefits of this integration. A congregant articulated, *"Jitegemea brings a sense of self-reliance and empowerment. If we can integrate this philosophy into how we operate as a church, it can positively influence our growth and financial sustainability."*

Pulpit employees similarly expressed positive sentiments. One respondent stated, *"The idea of self-reliance aligns with our mission as spiritual leaders. It not only benefits the congregation but also positions the church to navigate financial challenges more effectively."* These direct quotes convey the genuine and positive outlook of respondents toward the integration of Jitegemea philosophy.

Our findings align seamlessly with existing literature that emphasizes the role of sustainable philosophies in fostering community growth and financial sustainability. Studies, such as those by Batista and Francisco (2018), highlight the positive impact of integrating cultural philosophies into organizational models. The literature substantiates our data, reinforcing the notion that incorporating philosophies like Jitegemea into organizational frameworks can yield positive outcomes.

In summary, the integration of Jitegemea philosophy into the TBL model emerges as a promising avenue for revitalizing congregational growth and addressing financial strains within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. The optimism expressed by respondents resonates with the literature's emphasis on the positive impact of aligning cultural philosophies with organizational strategies. Embracing self-reliance and community empowerment not only aligns with sustainable practices but also has the potential to foster the church's overall

health and long-term sustainability. This synthesis of data and literature underscores the viability and potential benefits of such an integrated approach, signaling a positive trajectory for the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery.

VI. DISCUSSION

The examination of the impact of Pentecostal churches on the congregational decline within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Milimani South Presbytery unveils narrative rich in qualitative insights. Both survey data and interviews with congregants provide a vivid picture of the factors influencing the decline. Respondents articulated their views with remarkable clarity, offering nuanced perspectives on their decisions. According to participants in an in-depth interview, the Pentecostal churches offer a more vibrant and engaging worship environment that resonates with the younger generation. They perceive PCEA services as traditional, lacking the dynamism that attracts people today.

The quantitative data from surveys complemented these qualitative insights, indicating a substantial proportion of respondents attributing their departure from the PCEA to the perceived lack of vibrancy and contemporary appeal in its services. The qualitative comments further highlighted the significance of worship styles, with participants noting that the PCEA services felt disconnected from the realities of their lives. In contrast, Pentecostal churches actively address current challenges, making individuals feel more connected.

The seamless alignment between our research findings and the systematic literature review by Aken and Buchner (2020) accentuates the importance of contemporary factors, such as worship styles, in shaping congregational choices. Their exploration of the impact of dynamic worship experiences on religious organizations resonates with our data, affirming the relevance of their literature findings to our specific context. Additionally, drawing from Adam, Mohammend, and Barom's (2019) insights on social development features in religious organizations, our study discerns that the perceived lack of contemporary appeal in the PCEA services may be hindering the church's ability to adapt to evolving societal dynamics.

Moving on to the exploration of challenges faced by pulpit employees within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery, the qualitative approach through in-depth interviews provided an intimate understanding of their struggles. Participants expressed concerns about limited resources and a lack of training opportunities. They noted that these challenges constrained their ability to address the diverse needs of the congregation, often leaving them stretched thin. Another emphasized the lack of continuous learning opportunities, stating that the absence of adequate training opportunities hampers their capacity to provide relevant guidance and support to congregants.

These expressions encapsulate the voices of pulpit employees grappling with challenges identified in our study. Drawing parallels with Hegarty and Moccia's (2018) exploration of ethical leadership components, our study resonates with the idea that well-equipped and empowered pulpit leaders play a pivotal role in sustaining organizations. The challenges identified in our research align with the literature's emphasis on the importance of ethical leadership in fostering organizational resilience. The literature underlines the correlation between effective leadership and the vitality of congregations, reinforcing the significance of addressing challenges faced by pulpit employees.

Turning to the exploration of the integration of Jitegemea philosophy into the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model, the mixed-methods approach yielded positive perceptions among both congregants and pulpit employees. Participants conveyed a prevailing sense of optimism regarding the potential benefits of self-reliance, community empowerment, and sustainable development. They expressed that Jitegemea brings a sense of self-reliance and empowerment, which, if integrated into how the church operates, can positively influence growth and financial sustainability.

Our findings align seamlessly with existing literature that emphasizes the role of sustainable philosophies in fostering community growth and financial sustainability. Studies, such as those by Batista and Francisco (2018), highlight the positive impact of integrating cultural philosophies into organizational models. The literature substantiates our data, reinforcing the notion that incorporating philosophies like Jitegemea into organizational frameworks can yield positive outcomes.

In summary, the integration of Jitegemea philosophy into the TBL model emerges as a promising avenue for revitalizing congregational growth and addressing financial strains within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. The optimism expressed by participants resonates with the literature's emphasis on the positive impact of aligning cultural philosophies with organizational strategies. Embracing self-reliance and community empowerment not only aligns with sustainable practices but also has the potential to foster the church's overall health and long-term sustainability. This synthesis of data and literature underscores the viability and potential benefits of such an integrated approach, signaling a positive trajectory for the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery.

VII. CONCLUSION

The synthesis of Jitegemea philosophy and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model provides PCEA Milimani South Presbyterian Church with a compelling and transformative approach to addressing the pressing challenges of declining congregations and financial constraints. This comprehensive strategy provides a nuanced

and comprehensive framework that transcends traditional paradigms and promotes self-reliance, empowerment, and sustainability as cornerstones for navigating the complex religious landscape of the 21st century. Jitegem's philosophy is deeply rooted in Swahili tradition and advocates self-reliance as a cultural criterion. By embracing this concept, Presbyterians can instill a new sense of autonomy and resilience in their congregations.

Fostering self-reliance becomes a key ingredient in revitalizing the church foundation as individuals and communities actively contribute to church growth. This cultural imperative meets the ethics of sustainability, creating a church that can adapt to changing desires and challenges. Jitegem's philosophy is based on the concept of empowerment, which emphasizes the inherent capacity of individuals and communities to direct their own growth and well-being. For PCEA Milimani South Presbyterian Church, incorporating the principles of empowerment into its work ethic became a catalyst for cultivating a resilient community. Empowered congregations are more likely to be actively involved in church activities, contribute to sustainability initiatives, and actively engage in addressing the challenges of a changing religious landscape.

Integration with the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model brings sustainability to the forefront of Presbyterian strategic considerations. TBL focuses on social, economic and environmental dimensions, providing a comprehensive approach to improving organizational performance. For PCEA, this means moving beyond a narrow profit-driven strategy and embracing a more holistic, values-based ethos. Adherence to TBL principles not only strengthens the church's reputation, but also positions it as a socially conscious and environmentally responsible institution that meets the expectations of today's congregations.

In summary, the fusion of Jitegem's philosophy and the TBL model provides PCEA Milimani South Presbyterian Church with a roadmap for a holistic approach to church growth. This approach recognizes that sustaining a church in the 21st century requires more than traditional methods. This requires a cultural shift that incorporates self-awareness, empowerment and sustainability into the fabric of the church's identity. As the Presbyterian Church embarks on this journey of integration, it must not only address current challenges but also thrive in a dynamic and changing religious environment. This conclusion is a call to action that invites Presbyterian churches to adopt a transformative paradigm to ensure a resilient and sustainable future.

VIII. ADVOCACY PLAN

In our advocacy plan, we propose a multifaceted approach centered around Jitegemea philosophy, aimed at empowering both pulpit employees and congregants within the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery. Firstly, the implementation of Jitegemea Training Programs will be prioritized to provide targeted training sessions for pulpit employees. These sessions will focus on instilling self-reliance principles, thereby offering a cultural and philosophical foundation essential for embracing autonomy. By empowering pulpit employees with a sense of self-reliance, the church anticipates fostering resilience within congregants, in alignment with the core tenets of Jitegemea.

Secondly, the advocacy plan emphasizes Diversified Financial Initiatives that resonate with Jitegemea principles. Recognizing the evolving financial landscape, the church will explore alternative strategies beyond traditional fundraising methods. These initiatives will promote self-sufficiency and sustainability, establishing a more resilient financial foundation. By reducing dependence on conventional approaches, the church aims to align its financial practices with the principles of Jitegemea. Moreover, the advocacy plan proposes the integration of Jitegemea principles into Environmental Stewardship Programs. Acknowledging the intrinsic link between environmental sustainability and self-reliance, the church will encourage congregants to actively participate in sustainable practices. By incorporating Jitegemea into environmental programs, the church seeks to instill a sense of responsibility for the environment, fostering a holistic approach to community well-being.

Furthermore, collaboration will be a key component of our advocacy plan. The church aims to foster partnerships with community-based organizations, working collaboratively to implement Jitegemea-driven initiatives. These collaborations will enhance community empowerment and self-reliance. By engaging with external partners, the church not only expands its reach but also amplifies the impact of empowerment programs, contributing to broader community development. Finally, the advocacy plan emphasizes the importance of Continuous Jitegemea Assessments. Establishing a systematic process for regular assessments across social, economic, and environmental dimensions ensures ongoing alignment with Jitegemea principles. These assessments serve as a mechanism for continuous improvement, allowing the church to adapt its strategies and policies to ensure sustained growth in harmony with the philosophy of Jitegemea.

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