

Relationship between Transformational Leadership and the Participation and Constructive Engagement of Young People in the Church

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Abstract

Contemporary churches today are grappling with the prospect of extinction due to an emergent phenomenon of shrinking population of young people in church. Leadership literature propose transformational leadership as a solution to the challenges of youth attraction and retention in church. However, the evidence base in Kenya in support of this proposition is not compelling. The aim of this study was to empirically investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in churches in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Cross-sectional research design guided the study process. The research was conducted in 11 different denominational churches in Nairobi County. A stratified random sample of 330 participants were recruited into the study. The participants filled Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and Tiffany-Eckenrode Program Participation Scale. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS from which output tables were generated. Results indicated a significant relationship between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in the church. The results affirm that transformational leadership is an effective leadership style for positively influencing and inspiring the younger population in the church to actively participate and be engaged in the activities of the church. Churches should apply transformational leadership style to increase the voice/influence of the youth, promote their personal development, get them actively engaged in their communities and foster in them a sense of safety and support. Due to potential contextual differences, there is need to carry out a similar study among small churches, especially those within rural communities.

Key words: Constructive Engagement, Personal Development, Transformational Leadership

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I. Introduction

Contemporary churches today are grappling with the prospect of extinction due to an emergent phenomenon of shrinking population of young people in church (Jones, 2020). Interviews conducted with young adults in America identify a diversity of reasons for this phenomenon (Earls, 2019). Among the reasons cited by majority of the respondents were leadership, pastor related reasons and judgmental attitudes as well as hypocrisy of members of the church. Further, a number of youth view church as boring with many rules and restrictions on what they can or cannot do. Most of the interviewees disagreed with the stance their local church took on various social or political issues. The young people feel that the church limits them from freely expressing themselves through the way they dress, talk, behave or associate, and fellowship with their peers.

According to Beytia (2008), young people are also exposed to a multiplicity of life realities including advancements in technology and information flooding thanks to the proliferation of internet connectivity, a vast array of application and ubiquitous mobile devices. Consequently, compared to the older generation, the youth of today are less conservative and readily embrace diversity including life values (Hallman, 2017). Young people of today also grapple with fear of failure, increased pressure to succeed, a desire to belong to a group yet faced with heightened individualism leading to superficial friendships, and loneliness within a group or in a family (Beytia, 2008). They are generally viewed as a generation with great expectations (Green, 2008). As such, they seek rapid advancement and development of skills in their engagements but with a good work-life balance (Ng et al., 2010).

The great expectations of young people, coupled with life pressures that they face pose a challenge to church leaders and present them with an enormous task of satisfying this generation of followers, and retaining them longer in their places of engagement including in the church (Stein, 2013). It has been noted that a good number of young adults are not interested in going to church or voluntarily get involved in the church programmes and activities, unlike the situation during their teenage years (Earls, 2019). Church attendance and

active participation in church programmes and activities by the young people is therefore on a downward trajectory as the youth increasingly find no motivation to go to church or involve their own children in church or other religious activities (Awuku-Gyampoh et al., 2021).

The existential woes of the church notwithstanding, there is a well-established notion that the church is a safe haven for young people because it provides a training ground for good morals and thereby help to keep youth positively engaged as key stakeholders in the development of their communities (Ragira et al., 2017). In addition, being actively involved in the church is believed to keep the youth away from vices of the society like drug and substance abuse, casual sexual activities, destructive peer groups and gangs. This is because the church exposes young people to the Bible teachings and the importance of following in the steps of Jesus Christ. At the same time church leaders and members supposedly demonstrate the biblical virtues as role models to the youth. Given the opportunity to serve in the church coupled with teaching and implementation of sound doctrine, the youth can be important agents of positive transformation not just for the advancement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but also the overall moral climate of society. Indeed, the continued existence of the church is dependent on young people as older generations retire and step down from active duty and participation in church activities (Beytía, 2008).

Leadership literature propose transformational leadership as a solution to the challenges of youth attraction and retention in church (Haruna, 2021; McCall, 2019). The literature suggests that transformational leaders intellectually stimulate, inspirationally motivate, individually consider, and idealize their influence, thereby arousing the desire to will and to act in accord with the direction of the leader (Boamah et al., 2017; Butler & Senses-Ozyurt, 2020). However, the evidence base in Kenyan support of this proposition is not compelling. Benedicte et al. (2022) for instance undertook a survey of youth retention and growth in selected protestant churches in Ongata Rongai in Nairobi. Regression analysis revealed that the effect size of transformational leadership was not statistically significant. Instead, it is transactional leadership style that had a strong positive and statistically significant effect on membership retention and growth. Their study recommended further studies that either confirm or refute their research results. The present study responded to this call for continued empirical inquiry by investigating the relationship between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in churches in Nairobi city County, Kenya.

II. Literature Review

Young people need to be inspired and challenged in order to actively participate in the affairs of a church. They need affirmation from leaders that they are able and capable to take up challenging tasks and be role models to their peers. The transformational leadership traits including inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration are crucial in affirming to the young people that they have what it takes to participate in church matters, thus boosting their self-efficacy. Besides, the youth should be free with their leaders in order to confide in them whenever they face difficulties in life. By doing so the leaders are able to direct youth into developmental programmes which would grow their capabilities. The youth have immense energy and are happy to get involved in exciting and stimulating activities. Such activities include taking mission trips to different parts of their countries, learning new cultures and getting exposure to new adventures. Other inviting opportunities are music, games, movies, outdoor camping among other recreational facilities which enhance holistic health and growth. Similarly, it is crucial to give young leaders and pastors an opportunity to grow in the church so that they can positively influence their fellow young congregants (Ragira et al., 2017). Njoroge (2019) concurs that quality and exciting youth programs are important to attract youth to church and make them actively participate in the various activities available. Moreover, young people can migrate from a church which lacks stimulating, inspiring and interesting programs which they can engage in. Youth desire to be heard. The older generations should show interest in them and treat them with respect and dignity. The youth repulse treatment from older generations who portray the young people as persons who are not reliable and not mature enough to handle significant responsibilities.

A connection with God is the most important factor in defining spiritual health of a person (Ghaderi et al., 2018). Thus, the spiritual health and well-being of a person is key in maintaining a sound life for every human being. In their study which focused on providing a definition for spiritual health, its components and indicators, Ghaderi and team concluded that a connection between God and human beings was the defining factor in spiritual health. Other components such as connection between other people and the nature or individual persons themselves did not constitute specific components to spiritual health. According to Ghaderi et al. (2018), spiritual health constitutes four dimensions of connection which include connection with self or personal dimension, social dimension which is connection with other people, the environmental dimension which incorporates connection with nature, and lastly, the transcendental dimension, which is the connection with God.

The importance of having a committed membership in a church has been found to be beneficial in order for the church to grow (Dever, 2005). However, this commitment could only be guaranteed if the

members feel well led and properly nourished spiritually in such a way that even when difficult times like a recession or a pandemic strike, then the church would prevail because it is spiritually healthy. Effective leadership is therefore of great importance in instilling good spiritual health in the church. As has been noted above, pastor-related issues have been identified as contributing to the decline in church attendance by young people yet these pastors ought to be nurturing the young people spiritually (Awuku-Gyampoh et al., 2021).

Oluseyi (2020) carried out a case study in Nigeria in order to establish the contribution of youth to church growth. The study acknowledged that the growth and expansion of the Christ Apostolic Church in the country was attributed to the programmes and activities of the youth organizations such as the Light of the World Society. Through such organizations, young people contributed to the growth of the church through active evangelism, church planting and promotion of Christian education as well as development of leadership. Oluseyi notes that young people would be involved in regular and fervent prayers meetings, open air crusades whereby masses of people would hear the Gospel preached and also through door-to-door and street evangelism. He posits that such initiatives led to conversion of souls, spiritual and numerical growth of the church with many churches being planted in the communities, particularly in the South Western part of Nigeria.

Ndonye (2018) did a case study of Nairobi Gospel Centres International Church (NGCI) to examine the leadership approaches in the church and their impact on the growth of the church, both numerically and spiritually. The findings by Ndonye established a positive significant correlation between the spiritual and numerical growth of the church and the application of both secular and spiritual leadership styles. Ndonye however noted a gap in leadership training for some of the leaders who were respondents, and thus recommended that leaders be facilitated with appropriate programs in order to develop their capacity for better effectiveness.

Kamande et al. (2022) explored the role of church leadership in youth retention at the Ruiru Archdeaconry of the Anglican Church of Kenya. A total of 110 youth participated in their study as respondents. Results revealed that youth perception of whether the church leaders were inspirational immensely contributed their engagement in church. The results provided empirical evidence in support of inspirational motivation dimension of transformational leadership on engagement of young people in church. The study however lacked statistical rigor as conclusions were based on basic descriptive statistics rather than inferential analysis, hence presenting a methodological gap. Further, the transformational leadership dimensions were implied rather than explicit, thereby resulting in conceptual ambiguity.

Demesi et al. (2022) focused their study on intellectual stimulation and its influence on church leadership performance. The research was conducted within the context of a transformational church leadership development training program in a private Christian university in Kenya. The study found strong support for nexus between intellectual stimulation and leadership performance of graduates of the training program. The graduates came up with new and innovative ways to promote the growth of their respective churches. Whereas some of the study participants were from the younger generation, it was not clear from the study whether church growth included participation and constructive engagement of young people in church.

Benedicte et al. (2022) undertook a comparative study between transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style in terms of their implications on youth retention and growth in selected protestant churches in Ongata Rongai in Nairobi. The study utilized a sample size of 256 participants. Contrary to the results of Kamande et al. (2022), the study found that the link between transformational leadership style and retention and growth of the youth in church was statistically insignificant. In comparison, their inferential analysis yielded a strong effect size for transactional leadership style. In terms of strengths, the study by Benedicte et al. (2022) overcame both the conceptual and methodological limitations observed in the research by Kamande et al. (2022).

It is evident from the reviewed empirical literature that there is a growing scholarly interest in the subject of youth attraction, retention and engagement in church, with most studies framing the problem of declining youth participation in church as a leadership issue. However, the evidence base linking transformational leadership and youth participation and constructive engagement is still underdeveloped in Kenya. Further, the empirical results is inconsistent as some studies find statistically significant effect of transformational leadership while others report non-statistically significant effect sizes. The literature review has identified the conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps that the present study sought to bridge.

III. Methodology

Cross-sectional research design guided the study process. This means that the data was collected and at a specific point in time, thereby providing a snapshot of the state of youth participation and engagement in church at the time of the study (Zangirolami-Raimundo et al., 2018). The research was conducted in 11 different denominational churches in Nairobi County. All the targeted churches had large congregations, although not necessarily with many young members. The churches had various branches within Nairobi City County and in other parts of Kenya and across the world. The sample frame consisted of the young people including ministry

team leaders and members from the respective churches. The young ministry team leaders were considered as committed members of their respective churches. These are people who are familiar with the programmes, structures and operations of the churches. As followers, they are familiar with the leadership of their churches. A stratified random sample of 330 participants were recruited into the study. In keeping with ethical requirements of research, voluntary informed consent was obtained as a prerequisite for continuing with data collection.

Data was collected using structured questionnaire. Specifically, the study utilized the rater-evaluating questionnaire because respondents were to evaluate their leaders, and the levels of youth participation and active engagement in the affairs of the church. Transformational leadership was evaluated using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Rowold, 2005) and the Tiffany-Eckenrode Program Participation Scale (TEPPS). The MLQ rater questionnaire was selected for this study because its effectiveness had been demonstrated from varied research projects (Rumley, 2011). The MLQ rater questionnaire was administered physically to the young people of each sampled church in order to measure the leadership variable of the church leaders.

The Tiffany-Eckenrode Program Participation Scale (TEPPS) is a 20-item youth program participation measure, which was originally developed by Jennifer Tiffany, John Eckenrode, Deiner Exner-Cortens and the Complementary Strengths Research Partnership (Tiffany et al., 2012). The scale is made up of four sub-scales namely: personal development, voice/influence, safety/support, and community engagement. As scholars adopt the tool for their research work, the instrument continues to become popular as a valid and reliable scientific measurement tool, thus increasing its generalizability (Villa-Torres &Svanemyr, 2015; Tiffany et. al., 2012). The quantitative TEPPS measure was chosen for this study because it aligns well to the identified constructs of youth participation, incorporating questions that seek views and opinions of the young people themselves on various issues. The Likert scale based questionnaire has five possible responses to the 20 questions, which were divided into the four dimensions of personal development, voice/influence, safety/support, and community engagement. The possible responses ranged from numerical value 1 “Not at all true for me”, followed by value 2 “Not really true for me”, then 3, I’m neutral about this”, then 4 “Sort of true for me”; and lastly value 5 “Very true for me”. Every respondent was required to choose one of these responses for every question. On scoring, numerical values which were assigned to the responses were totaled for each of the four dimension subscales, then a score was calculated. As guided by Tiffany, et al. (2012), each individual item had a range of 1-5, while the range for the full scale was 20-100.

Once the primary data was collected, the filled questionnaires were coded and analyzed to establish the existing relationships between the research variables. The data was first subjected to transformation process by generating composite mean scores. The mean, standard deviation, correlation and regression coefficient were determined and reported. Data analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for the social Sciences (SPSS) software program from which output tables were generated.

IV. Findings

Descriptive statistical analysis for young people participation dimensions were computed and the statistical output presented in table 1 below. The table shows that on a 5-point scale, the composite index for safety and support was the highest (\bar{x} =3.8612, σ_x =.82423), followed by personal development (\bar{x} =3.7467, σ_x =.79612), community engagement (\bar{x} =3.6869, σ_x =.81292) and voice/influence (\bar{x} =3.5621, σ_x =1.05417). These results resonate with the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, which places safety needs as one of the two fundamental basic needs in a person, the other one being physiological needs. As well, Balraj (2017) observes that safety needs are not just physical in nature, but they also incorporate mental needs as well. Young people desire to operate in an environment where their physical, mental, spiritual and emotional needs are guaranteed. Leaders and mentors are key pillars whom the young people can look up to, provide guidance to them and confide in a space where their confidentiality is assured (Chiroma, 2017).

Table 1: *Descriptive Statistics for Young People Participation Dimensions*

| | | Statistic | Std. Error |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Personal Development | Mean | 3.7467 | .04909 |
| | Median | 3.8000 | |
| | Std. Deviation | .79612 | |
| | Range | 4.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | 1.20 | |
| | Skewness | -.424 | .150 |
| Voice/Influence | Mean | 3.5621 | .06500 |
| | Median | 3.6667 | |
| | Std. Deviation | 1.05417 | |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|
| | Range | 4.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | 1.67 | |
| | Skewness | -.366 | .150 |
| Safety/Support | Mean | 3.8612 | .05082 |
| | Median | 4.0000 | |
| | Std. Deviation | .82423 | |
| | Range | 4.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | 1.17 | |
| | Skewness | -.612 | .150 |
| Community Engagement | Mean | 3.6869 | .05013 |
| | Median | 3.6667 | |
| | Std. Deviation | .81292 | |
| | Range | 4.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | 1.17 | |
| | Skewness | -.507 | .150 |

The lowest score of voice/influence in this study brings out a departure from preceding studies which have highly rated this dimension (Intosh et. al., 2020; Nyang'au et. al., 2020; Brown & Gabriel, 2019). The scholars opined that young people need to be on the decision making table in order that their ideas are considered and reflected in any important decisions taken. Although the outcome of this study rates the voice/influence dimension at a low, it however does not negate the fact that the voice and influence of young people need to be heard and upheld. For all the four dimensions, negative skewness (Skp= -.424, -.366, -.612, and -.507) were registered meaning that most respondents rated these dimensions above the respective mean scores. The implication of this is that the participants felt that the four facets of their participation and engagement in the churches were exercised.

Descriptive analysis for young people participation aggregate score was performed and the statistical output shown in table 2. The table shows that the aggregate index for young people participation was high (\bar{x} =3.7176, σ_x =.70568). A negative skewness was obtained (Skp=-.443), which means that most of the respondents rated their participation and engagement in their church above the mean. This implies that there was active engagement of young people in the sampled churches.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Young People Participation Aggregate Score

| | Statistic | Std. Error | |
|---|---------------------|------------|--------|
| Participation and Constructive Engagement | Mean | 3.7176 | .04335 |
| | Median | 3.7667 | |
| | Std. Deviation | .70568 | |
| | Range | 4.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | .86 | |
| | Skewness | -.443 | .150 |

The composite measure of personal development was regressed on the four dimensions of transformational leadership in order to establish the contribution of each dimension to personal development of young people participation and constructive engagement in the church. The regression output is shown in Table 3. The table shows that the four transformational leadership dimensions combined explained 8.4% of personal development metric, R^2 =.084, $F(4) = 5.948$, p =.000. However, none of the transformational leadership dimensions individually had a statistically significant influence on personal development (p >.05). It was thus inferred that transformational leadership dimensions together had predictive power on personal development metric although the explanatory power of the individual facets of transformational leadership were not statistically significant.

This finding that the combined transformational leadership dimensions has explanatory power on the personal development of young people is confirmed by previous studies, which align to this finding. For instance, Frunzã (2017) acknowledges the importance of charisma, a key element of inspirational motivation in attracting good personnel to an organization, inspiring them in their work and personal goals and improving the organizational performance. Frunzã highlights the importance of spiritual dimension in the personal transformation of a person, particularly from the perspective of ethical leadership. This is in agreement with observations by Chiroma and Chiroma (2021) who stress the importance of spiritual development of young people in relation to their critical role in advancing church missions. Besides, Frunzã proposes to leaders to consider personal development as one of work related rewards to personnel in their organizations.

Besides the religious environment, studies from other fields show a positive correlation between transformational leadership and the development of young people. In the sports sector for instance, Erikstad et al. (2021) established an existence of a positive movement originating from transformational leadership to both task and social cohesion. They further established that other factors including task-oriented motivational climates, self-regulation of learning and athlete satisfaction that were impacted youth positively by transformational leadership.

Table 3: Regression of Personal Development on Transformational Leadership

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .290 ^a | .084 | .070 | .23564 | | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration | | | | | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 1.321 | 5 | .330 | 5.948 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 14.437 | 253 | .056 | | |
| | Total | 15.758 | 268 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Personal Development | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | t | Sig. |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| (Constant) | .733 | .118 | | | 6.222 | .000 |
| Idealized Influence | .023 | .092 | .029 | | .251 | .802 |
| Intellectual Stimulation | .222 | .115 | .170 | | 1.934 | .054 |
| Individualised Consideration | .021 | .089 | .028 | | .236 | .814 |
| Inspirational Motivation | .171 | .238 | .147 | | .717 | .474 |
| Transformational Leadership | .222 | .253 | .167 | | .880 | .380 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Personal Development | | | | | | |

Voice/influence composite score was regressed on the four dimensions of transformational leadership so as to test whether they significantly predicted the participation and constructive engagement of young people in the church as measured by voice/influence. Table 4 shows the results. As per the table, transformational leadership accounted for 8.2% of voice/influence, $R^2=.082$, $F(4) = 5.790$, $p=.000$. Individualized consideration metric ($B=.281$, $p<.05$), idealized influence ($B=.271$, $p<.01$) and inspirational motivation ($B=.641$, $p<.05$) were the statistically significant predictors of voice/influence aside from the aggregate measure of transformational leadership ($B=1.216$, $p<.01$). Thus, the null assumption; that there is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and voice/influence was rejected, concluding that transformational leadership did significantly predict voice/influence. This result agrees with previous studies, acknowledging that the capacity of young people to contribute to the success of an organization is tremendous, as long as they are given the right opportunity and a voice to articulate their matters (Brown & Gabriel, 2019). The findings in this study bring out the importance of having transformational leaders in an organization, who are able to provide young people the platform to positively influence the direction of an organization. Nyang'au et al. (2020) identified a positive relationship between youth participation in organizational decision making and the successful implementation of programmes. This infers that with the right leadership in place who give young people a platform to contribute, then the organizational performance is enhanced translating to better results.

Table 4 Regression of Voice/Influence on Transformational Leadership

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---|------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .286 ^a | .082 | .068 | .33222 | | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration | | | | | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 2.556 | 5 | .639 | 5.790 | .000 ^p |
| | Residual | 28.696 | 253 | .110 | | |
| | Total | 31.252 | 268 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Voice/Influence | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .560 | .166 | | 3.371 | .001 |
| | Idealized Influence | .271 | .129 | .241 | 2.101 | .037 |
| | Intellectual Stimulation | .111 | .162 | .060 | .687 | .493 |
| | Individualised Consideration | .281 | .125 | .262 | 2.243 | .026 |
| | Inspirational Motivation | .641 | .310 | .419 | 2.066 | .040 |
| | Transformational Leadership | 1.216 | .357 | .649 | 3.411 | .001 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Voice/Influence | | | | | | |

Regression analysis was performed between safety/support composite index and the indices of transformational leadership dimensions. Table 5 below shows the regression output. The table indicates that transformational leadership dimensions together explained 16.1% of the variability in safety/support, $R^2=.161$, $F(4) =12.467$, $p=.000$. The unstandardized beta coefficients show that one unit change in transformational leadership contributed to 0.583 unit change in safety/support ($B=.583$, $p<.05$). Inspirational motivation dimension of transformational leadership alone significantly predicted voice/influence ($B=.538$, $p<.05$). This finding demonstrates the significance of applying a leadership style that is transformative in nature in order to assure young people of their support and safety, fully cognizant that their needs matter. Literature has demonstrated how young people need to have someone to walk with them in the journey of life, persuaded of a safe and confidential environment in which they may be vulnerable (Balraj, 2017; Chiroma, 2017). Through inspirational motivation, leaders can positively influence young people to tackle the ups and downs of life, fully assured of Maslow's basic need of safety and support. Concerns like those expressed by the Irish young people according to Barna (2017), that they did not know of an adult who shared with them on faith matters would be diminished.

Table 5: Regression of Safety/Support on Transformational Leadership

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model Summary | | | | | | |
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .401 ^a | .161 | .148 | .22649 | | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 2.558 | 5 | .640 | 12.467 | .000 ^p |
| | Residual | 13.338 | 253 | .051 | | |
| | Total | 15.896 | 268 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Safety/Support | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .551 | .113 | | 4.868 | .000 |
| | Idealized Influence | .062 | .088 | .077 | .701 | .484 |
| | Intellectual Stimulation | .193 | .110 | .147 | 1.751 | .081 |
| | Individualised Consideration | .088 | .085 | .116 | 1.034 | .302 |
| | Inspirational Motivation | .538 | .233 | .448 | 2.304 | .022 |
| | Transformational Leadership | .583 | .243 | .436 | 2.398 | .017 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Safety/Support | | | | | | |

Community engagement composite index was regressed on transformational leadership dimensions and the results were presented in Table 6. The table provides that transformational leadership dimensions collectively explained 11.7% of the variability in community engagement facet of young people participation in church, $R^2=.117$, $F(4) = 8.553$, $p=.000$. The table indicates that a unit increase in transformational leadership accounted for 0.731 unit rise in community engagement ($B=.731$, $p<.05$). Individually, none of the dimensions of transformational leadership significantly predicted community engagement ($p>.05$). Previous research demonstrates the positive impact of keeping young people engaged in meaningful activities, which is in agreement with this finding. Ononogbu et al. (2020) pointed out how organizations and the church in particular are able to engage young people in creative skills-training programmes. Such programmes would ensure that the young people acquire abilities and create opportunities not only for their own well-being but also impact their communities. Furthermore, the report by Ononogbu et.al. (2020) established that the young people in Nigeria believed that the church played a positive role in the public space of the country. To further affirm this finding, the churches in Kenya such as PCEA, CITAM, and the Catholic Church have continued to implement social amenity and community based projects which positively impact the lives of the members of their communities, for example the Isiolo based projects discussed in the literature review above (Chigozie et al., 2017). Thus, transformative leaders in the church may intentionally work out community based activities so that their young members can fully participate in them.

Table 6: Regression of Community Engagement on Transformational Leadership

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .342 ^a | .117 | | .103 | .23827 | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 1.942 | 5 | .486 | 8.553 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 14.704 | 253 | .057 | | |
| | Total | 16.646 | 268 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Community Engagement | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .664 | .119 | | 5.579 | .000 |
| | Idealized Influence | .112 | .093 | .136 | 1.210 | .228 |
| | Intellectual Stimulation | .006 | .116 | .004 | .049 | .961 |
| | Individualised Consideration | .106 | .090 | .135 | 1.178 | .240 |
| | Inspirational Motivation | .281 | .237 | .238 | 1.184 | .238 |
| | Transformational Leadership | .731 | .256 | .533 | 2.854 | .005 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Community Engagement | | | | | | |

The aggregate score of young people participation was regressed on the four dimensions of transformational leadership and results presented as per Table 7. The table indicates that transformational leadership dimensions collectively predicted 15.0% of the variance in young people participation in church, $R^2=.150$, $F(4) 11.492$, $p=.000$. Further, the table demonstrates that a unit increase in transformational leadership accounted for .631 unit rise in community engagement ($B=.631$, $p<.05$). However, only one dimension of transformational leadership namely, inspirational motivation significantly predicted community engagement ($B=.407$, $p<.05$). This outcome implies that inspirational motivation is a significant element for church leaders to employ as they lead young people, in order to enthuse them towards good works of positively engaging with their communities. The inspiration and authenticity of a person in leading others convinces the followers that the leader has the best interest at heart for themselves and their communities (Frunzã, 2017). As such, this would encourage the followers to replicate the same virtues in serving their neighbours and communities. In their study of leadership in religious organizations in Norway, Løvaas et al. (2020) linked the intrinsic motivation of managers to their transformational leadership behaviours. They also found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovation. This observation can be related to this current study, noting that

transformational leaders can help their young followers to find it a fulfilling and rewarding endeavour when they innovatively participate in community activities.

Table 7: *Regression of Young People Participation on Transformational Leadership*

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .388 ^a | .150 | .137 | .19534 | | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 1.754 | 5 | .438 | 11.492 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 9.921 | 263 | .038 | | |
| | Total | 11.675 | 268 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Young People Participation | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation | | | | | | |
| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .671 | .098 | | 6.868 | .000 |
| | Idealized Influence | .090 | .076 | .130 | 1.182 | .238 |
| | Intellectual Stimulation | .084 | .095 | .075 | .885 | .377 |
| | Individualised Consideration | .115 | .074 | .176 | 1.564 | .119 |
| | Inspirational Motivation | .407 | .200 | .396 | 2.037 | .043 |
| | Transformational Leadership | .631 | .210 | .551 | 3.011 | .003 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Young People Participation | | | | | | |

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of this study was to establish whether there was a relationship between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in the church. The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in the church was tested. From the study findings, this null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in the church. The descriptive statistics for this objective disclosed that the aggregate index for participation and engagement of young people in church activities was high, as also demonstrated by the negative skewness obtained. Further, analysis showed that the safety/support composite index for this variable was ranked as the highest by the respondents, compared to the other three dimensions. Additionally, a linear relationship was established between transformational leadership and the participation and constructive engagement of young people in the church.

The inferential tests performed revealed that transformational leadership as a whole significantly predicted the four dimensions of young people participation and engagement in the church. However, out of the four dimensions of transformational leadership, only inspirational motivation stood out as having a significant predictive power over voice/influence and safety/support components of young people participation variable.

The results affirm that church transformational leadership is an effective leadership style to positively influence and inspire younger population in the church to actively participate and be engaged in the activities of the church. Churches should apply transformational leadership style to increase the voice/influence of the youth, promote their personal development, get them actively engaged in their communities and foster in them a sense of safety and support. Moreover, the leaders should endeavour to apply not only the inspirational motivation facet of transformational leadership, but also the other three namely idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. By applying inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, church leaders can help young members of their congregation to articulate their ideas and provide them with adequate opportunities to voice out their contributions as well as bring out their innovations. Equally, through idealized influence the leaders may model to these young congregants how to engage and give back to their communities. Individualized consideration is crucial for church leaders to help their followers identify their potentials and pursue them, as well as mentoring them in various capacities.

Retrospectively, two limitations of the present study offer grounds for future research. Firstly, this study was conducted in urban churches with large congregations. This means that the research results may not be generalizable to churches with small congregations and those that are in the rural areas. Due to potential contextual differences, there is therefore need to carry out a similar study among small churches, especially those within rural communities. Secondly, the present study utilized quantitative methodology to investigate leadership in relation to constructive engagement of young people which are largely qualitative subjects. As such, another study can utilize qualitative methodologies to help shed more light into how churches can apply transformational leadership to engage constructively with young people so that they become active participants in church. Pastors should explore how to tailor transformational leadership style to suit the specific context of the church in light of the unique realities of the community that it serves. On their part, young people should be proactive in giving feedback to church leadership through surveys and discussions. The churches should create an enabling environment for transformational leadership to thrive.

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