



Building the Church of Christ: Challenges for Leaders: Pavillion City Chapel International -Amasaman, Accra- Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Published Online: December 13, 2025

When Jesus Christ came into this world, He built His Church. This Body of Christ, the church, was meant to be composed of all born-again people from any race or tribe. It is also represented in localities by the local church of Jesus Christ. The church was to have an upward purpose of worshipping and glorifying God, an inward purpose of teaching, discipline, and ensuring the unity of the body's members, and an outward purpose of reaching the unsaved world for Jesus Christ. To achieve this three-fold purpose of the church, Jesus Christ ordained leaders for His church. These included apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers for the universal church, and pastors, deacons, and deaconesses for the local churches. In addition, He gave many other gifts of the spirit to various members of the church. The purpose of these gifts was that the body of Christ would be equipped and united for the purpose for which it was established. These leaders, however, face daunting challenges in their role of equipping the saints of Jesus. The world, economic pressures, and pressure from cults and non-Christian religions and some of the forces that the church leader has to reckon with in this modern time. By relying on the word of God and the spirit of God, however, the church leader should be able to overcome the challenges confronting his or her ministry.

KEYWORDS:

New Testament Christianity; Missionary Leaders; Pentecostal; Theology; Evangelization; Crusade

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Leadership refers to the ability of a leader to guide and direct his followers toward a common destination¹. It involves making decisions that are for the common good of the people. Church leadership is like other types of leadership, with its challenges, rewards, as well as failures. However, church leadership should be both secular and spiritual in its thrust because it deals with the whole man. Church leadership is about a vision. It is a vision for the people of God whom a leader is called to serve by helping them identify with God's purpose for their lives.

This vision must be unique to what the church can become. It is a picture of the preferred future. But leadership is more than dreaming great dreams. It involves being the people of God to take difficult steps. It takes a good deal of the workforce initiative to move people from the past, through the often time

disillusioning present, to a better future. There will always be some resistance to change and people prefer the certainty of familiar old idols to the risk of faith in a new one. A leader is to help people see that the risk of faith is worth it. And there is no one else who should have a greater sight of where God's people should be led than the church leader.

Building the church of Christ and attempting to practice NT Christianity is the most daunting challenge that the brotherhood of Christian churches/churches of Christ has ever faced, particularly those in the African continent (e.g. Ghana) where they predominantly have their way of worship². Through the ages, the church has changed with the times and often lost its identity to that which was established by the apostles of Christ. Now leadership implies the ability to a changes that bring a clearer understanding of the gospel than others, but as a whole, denominationalism and religiosity

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**Cite this Article: Blessing Imade Moses, David Laud Amenyo Fiase (2025). Building the Church of Christ: Challenges for Leaders: Pavillion City Chapel International -Amasaman, Accra- Ghana. International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies, 5(12), 1063-1070*

¹ Winston, B. E., & Patterson, K. (2006). An integrative definition of leadership. *International journal of leadership studies*, 1(2), 6-66.

² Chambers, Dan. "Leading Members to a Convictional Understanding of the Historic Doctrinal Emphases of Churches of Christ at the Concord Road Church of Christ, Brentwood, Tennessee." (2015).

that we now see have come about by man's innovations and have led to a departure from the teachings of the New Testament. But the goal of recapturing its New Testament identity is highly significant, and yet ironically the least realized goal of the brotherhood. However, given this, it is comforting to know that God's church belongs to His people. And the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18).

1.1 Problem Statement

Church leaders today in Ghana face an impossible task. On one hand, they hold to the unchanging, perfect standard of God's Word to lead and guide their church. They are called to implement those unchanging truths in a country that constantly changes. The world around the church in the country is becoming more complex. Culture and the way of doing things are changing exponentially. In the past, church leaders could understand the culture of their society and how to minister within it by studying the trends of the past generation. This is no longer the case in the Ghanaian societies. One of the significant challenges is the lack of clarity of mission and delivery.

Churches in Ghana today struggle with a clear and concise mission statement that guides their actions and decisions. The mission answers the question of why the church exists, and without it, the church may lack direction and purpose. The challenges of trained personnel are an overwhelming phenomenon in most Ghanaian churches. Trained and well-informed leaders connote discipleship and growth in the Lord, which comes with more responsibility. The trained and capable leader will be in tune with their gifts and abilities and will truly desire to grow in them. One cannot exclude cash flow impairment as a major obstacle to the growth of churches in Ghana. As a developing country, the church thrives on the benevolence of others to grow. This inhibits the expatriation of the church since this financial and other material support is limited in supply. Addressing these challenges requires prayer³. Most importantly, it needs strategic planning, leadership development, and a commitment to discipleship and growth.

1.2 Research Objectives

1.2.1 General Objective

The principal research objectives for building the church of Christ and addressing the challenges for leaders will be formulated on a church in Ghana, using the case of Pavilion City Chapel International.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

Interviewing or surveys with church leaders to identify and prioritize the challenges they face in building and leading their congregations.

- i. Examining case studies of successful and struggling churches to understand common challenges and effective strategies for overcoming them
- ii. Reviewing academic and theological literature on leadership within the Church of Christ, focusing on challenges specific to this context.
- iii. Comparing challenges faced by leaders in different denominations or religious contexts to identify unique factors affecting the Church of Christ.
- iv. Investigating innovative approaches and best practices employed by successful church leaders to address challenges and foster growth.
- v. Conducting a longitudinal study to track changes in challenges and leadership strategies over time, providing insights into evolving dynamics within the Church of Christ.

1.3 Significance of research study

The study will assist church leaders in navigating a rapidly changing cultural landscape, and also studying the challenges and opportunities of building the church of Christ can help churches stay relevant and effective in their communities. This study will assist us to understand that building the church of Christ can help individuals and churches clarify their mission and purpose, and develop strategies for fulfilling that mission. Leaders of churches face unique challenges, and studying these challenges can help them develop effective leadership skills and strategies. Building the church of Christ involves creating a community of believers who support and care for each other. Studying how to build this community can help churches become more inclusive, welcoming, and supportive. Building the church of Christ is a central aspect of the Christian faith, and the study of how to do so can help individuals grow spiritually and deepen their relationship with God

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study is focused on Pavilion City Chapel International, Amasaman in the Ga West District, Accra-Ghana, a community-minded church discovering together what life can be like when lived from a place of faith, hope, love, and purpose. The Church was established 4 years ago by a Ghanaian Minister, Rev. Ezekiel Kofi Yesutor. In less than 4 years the church has grown from a small community-based church in Amasaman to a world-recognized one. Rev. Yesutor has plans to open more branches in Ghana. Reiterating, Pavilion City Chapel International is a Ghanaian church with a significant presence in the country. Like any religious institution, it may face challenges related to growth, community engagement, and maintaining relevance in a changing society. However, Pavilion City Chapel

³ One cannot exclude cash flow impairment as a major obstacle for the growth of churches in Ghana

International likely benefits from a strong sense of community, dedicated leadership, and a commitment to its mission. Adapting to modern communication tools and addressing societal issues could also be priorities for the church to remain impactful in Ghana.

1.5 Delimitation

The research was faced with the following setbacks: Time Constraints, Attainment of comprehensive data from all sources (primary and secondary data) involves a lot of time, therefore blending other academic works with my project demands a lot of time which I do not have.

1.5.1 Financial Limitation

The cost of moving around to obtain data for the study was a major setback so far as the study is concerned. It involves a lot of cash outlay and my capacity as a student makes me unable to meet such commitment.

1.5.2 Inadequate Data Gathering

Unwillingness on the part of some church leaders and Christians to disclose relevant information to me.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Due to the broadness of the research, a case study was employed with a particular individual, group, or program for a defined period.

2.1 Population

The population for this study was centered on Church of Christ branch churches in the Ga West district paying close attention to Pavilion City Chapel International with 150 members.

2.2 Sample Size

To obtain a representative sample size of the employees for the study, the number of Workers was obtained from the Pavilion City Chapel International. Then, with the usage of a systematic sampling technique 50 out of the 150 (Church members), elders, pastors, and the youths or Staffs.

2.3 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling was used to select the church leaders because it is a judgemental sampling in which the researcher needs to purposely choose subjects who, in their opinion are thought to be relevant to the research topic. In this case, the investigator's judgment was more important than obtaining a probability sample. The process of sampling in this case will involve the identification of the informants and arranging times for meeting them.

2.4 Data Source

Primary and secondary data were collected from the Pavilion City Chapel International in the Ga West District, Accra-Ghana. Primary data was collected from structured and unstructured interviews that were administered to the respondents, while secondary data was obtained from the Internet and documents from the church.

2.5 Data Collection

Structured and unstructured interviews will be used to obtain primary data from the respondents. A structured interview is based on a strict procedure and a highly structured interview guide. It allows no freedom to make adjustments to any of its elements such as content, wording, or order of the questions. On the contrary, an unstructured interview is theoretically inconceivable and has no restrictions on the wording of the questions, the order of questions, or the interview schedule. The interviewer acts freely in this context based on certain research points, formulating questions as and when it is required, and also employs neutral probing. Thus, the structure of these interviews is flexible and the restrictions are minimal, being presented in most cases in the form of guides rather than rules.

Under the nature of the research (case study), interviews were seen to be appropriate for data collection as they have the potential to elicit data and collect extensive data about a situation in a case study research (Bakker, 2004). A structured interview was used to elicit data from all the respondents of the church. This category of respondents was seen to be literate and therefore needed no explanations for the research questions to provide accurate answers. Conversely, the unstructured interview was employed to obtain data head pastors of the church. The questions in both sets of interviews were posed to reflect the specific objectives.

2.6 Data Analysis

Data was imputed with the use of Microsoft Excel. The collected data from all the specific objectives were analyzed with the use of tables.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- i) 80% of the respondents affirmed that "A good succession makes a church more attractive to potential new members" with only 4% disagreeing, and 16% Not Sure (n=50, D=4%, NS=16% A=80%). Dr. J. W. Rothwell stated that a good succession plan can make a church more attractive to potential new members by demonstrating that the church is committed to its mission and vision." He argues that when a church has a succession plan, it is more likely to be seen as a church that is serious about its mission and vision, which can be attractive to potential new members. According to Beverley J. W. (2007), a strong succession plan can help ensure the continued development of a church by providing a way to transfer the church's vision and values to the next generation of leaders." He argues that when a church has a clear succession plan, it is more likely to be able to continue to grow and develop in accordance with its mission and

- vision. The above Support the statement “A strong succession plan helps ensure the continued development of a church.” 82% of the respondents agree with the statement with 0% disagreeing and % Not Sure (n=50, D=0%, NS=18 A=82%).
- ii) With the next Statement, “Churches experience a decline in growth due to a lack of a clear proper plan”, 82% of the respondents agree, 4% disagree and 14% are No Sure (n=50, D=4%, NS=14 %A=82%). When a church does not have a succession plan, it is more likely to be seen as a church that is not prepared for the future, which can make it difficult to attract and retain talented leaders (J. W. Rothwell, 2010).
- iii) 82% of the respondents agreed with the statement that “A succession plan can help ensure that a church stays true to its core values and beliefs over time”, 0% disagreed and 18% were Not Sure (n=50, D=0%, NS=18% A=82%), it can be concluded that the findings of the current study agree with the assertion by J. W. Beverley that when a church has a clear succession plan, it is more likely to be able to pass on its core values and beliefs to the next generation.
- iv) 83.3% of respondents agree with the statement that says: “Successful execution of a succession plan brings out innovative ideas”; with 2% disagree and 14% Not Sure (n=50, D=2%, NS=14%, A=84%). This response has been backed by J. W. Rothwell (2010) said a successful succession plan can bring out innovative ideas by creating a space for new leaders to share their ideas and perspectives. Dr. Rothwell J. W, author of the book *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from Within*, also writes that "a pastoral succession plan can contribute to a smoother transition by providing a way to communicate with the congregation about the transition." He argues that when a church has a plan for succession, it is more likely to be able to communicate with the congregation in a clear and transparent way, which can help to reduce anxiety and uncertainty during the transition. This is exactly what this last finding asserted where 90% of the respondents agree with the statement that “A pastoral succession plan can contribute to a smoother transition” with 2% disagreeing and 8% Not Sure (n=50, D=2%, NS=8 A=90%).
- v) 92% of the respondents agree to the statement that “A Pastoral succession plan helps prevent disruptions when a change of leadership occurs” with 0% disagreeing and 8% Not Sure. Beverley J. W. (2007), writes that "a pastoral succession plan helps prevent disruptions when a change of leadership occurs by providing time for the current pastor to mentor and train the new pastor." He argues that when a church has a clear succession plan, it is more likely to be able to ensure that the new pastor is well-prepared to take over, which can help to reduce disruptions. This argument backs the statement above.
- vi) 62% of the respondents affirmed that “There are Difficulties in finding the right candidate to succeed a departing pastor or church leader.” with only 18.6% disagreeing, and 21.2 % indicating they are Not Sure (n=50, D=10.6%, NS=21.2% A=60.2%). Beverley J. W. (2007) states that "there are a number of factors that can make it difficult to find the right candidate to succeed a departing pastor or church leader." These factors include: The size and complexity of the church, the unique culture of the church, the specific needs of the church, and the availability of qualified candidates Beverley J. W. (2007) wrote that "legal or financial concerns can take many forms, including Determining who owns the church's assets, transferring the church's legal liability and securing the church's financial future. The above supports the statement “There are challenges in navigating legal or financial concerns during a succession process.” 62% of the respondents agree with the statement with 21.2% disagreeing and 10.6% Not Sure (n=50, D=21.2%, NS=10.6 A=62%). With the next Statement, 60.1% of the respondents agree to the statement that: “A pastoral succession plan does not solve potential leadership problems” with 21.2% disagreeing and 19.6% Not Sure (n=50, D=21.2%, NS=19.6 %A=69.1%). Dr. Rothwell W. J (2010) asserts that a succession plan can help to ensure a smooth transition of leadership, but it cannot guarantee that the new leader will be effective.
- vii) 40% of the respondents agreed with the statement that “Implementation of succession plan sometimes brings about breakout”, 36% disagreed, and 24% were Not Sure (n=50, D=36%, NS=24% A=40%), we can conclude that the findings of this study agree with Bird W. (2019), who states that "the implementation of a succession plan can be a delicate process."

He argues that it is important to be prepared for conflict and breakout and to have a plan for addressing it.

- viii) 60% of respondents agree to the statement that: "Conflicts or power struggles arise during the implementation of a pastoral succession plan." with 26% disagree and 14% Not Sure (n=50, D=14%, NS=14%, A=60%). This response has been backed by Dr. J. D. Sterling's statement that "the implementation of a succession plan can sometimes bring about breakout." He argues that this can happen when there is disagreement about the process, the selection of the new leader, or the future direction of the church.

According to Dr. Vanderbloemen W. J., it is important for organizations to be aware of the potential for stifled leadership after an abrupt change in leadership. He suggests that organizations can mitigate the risk of stifled leadership by Communicating openly and honestly with the organization about the change in leadership, providing support and resources to the new leader, and giving the new leader time to adjust and build relationships. This is exactly what this last finding asserted to where 76% of the respondents agree with the statement that "An abrupt change in leadership may result in stifled leadership" with 10% disagreeing and 14% Not Sure (n=50, D=10%, NS=14 A=76%).

- ix) 92% of the respondents agree to the statement that "Lack of clear Communication and transparency affect the successful execution of a pastoral succession plan" with 2.6% disagreeing and 5.6% Not Sure. (n=50, D=2.6%, NS=5.6% A=92%). Beverley J. W. (2007), affirms that lack of clear communication and transparency can lead to conflict and confusion during the succession process." He argues that this can happen when there is no clear understanding of the succession plan, or when there are different expectations about the future of the church. This argument is backed by the statement above.

3.1 Summary of Key Findings

Per the objectives of the study the results have revealed that:

1. The Pastoral Leaders in the Pavillion City Chapel International churches in the Amasaman Constituency Know the importance of Church growth. A large number of the Pastors believe that pastoral Growths plans are important for the long-term sustainability of a church and it is key to its progress. They also believe that to avoid power struggles,

churches should have ideas, Family dynasties would also prevent congregational conflict. Many church leaders believe that Pastoral succession plans bring peaceful leadership coherence to the church. It has been ascertained that lack of pastoral Gospel of Christ leads to stagnation in church growth which leads to an abrupt change in the vision of the church. Leadership training Firstly can help to ensure that the church's vision and mission are carried on by new leaders who are committed to the same values. Second, it can help to ensure that the church has the leadership it needs to reach new people and grow in size due to training and understanding certain keys because is trained to know who is capable of the leadership. Third, it can help to ensure that the church's leadership reflects the diversity of its congregation.

2. They believe that a Succession plan has a positive impact on the church,

They believe that Succession planning can help ensure that the church's vision and mission are carried on by new leaders who are committed to the same values. This can help to maintain the church's identity and attract new members who are drawn to the church's mission and vision. It also helps ensure that the church has the leadership it needs to reach new people and grow in size. This is because succession planning can help identify and develop potential successors who have the skills and abilities to reach new people and grow the church.

They hold the belief that Succession planning can help ensure that the church's leadership reflects the diversity of its congregation. This is because succession planning can help to identify and develop potential successors who represent the diversity of the church's congregation.

However, it is important to note that succession planning is not a guarantee of church growth. There are other factors that can also impact church growth, such as the church's programming, its outreach efforts, and its financial health.

i. They believe that there are challenges when it comes to the implementation of succession plan. Lack of buy-in from leadership: In some cases, church leaders may not be convinced of the need for succession planning, or they may be pushback from individuals or congregations. This can make it difficult to implement a succession plan.

Lack of qualified successors: In some cases, there may not be qualified successors available to take on leadership roles. This can make it difficult to implement a succession plan.

Culture of secrecy: In some Pentecostal-Charismatic churches, there is a culture of secrecy around succession planning. This can make it difficult to identify potential successors and to develop them for leadership roles.

They share the view that there could be Resistance to change: In some cases, church members may resist change, even if it is necessary for the long-term health of the church. This can make it difficult to implement a succession plan. The above are the general perceptions of the church leaders and

pastors in the Pavillion City Chapel International churches in the Amasaman Constituency.

ii. The Pastoral Leadership in the Pavillion City Chapel International churches in the Amasaman Constituency believes that a succession plan can help ensure that there is a smooth transition of leadership. This can help to minimize the disruption that can occur when a new pastor takes over.

They concur that a succession plan can help to ensure that the church's vision and mission are carried on by the new pastor. This can help to maintain the church's identity and prevent it from becoming stagnant. And ensure that the church's culture is preserved. This can help to keep the church's members engaged and prevent them from leaving.

iii. They believe that despite these challenges, there are several ways to overcome them. These include:

Educating church leaders and members about the importance of succession planning: This can help to create buy-in from leadership and to ensure that they are committed to the process. They believe in identifying qualified successors: This can be done by conducting assessments, providing training, and mentoring potential successors. And creating a culture of openness and transparency: This can help to overcome resistance to change and to ensure that the process is fair and equitable.

They are of the opinion that communicating the succession plan to the congregation: This can help to ensure that everyone is aware of the church's plans for the future and that they are supportive of the process. By the above, they believe churches can overcome the challenges of succession planning and ensure that they have a plan for the future.

iv. They assert to the importance of external consultation and assistance in the implementation of a succession plan. They believe in seeking external consultation and assistance in the implementation of your succession plan. Knowing that the external consultations bring Objectivity: External consultants can bring objectivity to the succession planning process. This can help ensure that the plan is fair and equitable and that it is not influenced by personal biases.

External consultants can bring expertise to the succession planning process. This can help identify potential successors, develop succession plans, and implement succession plans effectively. External consultants can facilitate the succession planning process. This can help ensure that the process is smooth and efficient.

v. The Pastoral Leadership believes in the inclusive drafting of the succession planning. They believe that the involvement of a legal brain in the drafting can help to ensure that the succession plan is legally sound and that it complies with all applicable laws and regulations. This is important because a poorly drafted succession plan could leave the church vulnerable to legal challenges. And they believe also that the involved Stakeholders are those who have a vested interest in the church, such as members, staff, volunteers, donors, and partners. They should be involved in the drafting of the

succession plan so that their needs and concerns are taken into account. This will help to ensure that the succession plan is supported by all stakeholders and that it is likely to be successful.

They believe that by so doing, there will be increased transparency: By involving stakeholders in the drafting of the succession plan, the church can demonstrate its commitment to transparency and accountability. This can help to build trust and confidence among stakeholders, which is essential for the long-term health of the church.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Building the Church of Christ, Challenges for Leaders is an essential process for Pavillion City Chapel International - Amasaman, in Ghana. It can help to ensure a smooth-running good leadership to solve and internal outcome of the church, and it can also help to identify and develop potential successors who are aligned with the church's vision and mission.

Building the Church of Christ, Challenges for Leaders is not just about finding a new pastor. It is also about developing a team of leaders who can carry on the church's mission and vision. So, it should be an ongoing process. The research has suggested that Building the Church of Christ, Challenges for Leaders should involve all levels of the church, from the pastor and staff to the congregation. It should also be flexible and adaptable, as the church's needs may change over time.

Despite the challenges that churches face when they can manage to train better way to spread the good news to the nation across the world. The research has shown that the benefits of having a good train in place outweigh the drawbacks. If you are a church leader, you are encouraged to consider developing pastoral training. It is an important investment in the future of your church.

In addition to the benefits and challenges mentioned above, the research also found that succession planning can have a positive impact on church growth. Churches with succession plans in place tend to be more stable and vibrant than churches without training plans. This is because training plans help to ensure that the church has a clear vision for the future and that it is prepared for change.

The research revealed some benefits of succession planning for churches: A smooth and orderly transition of leadership; a prepared and qualified successor; a continued focus on the church's mission and vision; increased membership; improved financial outlook; positive reputation in the community. There is a discovery of some specific challenges that churches face when implementing a succession plan: Resistance from members; Difficulty finding the right candidate; Legal or financial concerns.

Overall, succession planning is a valuable tool for Pavillion City Chapel International and other churches that want to ensure a smooth transition of leadership and continued

growth. By developing a succession plan, churches can position themselves for success in the years to come.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings and conclusions, we recommend the following:

1. Training of future leaders

One problem with Building the Church of Christ: Challenges for Leaders is that it can be difficult to identify and develop potential Building the Church of Christ: Challenges for Leaders early on. The researcher recommends that early training of Building the Gospel of Christ, the better. This will give them time to develop the skills and experience they need to be successful in leadership. And provide a variety of training opportunities: There are many different ways to train Build the Gospel of Christ: and solve Challenges for Leaders. You can provide them with formal training, such as through workshops or seminars. You can also provide them with informal training, such as through mentoring or shadowing. It is recommended that churches should focus on both technical and leadership skills: Building the Church of Christ: Challenges for Leaders need to have both technical skills and leadership skills. Technical skills are the skills that are specific to the job, such as preaching, teaching, or counseling. Leadership skills are the skills that are necessary to lead others, such as communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Once Building the Church of Christ: Challenges for Leaders have learned the skills they need, they need opportunities to practice them. This can be done through leading small groups, teaching Sunday school classes, or serving on committees. Not all Building the Church of Christ and solving Challenges for Leaders will have the same needs. Tailor the training to the individual's strengths and weaknesses, as well as their career goals. Building the Church of Christ, Challenges for Leaders need to feel comfortable taking risks and making mistakes. Create a supportive environment where they feel safe to do so. When Building the Church of Christ and solving Challenges for Leaders achieve their goals. This will help to motivate them and keep them moving forward. Building the Church of Christ, Challenges for Leaders is an ongoing process. Stay involved in the training and development of the way to spread gospel of Christ throughout better journey

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