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STRATEGIC ONBOARDING AND EXITING IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP

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Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This project examines the dynamics of church leadership transitions using a comprehensive research design and methodology. It conducts a comparative analysis of leadership transition models across different church contexts to identify common challenges and gaps in existing frameworks. By examining case studies using qualitative and quantitative data, the project develops a robust framework to enhance the effectiveness of such transitions. The findings provide deep insight for church leaders, administrators, and scholars, facilitating a deeper understanding of the complexities of leadership change. Ultimately, the project aims to contribute to the development of best practices that not only support a smoother transition process but also promote long-term growth and stability within congregations. The findings of this research indicate that churches will be better equipped to navigate leadership transitions, ensuring continuity and fostering renewed vision and purpose within their communities.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership transitions are critical for sustaining the church's mission, stability, and community trust. This research explores structured onboarding and exit practices in church leadership, drawing on both local and global contexts to recommend adaptable, evidence-based frameworks.

1.1 Research Problem

Organizations that fail to manage leadership transitions strategically risk declines in general organizational performance, cultural disruption, and stakeholder disengagement. In the church context, these risks manifest in declining attendance, financial instability, and loss of mission focus.

To enhance the stability of evangelical churches, Omae et al. (2024) employed strategic leadership theory to explain how succession planning strengthens the connections between leaders and their followers. The study revealed that most churches lack formal succession planning and structured onboarding, leading to instability and mission drift.

Makabira (2020) explains that transitions are often reactive and undocumented with limited stakeholder engagement or mentorship. Onboarding and exiting practices have lagged behind workplace changes, with many companies relying on generic programs. This leads to retention problems that affect costs, reputation, morale, and productivity (Jeske & Olson, 2021). Modern onboarding should be ongoing, personalized, and digitized, aligning with evolving employee roles and higher expectations for engaging experiences.

Jeske and Olson (2021) emphasize onboarding as a strategic, relational process, but their research lacks adaptation for faith-based contexts. This is further emphasized by Mosquera and Soares (2025), who link onboarding to psychological safety and retention, but focus on corporate environments rather than faith-based contexts.

Unlike corporations that rely on structured succession planning and human resource practices (Sharma, 2024), many churches depend on charisma, tradition, or spiritual discernment without systematic frameworks (Antakirana & Purwanto, 2025). This leaves critical knowledge undocumented and transitions vulnerable to crisis management. There is a pressing need to adapt organizational leadership and management practices to the unique dynamics of transition in faith-based institutions.

Despite the critical role leadership transitions play in sustaining a church's mission, many faith-based institutions, particularly in Kenya and similar contexts, lack structured, scalable frameworks for onboarding and exiting leaders. This gap undermines continuity, relational trust,

and institutional maturity. Existing literature highlights fragmented practices and informal models, but only a few studies offer transferable, evidence-based solutions that integrate both spiritual and organizational dimensions.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This secondary research seeks to synthesize the existing scholarship on transitioning leaders into churches (onboarding) and out of churches (exiting) by integrating the results of various academic studies with data from organizational reports. The goal of the research is to provide an overview of how organizations worldwide use transitional practices.

By comparing and contrasting how churches in Kenya, Nigeria, and the United States transition their leaders, the research will identify the most effective transitional practices and the cultural characteristics that underpin them; thus, establishing standards for developing faith-based leadership. These findings will inform the development of training curricula, succession plans, policy, and governance frameworks for churches grounded in empirical evidence and adaptable to each church's unique spiritual, relational, and operational needs.

The primary gap identified in this research, concerning the lack of comparative analyses of church transition processes across multiple nations, is addressed through a comparative analysis of church transition processes in Kenya, Nigeria, and the United States. Additionally, by studying church transition processes in Kenya and comparing them with those in international settings, this research has established common challenges facing churches and unique opportunities for innovation.

This study has demonstrated the absence of well-developed, transferable onboarding and exit frameworks in Kenyan churches, as previously reported in local research (Omae et al., 2024). It has introduced frameworks from other contexts that can be adapted for faith-based settings. While much of the existing literature has focused on transitions in corporate or academic settings, this research has combined considerations of spiritual discernment, relational trust, and theological alignment, thereby grounding new intervention efforts in established research to ensure that proposed solutions are not only credible and contextual but also scalable and sustainable.

1.3 Research Questions

The primary research question is “How can one develop an organizationally informed framework for Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership that ensures stability, institutional resilience, and mission continuity?” This question is articulated through several secondary research objectives as follows:

- To analyze existing onboarding and exit practices in church leadership through organizational leadership theories.
- To identify barriers and enablers to effective leadership transition in churches.

- To evaluate organizational best practices in succession planning and executive transitions for their relevance and applicability within church contexts.
- To propose a practical, adaptable model for church leadership onboarding and exiting.

1.4 Significance

A Church Leadership Onboarding and Exiting Training Program is essential for maintaining the church's mission and vision during leadership transitions. Structured onboarding helps new leaders align with the church's beliefs, community priorities, and strategic goals, while clear exiting protocols safeguard continuity and preserve institutional memory. These programs build relational trust by fostering meaningful connections among leaders, staff, and congregants, reducing isolation and misunderstandings. Thoughtful exits honor outgoing leaders' contributions, helping prevent division or the loss of their legacy.

Additionally, the structured transfer of knowledge and mentorship opportunities ensures that successors are well prepared and support leadership continuity. By introducing change management principles and succession protocols, such programs minimize risks, including power struggles and congregational splits. There is evidence that such programs promote a shift from personality-driven to system-based leadership, encouraging multi-generational involvement and organizational resilience (Makabira, 2020; Omae et al., 2024).

Drawing from best practices across sectors and tailored to local church contexts, these programs ensure compliance with denominational and legal standards. Finally, formalized onboarding and exiting enable robust monitoring and evaluation, helping churches gather feedback, track outcomes, and make informed decisions to strengthen their long-term health and effectiveness.

1.5 Magnitude

Exploring leadership onboarding and exiting through a global lens reveals significant contextual diversity in how transitions are managed across church and faith-based institutions. For example, in Kenya, leaders are often brought into a new role informally, typically selected by the church's founding leader. There is generally little formality to the process, including no written documents or formalized succession plans.

The success of each transition in Kenya depends on relationships of trust and discernment, as well as on the unique characteristics of the local community. However, organizations, whether secular or religious, are adopting structured onboarding processes that place greater emphasis on mentoring, compliance, and measurable performance outcomes. Developing countries tend to view onboarding as a psychological strategy to ensure organizational alignment and to foster a mutually beneficial learning experience through a robust Human Resources (HR) system and a sound change management framework.

When comparing international examples of onboarding and exiting church leaders, it becomes apparent that cultural, institutional, and theological environments are significant factors in why

most international models do not meet the needs of churches. Additionally, this comparative research has exposed some limitations in transferable models. As noted by Makabira (2020), there are few documented models for onboarding and exiting church leaders in Kenya.

The international literature provides a framework for the onboarding process through models such as Koter's 8-step process and the ADKAR model, which are discussed in Chapter 2. However, these models have not been applied in faith-driven or community-based environments (Omae et al., 2024). Therefore, what is needed are hybrid models that combine strategic rigor with sensitivity to the relational and spiritual aspects of church settings. By examining successful onboarding practices worldwide, institutions can determine which practices will truly enhance leader retention, build trust, transfer knowledge, and manage legacy.

Cross-country research will empower faith-based organizations to create innovative training programs and succession policies that are culturally relevant yet informed by best practices worldwide. This will ultimately lead to the development of sustainable, culturally appropriate onboarding and exit processes for senior pastors in faith-based organizations worldwide.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides an overview of the key theoretical frameworks and literature guiding research on church leadership transitions and onboarding practices. Drawing on organizational change models, leadership theories, and recent empirical studies, this work explores both the conceptual and practical dimensions of effective succession planning within faith-based contexts. The models also provide church leadership with guidance on how to use them to develop an effective transition plan when a church leader steps down.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks Guiding Research

Research into Strategic Onboarding & Exiting Church Leaders has utilized several theoretical models of Leadership and Change Management. John Kotter's 8-step change model is a structured process that helps church leadership navigate the transition from one leader to another (Kotter, 1996). The 8-step model is based on the need for urgency, a team's involvement in the transition, and ensuring everyone shares a common goal and understands what the church wants to achieve as it transitions to a new leadership style.

This is an effective way to onboard new staff because it ensures alignment with the church's mission and purpose and identifies short-term successes that build momentum during the transition. In addition, the last two steps in the 8-step model -Consolidate Gains and Anchor New Approaches in Culture- focus on ensuring the church continues to grow and thrive as the new leader takes over.

Kurt Lewin's Change Management Model includes three stages: unfreeze, change, and refreeze (Lewin, 1947). This model will help churches navigate the transition from one leadership style to another by changing the current state of affairs, implementing new leadership approaches, and ultimately developing new ways of thinking about how to relate to one another within the church community. These three stages of the Change Management Model will help churches continue to grow and thrive after transitioning from one leadership style to another.

Transformational Leadership Theory, developed by Bernard Bass (Bass, 1985), emphasizes the importance of leaders motivating their followers and empowering their successors. This form of leadership fosters relational trust and spiritual alignment between the outgoing and incoming leaders, enabling the outgoing leader to demonstrate the church's values and invest in the future leadership of the church.

Despite the importance of leadership style, there remains a paucity of evidence on its examination across multiple countries, cultures, and institutions. In addition to Transformational Leadership Theory, the Socialization of Resources Theory (SRT) explains how new leaders

become accustomed to the church's norms and culture, suggesting that onboarding should include mentoring and immersion in the church's culture (Mosquera & Soares, 2025).

Finally, the C.H.A.I.N. model examines faith-based leadership transitions by emphasizing spiritual discernment and structured onboarding through the five pillars: Calling, Honour, Alignment, Investment, and Navigation. The C.H.A.I.N. Model provides a solid foundation for the successful transfer of intergenerational leadership within a church (Antakirana & Purwanto, 2025).

Given the models considered in this work, John Kotter's change model offers 8 steps for achieving successful change. "Create Urgency" sets the stage for effective communication and can foster a sense of urgency. "Forming Guiding Coalitions" facilitates collective decision-making. "Communicating Vision" supports long-term continuity. "Empowering Others to Act" builds a sense of ownership among the members. "Planning for Sustainment" creates a sense of security and stability in the church.

The final two steps are "Generating Short-Term Wins" and "Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture," which aim to create stability within the church. Kurt Lewin's change management model comprises three phases: "Unfreezing" (to prepare members emotionally), "Changing" (the transition period), and "Re-freezing" (in which new relationships and patterns emerge). Transformational leadership theory emphasizes the importance of inspiring others and fostering trust during transitions.

Socialization theory helps explain how new leaders learn the church's values and dynamics and why relational immersion is more important than positional authority. The C.H.A.I.N. framework evaluates a leader's readiness and ensures that the church's spiritual identity thrives. Together, these models constitute a comprehensive framework for effective onboarding and exit of church leaders.

2.2 Review of Key Literature

This section reviews key literature on leadership transitions within faith-based organizations, examining diverse models and their effectiveness across global and local contexts. It highlights critical insights, strengths, and limitations in the current understanding of succession, onboarding, and leadership development practices in churches and related institutions.

Omae et al. (2024) investigated the relationship between church leaders' succession planning and the stability of those churches in Nairobi, using a three-dimensional approach (mentoring, talent management, succession planning) as the focal points. A quantitative survey design was employed to examine 60 churches affiliated with the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK), while descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to interpret the findings.

Omae et al. (2024) found that mentoring and talent management are essential for establishing stability within church leadership. They also identified that succession planning is frequently

informal and thus reactive. They further stated that churches with formal succession planning and strategic onboarding and offboarding procedures will be more resilient and better able to continue their missions.

In contrast, churches without such formalized processes will experience more relational disconnections and mission drift. Although the authors of this study identified several strengths of their research, they also identified some weaknesses. One strength of the research is that it is based on empirical data (a large sample size) and utilizes statistical analysis to support its claims. The other strength of the research is its focus on Nairobi's evangelical churches, which makes it relevant to the community under study and provides insight into the dynamics of faith communities in urban environments.

The authors of this study also framed the findings within the context of leadership and organizational development theories, thereby contributing to the body of knowledge. There are, however, some limitations of the study; for instance, because the research focused on churches in Nairobi, the geographic context of the churches may limit the generalizability of the results to churches in rural areas or to churches affiliated with different denominations.

The authors also did not provide a detailed explanation of the onboarding and offboarding processes involved in transitioning from one leader to another, which is necessary for a complete understanding of succession planning. Finally, because the authors employed a quantitative approach, the qualitative dimensions of leadership transitions (e.g., relational and spiritual) are underrepresented in the study, underscoring the need for further research in these areas.

Makabira (2020) conducted a study on the factors contributing to successful transitions in church leadership in Nairobi County, with a specific emphasis on succession planning, stakeholder commitment, and change agents. He sought to determine how each of these change-management elements affects the effectiveness and stability of transitions for church leaders.

Makabira conducted a descriptive survey and selected 24 churches affiliated with the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) as the sample. Structured surveys were administered to collect data, which were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. His primary findings show that succession planning is recognized as important but rarely formalized. Stakeholder commitment, especially that of congregants and church boards, is a significant factor in determining the success of transitions.

Change agents (i.e., outgoing leaders and denominational bodies) also play a significant role in the outcome of transitions. Most transitions are triggered by external factors (e.g., retirement, death, transfer), and there is no standard process for documenting the onboarding and offboarding of leaders. Although Makabira's study has several strengths (e.g., its focus on Nairobi's church leadership dynamics and its application of change management theory), it also has some limitations.

For example, the study had a minimal sample of 24 churches, which may not adequately represent the full range of denominations and regional variations. In addition, although Makabira explored various transition factors, he did not develop a framework for implementing a structured onboarding process for new church leaders, nor did he discuss strategies for promoting proactive planning over reactive planning. Lastly, Makabira did not include a comparative analysis of international best practices or other African contexts in his study, which limits the applicability of his findings.

Atuya (2023) examined how "Structured Leadership Transition Interventions" such as succession planning, documentation, and stakeholder engagement affect the operational performance of faith-based NGOs in Nairobi. The case study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach, employing five international faith-based NGOs in Nairobi as cases and drawing on interview, survey, and document data.

The researchers found that NGOs that documented exit procedures and implemented transitional plans improved employees' morale, operational continuity, and alignment with overall strategic objectives. In contrast, NGOs without structured transitional plans experienced disarray, loss of institutional knowledge, and reduced productivity during transitions. Stakeholders, including the board of directors, employees, and funding agencies, play a key role in successful transitional processes for NGOs.

Although the study demonstrates the impact of faith-based identity on transitional values, it notes that these values are not always represented in formal processes. The study provides empirically rich data on the transition process for NGOs in Nairobi but has limitations, including a relatively small number of participants and a focus on a single city; it does not provide comparisons with global best practices or with those in other African cities.

Antakirana and Purwanto (2025) emphasize the importance of sustainable leadership succession in church settings, particularly in Southeast Asia, where young leaders often face marginalization within traditional hierarchical systems. They introduce the C.H.A.I.N. model, which uses Calling, Honour, Alignment, Investment, and Navigation to connect the biblical accounts of Moses and Joshua with modern leadership development concepts and to encourage intergenerational transitions. The researchers employed qualitative theological research and narrative analysis to demonstrate that transitional leadership in church settings requires both spiritual and organizational components, supported by intentional mentoring and community discernment to facilitate successful transitions.

The authors critique the C.H.A.I.N model and highlight its strengths, particularly its theological richness and cultural relevance; however, they also acknowledge several weaknesses, including the absence of empirical evidence supporting it and its geographic limitation to Southeast Asia. Additionally, the model lacks structured onboarding and exit protocols that would enable

churches to implement it in practice without additional guidance. Overall, the C.H.A.I.N model is an innovative framework for addressing leadership transitions in a spiritual setting.

Jeske and Olson (2021) studied the design of onboarding as a collaborative learning experience for new hires, especially in leadership roles. The researchers criticized traditional top-down induction methods and advocated a personalized onboarding approach that aligns with an individual's learning style and organizational culture. Using a conceptual and reflective methodology, the researchers reviewed relevant literature, consulted practitioners, and provided case examples of onboarding experiences, with a focus on remote onboarding and transitions to leadership positions. Key findings from the research highlighted the importance of designing a flexible, customized onboarding process that encourages mutual learning, builds trust, and facilitates faster integration, primarily through staged processes that include pre-hire preparation and ongoing feedback.

The study's major strengths include its innovative perspective and practical applications for Human Resource departments, particularly in the context of post-COVID remote work. However, the study lacks empirical data to support its claims, and it lacks a broader cultural perspective and discussion of offboarding and legacy management, which could limit the applicability of its recommendations beyond Western organizational cultures.

Mosquera and Soares (2025) investigated the effects of onboarding on employee well-being and turnover intention in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) based on the Socialization of Resources Theory (SRT). The study focused on three dimensions of onboarding: Corporate Welcome, Manager's Welcome, and Coworker's Welcome. Based on a quantitative survey of 114 SME employees in Portugal, the study utilized Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and identified that successful onboarding positively affects organizational identification and employee well-being.

The study revealed that employee well-being mediated the relationship between onboarding and turnover intentions. There were significant gender differences: the Manager's Welcome influenced male employees differently from female employees, and workplace well-being played a greater role in retaining female employees than male employees. The study demonstrated a high degree of explanatory power, accounting for 65.4% of the variance in turnover intentions. While the study provides practical implications for SMEs, it has several limitations, including a focus on secularism, the lack of attention given to leadership transitions, cultural specificity, and the exclusion of offboarding issues, which are important in organizational settings.

Bhadane et al. (2025) in a structured analysis of onboarding practices in Indian firms argue that onboarding is critical and that both consistency and feedback mechanisms are essential for employees' job satisfaction and integration into the company. To examine how companies implement global onboarding standards, the authors researched departmental consistency, continuous feedback, and the use of technology in cultural adaptation. This was conducted using

a mixed-methods approach, encompassing 22 firms across multiple sectors, participant surveys and interviews, and audits.

Among the study's key findings, the researchers determined that standardized onboarding led to faster employee integration and job satisfaction, and that feedback mechanisms such as post-induction surveys were critical to improving onboarding. They also found that the use of technology for onboarding made it scalable for the company and that cultural sensitivity was important to ensure that onboarding was consistent with the company's culture. The study had several limitations, including its failure to examine how onboarding occurs for new leadership and its lack of specificity to faith-based organizations.

Narayan (2016) studied the effect of transformational leadership on succession planning in large Indian corporations. The study examined whether leaders with transformational qualities, such as vision casting, mentoring, and individualized consideration, are more effective at developing succession plans. Using a mixed-methods approach, the author used data from 18 mid-sized to large companies in the manufacturing, IT, and financial sectors.

The findings indicated that companies with transformational leadership are more likely to have written succession plans, mentorship programs, and more frequent internal promotions. However, the study identified two major barriers to successful succession planning: founder dependence and the organization's reluctance to change. While it applied transformational leadership theory to real-world HR issues, the study had limitations. For example, it focused primarily on corporate succession planning and therefore was limited to the corporate environment. Additionally, the study was culturally specific to India and did not provide information about the onboarding or exiting processes associated with succession planning.

Siambi (2022) provided a comprehensive review of succession planning and organizational transition in African institutions, drawing upon international and regional research. The study synthesized the literature on key themes in succession planning, including its critical role in maintaining organizational continuity and the roles of mentorship, documentation, and stakeholder involvement. It highlighted common challenges facing many organizations in Africa, including founder syndrome, a lack of policies, and cultural resistance to change. It additionally emphasized the need to adapt succession-planning models to the unique context of each country or region.

Methodologically, the work employed a narrative literature review and analyzed over 40 peer-reviewed articles and reports. The study was notable for its broad scope across multiple industries and its high level of contextual relevance to challenges facing African countries. However, there were limitations to the study. This included the fact that it relied exclusively on secondary data and therefore did not provide any original research.

Additionally, the study did not provide sufficient information about how succession planning occurs in church governance and did not develop detailed onboarding and exiting models for succession planning. Finally, the study did not provide a comparative analysis of succession-planning practices between African and non-African countries. Overall, however, the study provided numerous valuable insights and practical recommendations for succession planning.

Akinwalere et al. (2025) developed a Sustainability-Embedded Leadership (SEL) model for managing organizational change, with a focus on ethics, inclusivity, and long-term impact. Although the SEL model is not specifically faith-based, it could be adapted to church leadership transitions by linking spiritual values to sustainable governance. They demonstrate how incorporating sustainability into leadership can enhance the success of organizational change efforts.

The researchers found that leaders who prioritize sustainability increase trust and resilience among stakeholders, and that involving marginalized stakeholders in the change process can help to legitimize the changes and reduce resistance. The SEL model encourages legacy thinking, helping leaders consider how to preserve institutional values and culture beyond their tenure. The developed SEL model has several strengths, including innovation, an ethical orientation, and applicability to churches and NGOs. Nevertheless, the SEL model has several limitations. First, it lacks empirical support. Second, the SEL model is grounded in a largely Western-centric literature, which means it will require adjustment for application in other cultural contexts.

Dollhopf and Scheitle (2014) examined the relationships between leadership transitions and changes in the structure of religious congregations in the United States, and how these changes in turn affect membership patterns, conflict, and structural stability. They employed data from the National Congregations Study, which sampled 1,506 congregations. To draw conclusions, the researchers used logistic regression and multivariate modeling.

The researchers found that leadership transitions often lead to increased internal conflict and membership loss, particularly when transitions occur abruptly or are imposed from outside the congregation. On the other hand, when congregations select their leaders internally, the leadership transition experiences less disruption.

However, the study had some limitations, including that it was limited to the United States, it did not address onboarding protocols in detail, it did not consider the theological dimensions of succession planning, and it relied solely on cross-sectional data, which does not allow for the examination of the effects of leadership transitions over time. Nonetheless, the study offers valuable lessons for faith-based governance, with potential applications in contexts such as Kenya.

Ross et al. (2014) identified a structured process for transitioning new hires into the role of Academic Department Chair, emphasizing relational support, cultural immersion, and leadership

development. Although developed specifically for the Medical Academic Community, the structured phases of this onboarding model are adaptable for transitional models for faith-based leaders. Early success, job satisfaction, employee retention, and organizational alignment are directly tied to the effectiveness of an onboarding process.

All four roles within the onboarding model, Transition Navigator, Peer Mentor, Transition Mentor, and an Active Dean, provide a pathway for a successful transition from initial orientation to long-term leadership development. In addition to scalability, the model's strengths include clear role definitions for each onboarding position, an emphasis on mentoring, and the ability to adapt to different environments.

There are limitations to the model as well, including that it was designed specifically for use in Academic Medical Centers, there is no spiritual aspect included in the model, there is no discussion of creating dignified exit options, and the model is based upon a conceptual model and does not have empirical data validating the model, indicating a potential for adaptation in church or faith-based organization environments. However, such a framework may help mitigate uncertainty, preserve institutional continuity, and strengthen leadership legitimacy. This study builds on these insights by examining how strategic onboarding processes can be adapted to the context of churches, where leadership transitions occur without formalized structures.

2.3 Review of Global Literature

This section reviews global literature on church leadership transitions, with a particular focus on mentorship, onboarding, and succession practices across diverse contexts. By examining case studies from Nigeria and the United States, this study highlights both innovative frameworks and persistent challenges in preparing and supporting new leaders within faith-based communities.

Soneye et al. (2025) studied the mentorship relationship between Josiah Akindayomi and Enoch Adeboye in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). They stressed that intentional mentoring of Akindayomi was key to his successful leadership transition and, consequently, to RCCG's ongoing global mission sustainability. They pointed out the strategic nature of Akindayomi's mentoring, which focused on developing Adeboye's spiritual and leadership skills. This, they argue, facilitated a smooth transfer of vision and values when Adeboye succeeded Akindayomi. The study credits RCCG's continued worldwide growth to this mentorship approach and recommends it as a scalable model for future leadership changes.

Strengths of the study include its use of both biblical and theoretical frameworks, its contextual relevance, and its provision of practical recommendations based on the study's results. However, there are several limitations. One limitation is that it focuses on a single case and thus offers no comparative data. Another limitation is that no structured onboarding protocols were provided for future RCCG leaders. Additionally, the study relied heavily on secondary sources, which limits the study's empirical rigor. Overall, the study significantly contributes to the body of knowledge in ecclesiastical leadership studies.

Siyanbola et al. (2024) examined how societal and technological changes are transforming pastoral leadership, focusing on leadership styles and innovations that enhance church vitality. A key finding is that effective pastors often demonstrate visionary leadership and adaptability, which help grow their congregations. The study also shows that the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital tools in ministry, resulting in a fundamental shift in worship and outreach practices.

However, it highlights a significant research gap regarding the connections between leadership styles and innovation results. Although the study used biblical leadership models, it did not include examples of structured onboarding or exit strategies for leaders. It also identified a youth leadership gap, noting that many young members are leaving traditional Baptist churches for Pentecostal churches, but it did not suggest ways to involve younger leaders in traditional church leadership.

Barbee (2024) addressed the need for practical training for bivocational elders within a co-equal governance model in her dissertation. Her dissertation developed a structured six-week onboarding course and sermon series to prepare bivocational elders for the complexity of their roles. Key findings included the biblical justification for multiple elders, greater confidence among the congregation, and support for bivocational elders as they navigate the dual responsibilities of their vocations.

The strengths of the work include its deepening of biblical understanding, its practical application to bivocational eldership, and its use of effective evaluation tools. Limitations of the dissertation include its focus on a single church, its lack of contextualization within the global church, the absence of formalized exit procedures for leaders, and its limited assessment of the chronic stresses associated with bivocational ministry. Overall, the dissertation provides a useful framework for developing older adults, but additional research is needed to further its applicability.

Ronald Tuck (Tuck, 2014) conducted an interpretivist case study of leadership transition in a faith-based organization, employing constructivist theory and ethnographic methods. His study documented the experiences of individuals involved in a leadership transition at a Southern Baptist Church in North Carolina. The study revealed that pastoral succession encompasses multiple dimensions and is more complex than a mere transition from one pastor to another. He highlighted the importance of organizational preparedness, congregational buy-in, and interim leadership during times of transition.

The study noted that churches operate as both spiritual communities and corporate organizations. As such, he emphasized the duality of church leadership. While the study provides valuable insights and practical recommendations for churches, it has limitations, primarily being a single-case study and lacking comparative analyses. Global perspectives demonstrate that various approaches exist for transitioning pastoral leadership. U.S.-based churches tend to plan

structured transitions, whereas churches in Africa and Asia rely on spiritual mentorship and cultural traditions to facilitate transitions.

In their article, "Leadership and the Church: The Impact of Shifting Leadership Constructs," Gautsch and Setley (2015) examined how shifts in organizational structures and followers' perceptions of leadership affect the expression of charisma in church settings. Their study utilized two theoretical frameworks: charismatic and transformational leadership.

To support these theories, they presented a case study of Homily Church, a megachurch located in the United States. They demonstrated that Homily Church experienced three distinct periods in its history. During the growth period, Rev. Carter served as a charismatic leader, facilitating rapid growth and high levels of commitment among the congregation. Following a change in governance structure, Homily Church underwent a decline in participation and enthusiasm.

A new leadership team, which implemented transformational leadership strategies, restored momentum to the church through shared governance and restructuring. The study concluded that for churches to experience sustained success, effective communication, transparent decision-making, and adaptability during transitional periods are necessary components of leadership. However, it lacks a formal onboarding framework for new leaders, provides limited analysis of exit protocols, and its findings may not be universally applicable to smaller congregations.

2.4 Research Gaps

Church leadership transitions present unique challenges that are often underexplored in comparison to those in the corporate and nonprofit sectors. Existing literature highlights critical gaps in empirical research, structured onboarding, and cross-cultural frameworks, emphasizing the need for comprehensive studies tailored to faith-based contexts.

a) Limited Empirical Studies in Church Leadership Transitions

Church leadership transitions have received little research in church settings. Research has been conducted extensively in the corporate and non-profit worlds for decades regarding succession planning, onboarding, and executive exit processes. Most of the current literature addressing these topics in a church environment relies on theology, devotionals, or personal experience rather than systematic research from an organizational leadership perspective. The intent of this research is to address that gap and examine pastoral and elder succession in churches where unique relational and organizational dynamics intersect with spiritual dynamics.

b) Onboarding as an Overlooked Process

Many churches place great emphasis on selecting leaders and less on developing a comprehensive process for onboarding those selected into their roles through structured onboarding (e.g., orientation, mentoring). Therefore, research examining how onboarding

processes affect leaders' success, congregational trust, and overall organizational stability within faith-based organizations would be beneficial.

Furthermore, in both Kenya and Nigeria, leadership transitions have historically been achieved through informal mentorship or spiritual discernment. Conversely, in many United States churches, there are more formal induction processes, interim leadership structures, and established governance policies that can guide this process. The intent of this project is to identify the need for scalable, culturally relevant onboarding models for African church organizations, particularly bivocational or volunteer leaders.

c) Lack of Link between Exit and Off-boarding Practices to Leadership

Exit processes are an important part of leadership transition and may be subject to significant challenges, as exiting leaders normally exit through a combination of a celebratory event for their retirement or an abrupt departure, with little or no consideration for knowledge transfer, legacy planning, or transition management (Siambi, 2022). These types of departures have the potential to disrupt organizational operations in significant ways.

Therefore, there is a critical need to identify how structured exit processes can mitigate these issues, enabling smoother transitions and maintaining continuity. By prioritizing these elements, the transition from one leader to another will be enhanced, benefiting both the departing leader and the incoming successor. Moreover, a gap exists in the integration of the leadership lifecycle. Studies rarely link onboarding and exiting as part of a unified leadership lifecycle, missing opportunities for knowledge continuity and relational trust.

d) Integration of Organizational Leadership Theories

Theories of succession planning, socialization, and transition management are important aspects of organizational studies that have been extensively studied. Notably, these theories have received relatively little attention in research on church leadership (Omae et al., 2024). As such, there is a greater need to better explore ways to apply existing theories to faith-based organizations. By integrating succession planning, socialization, and transition management into the study of church leadership, we will gain a clearer picture of the unique dynamics of religious settings and develop stronger strategies for managing leadership transitions, which can lead to more sustainable and healthy organizational development among faith-based communities.

e) Underrepresentation of Bivocational and Lay Leaders

Most church leadership transition studies focus on senior (full-time) pastors; they overlook the growing number of bivocational elder and lay leaders who hold part-time jobs, volunteer, or both in other work. This research project will address this void by developing an onboarding module and an exit module that address the issues bivocational and lay leaders encounter when they

assume the added responsibility of managing their own ministry while also managing family and work commitments.

f) Impact on Organizational Sustainability

Research has shown minimal empirical connections between leadership transition practices and church sustainability outcomes, such as member retention, mission continuity, and financial stability (Omae et al., 2024). Further investigation is crucial to establish a link between transition processes and organizational stability and long-term sustainability.

g) Lack Cross-cultural or Multiple Countries Frameworks

Despite rich country-specific insights, several studies consider onboarding and exiting leadership programs in specific countries, for instance, onboarding programs in India (Bhadane et al., 2025), Portugal (Mosquera & Soares, 2025), while exiting programs in Kenya (Siambi, 2022) and India (Narayan, 2016). Very few studies examine multiple countries across multiple cultural or institutional contexts, such as Germany and the USA. There is a lack of cross-cultural frameworks, as most studies are localized and make little effort to synthesize transferable models across regions.

Numerous research areas remain unaddressed in church leadership transitions. There exists a dearth of empirical studies and little structure for onboarding and exiting in an integrated manner that addresses faith-based contexts. While considerable literature is anecdotal or theologically based, very little has been written from a cross-cultural perspective or addressing the specific needs of bivocational and lay leaders. Therefore, addressing this gap is important for developing effective, context-specific strategies to promote organizational stability and maintain leadership continuity across churches of various types.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative, comparative research design to explore leadership transition and onboarding practices in faith-based organizations across diverse cultural and organizational contexts. By synthesizing insights from academic literature and practitioner experiences, the methodology aims to identify key gaps and develop a context-sensitive training module to enhance leadership development and succession planning in diverse faith-based settings.

3.1 Research Design

The research design is a qualitative, comparative study examining church leadership transitions and onboarding practices across three culturally distinct contexts: Kenya, Nigeria, and the United States. By synthesizing secondary literature, this study aims to identify significant gaps in current practices and to inform the development of a context-sensitive training module tailored to churches in each country. The research exclusively draws on peer-reviewed dissertations, academic journal articles, theological project reports, and institutional publications on key themes such as mentorship, leadership transitions, and onboarding in faith-based settings, thereby providing a robust foundation for the study.

Data collection emphasizes specific geographic areas and their unique leadership and mentorship dynamics. For Kenya, the focus is on faith-based leadership practices and denominational governance. Nigeria's exploration encompasses charismatic succession models and spiritual legacy frameworks, particularly notable in cases such as the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG).

In the United States, attention is directed towards structured onboarding programs and interim leadership protocols, particularly within Southern Baptist and evangelical churches. The inclusion criteria for literature selection are stringent, ensuring only relevant, academically credible studies from the past 5 years are considered, unless they represent foundational work in the field. Emphasis is placed on practical insights with principles transferable to church settings.

The analysis examines multiple countries to develop an understanding using thematic and comparative methods. It focuses on mentorship models, succession planning, and onboarding structures, considering how cultural and organizational differences impact these practices. Our goal is to create a flexible training framework that can be tailored to each country's context.

The resulting training module will blend universal leadership principles with specific practices, such as mentorship in Nigeria, structured onboarding in the USA, and intergenerational leadership in Kenya. This initiative aims to provide effective tools for succession planning and legacy preservation in churches, enabling them to thrive in diverse environments.

3.2 Data Sources

A variety of academic and practitioner platforms will be utilized for this research, providing access to peer-reviewed articles, theses, and reports. Key sources included African Journals Online (AJOL) for regional church leadership studies, United States International University (USIU-Africa) for in-depth local theses, and SpringerLink for international onboarding frameworks. Emerald Insight and Google Scholar will enable access to global literature and mutual learning models, while ResearchGate and Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC) provide practitioner insights and educational onboarding studies. ProQuest will contribute comprehensive theses on leadership transitions from different regions.

This research aims to explore the vital process of leadership transitions within church and faith-based institutions by analyzing a wide array of journal insights. By drawing on region-specific publications such as the Eastern African Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences and HTS Theologiese Studies, the study seeks to uncover the unique cultural and theological facets of leadership change, particularly in both African and global contexts. It also incorporates managerial insights from journals such as the Journal of Work-Applied Management and the Review of Managerial Science, ensuring that effective strategies from both religious and secular organizations are considered.

The inclusion of resources like Academic Medicine provides evidence-based methodologies for induction and transition management, enriching the analysis with practical approaches. Through this thorough examination, the research will highlight culturally sensitive strategies and operational solutions to foster effective leadership development and succession planning in diverse church communities. Additionally, by integrating church governance manuals, NGO transition case studies, and established change management frameworks, the research aims to lay a solid foundation for adaptable, effective leadership transitions across diverse church environments, ultimately supporting the growth and sustainability of these vital institutions.

3.3 Data Analysis

The analytical approach integrated is thematic analysis with comparative cross-country evaluation to synthesize the literature on leadership transitions. This methodology enabled the identification of consistent patterns and the recognition of unique cultural and structural differences among Kenya, Nigeria, and the United States.

Key themes derived from the review included succession planning (planned or reactive transitions), mentorship models (spiritual or professional guidance for successors), onboarding structures (formal or informal orientation processes), spiritual formation (incorporation of biblical principles and character development), governance styles (ranging from hierarchical to congregational models), and exit protocols (methods for transitioning or honoring outgoing leaders). These themes will be systematically coded and grouped, thereby revealing patterns,

gaps, and innovative practices within each national context, thereby providing a significant understanding of leadership transition processes across diverse environments.

Thematic findings will then be compared across Kenya, Nigeria, and the United States to highlight regional distinctions as illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Comparison of Thematic Findings

Theme	Kenya	Nigeria	United States
Succession Planning	Often informal, relational	Charismatic, spiritually discerned	Structured, policy-driven
Mentorship Models	Intergenerational, community-based	Spiritual fatherhood, legacy-focused	Overlap with formal coaching
Onboarding Structures	Emerging, often ad hoc	Minimal formal onboarding	Curriculum-based, multi-session
Spiritual Formation	Strong emphasis	Central to transition	Integrated with leadership training
Governance Style	Mixed (congregational and hierarchical)	Founder-led, personality-driven	Committee-led, congregational polity
Exit Protocols	Rarely formalized	Often symbolic or abrupt	Guided by bylaws and interim roles

This comparative lens revealed both universal challenges, for instance, the lack of structured exit protocols, and context-specific strengths such as Nigeria’s deep mentorship culture and the U.S.’s rigorous onboarding process. The analysis revealed several critical gaps in leadership practices across three contexts: the absence of formal onboarding processes for bivocational or volunteer leaders; limited documentation for exit and legacy preservation; inadequate integration of mentorship into leadership development; and a lack of scalable training modules suited to diverse church sizes and governance models. To fill these gaps, a modular training framework will be created for churches in Kenya, Nigeria, and the U.S. This framework will emphasize essential onboarding, mentorship integration, succession-planning tools, spiritual development pathways, and protocols for exit and legacy management.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRAINING MODULE DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the design of a structured training program to strengthen leadership transitions within church contexts. The program, titled *Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership*, responds to documented gaps in leadership onboarding and integration, succession planning, and exit management in faith-based organizations. Research indicates that churches often experience instability, loss of institutional memory, and relational strain when transitions are poorly managed (Okanda, 2025; Omae et al., 2024).

To address the challenges, four interconnected training modules were created: Leadership Onboarding, Leader Shepherdship, Succession Planning, and Leadership Exiting. These modules combine biblical principles, organizational leadership theory, pastoral care, and change management frameworks to prepare leaders to manage healthy transitions within their organizations.

4.2 Training Philosophy and Pedagogical Framework

4.2.1 Biblical and Theological Integration

The training design is based on the biblical view of leadership as stewardship rather than ownership (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1–7). Scripture shows leadership transitions as intentional, relational, and Spirit-led processes, as seen in the shifts from Moses to Joshua (Deut. 31:7–8), Elijah to Elisha (2 Kings 2: 7-16), and Paul to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:2). These models shaped the theological framework of each module.

4.2.2 Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy)

The curriculum applies adult learning principles, emphasizing experiential learning, reflection, and contextual application. Activities include case studies, role-plays, group discussions, and personal assessments, which align with Knowles (1984) andragogical model (Smith et al., 2014), which holds that adults learn best when content is relevant, problem-centered, and participatory.

4.2.3 Competency-Based Formation

The training modules emphasize core competencies, including spiritual growth, governance, communication, emotional intelligence, mentoring, and organizational management. With well-defined learning outcomes and practical tools, each module seeks to empower individuals and teams, promoting growth and effective decision-making within organizations while facilitating smooth onboarding and exit processes.

4.2.4 Onboarding and Exiting Introduction

This section introduces leadership onboarding as a form of organizational socialization, where newcomers transition from “outsiders” to “insiders” by learning values, norms, and role expectations (Bhadane et al., 2025; Mosquera & Soares, 2025). Moreover, it includes the importance of leadership onboarding which include productivity and clarity, which accelerates new leaders’ productivity when necessary information and support is provided. Onboarding enhances leaders’ sense of belonging, boosts retention while reducing turnover, contributes to workplace well-being and cultural integration, and ensures strategic alignment, where leaders understand the goals and stakeholder expectations.

Leadership exiting was introduced as the process by which a leader leaves their position, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, resulting in a change within the organization. Also included were the impacts of ineffective church leadership exits, which affect continuity, stability, and institutional memory, making proactive succession planning essential (Siambi, 2022).

The section introduced the gaps identified in literature and practice, which included the limited Empirical Studies in Church Leadership Transitions, onboarding as an Overlooked Process, lack of link between Exit and Onboarding Practices to leadership, integration of Organizational Leadership Theories, underrepresentation of Bivocational and Lay Leaders, impact on Organizational Sustainability, impact on Organizational Sustainability, and the lack of cross-cultural or multiple countries frameworks. Lastly, the call to move from ineffective leadership transitions to Sustainable church leadership was raised, as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4.1 Improving Church Leadership Transitions to Sustainability



4.3 Module 1: Leadership Onboarding

This section presents the purpose and rationale for the module, its core content, activities, and expected outcomes.

4.3.1 Purpose and Rationale

Leadership onboarding is defined as the structured process of integrating new leaders into an organization's culture, systems, and expectations (Bhadane et al., 2025; Mosquera & Soares, 2025). In church settings, onboarding must also incorporate spiritual formation and relational integration.

The module aimed to help participants understand Biblical Leadership by gaining insights into leadership transitions, and the role of multiple elders as articulated in biblical teachings; recognize the importance of onboarding by exploring effective onboarding and exit processes to improve church sustainability; learn effective



onboarding practices by getting familiar with structured onboarding to clarify roles and promote cultural integration within the church; and support Bivocational Elders by developing time-management and accountability skills to effectively balance ministry and work.

4.3.2 Core Content Areas

a) Biblical Foundations of Leadership

Leadership as stewardship as highlighted in Acts 20:28 underscores the importance of responsible guidance within a community and emphasizes accountability to God and the congregation. The qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 emphasize character and integrity. The participants were asked, “How does stewardship change the way we view leadership authority?” Additionally, the study explored the balance between a plurality of elders versus singular leadership and how it can enhance church governance (Niemeyer, 2024). Moreover, the research examined biblical models of succession to underscore the importance of intentional leadership continuity, highlighting Moses’ public commissioning of Joshua and Paul’s mentoring of Timothy.

b) Foundations of Church Leadership Transitions

This section introduces the Leadership lifecycle before appointment, which entails discernment, selection, and spiritual preparation; appointment, onboarding, service, and exiting, in fostering effective leaders who are prepared and adaptable (Bhadane et al., 2025). Onboarding entails orientation, role clarification, and cultural integration. The active service incorporates leadership practice and accountability, ensures spiritual and organizational balance, and, lastly, during exiting, puts successor planning and legacy preservation centre stage.

The dual nature of church leadership, where they have a spiritual calling and an organizational responsibility with diverse community expectations and a need to balance, was highlighted. Lastly, relevant theories resonating with transition were introduced, including Socialization, which focuses on how to effectively integrate new leaders into the existing organizational culture, ensuring they understand core values and practices (Yu et al., 2025). Succession theory emphasizes preparing for smooth leadership transitions by identifying and grooming future leaders (Siambi, 2022), while transition management highlights strategies for guiding organizational change to ensure it is managed effectively, minimizing disruption and maintaining employee morale (Bridges, 2009).

c) Strategic Onboarding Practices

In this section, students were to learn structured onboarding practices beyond orientation, equip new leaders with role clarity, cultural assimilation, and mission alignment, and enhance communication and feedback among stakeholders during the transition. The socialization theory in practice was discussed with an emphasis on role clarity and feedback loops (Yu et al., 2025),

mentoring through pairing new and experienced leaders, and guided integration (Bateman, 2015).

There was an emphasis on designing induction programs that balance spiritual and organizational elements, thereby ensuring faith formation and organizational orientation. The section also introduced the leaders to communication strategies, incorporating relevant techniques for congregational introductions, such as commissioning and announcements, transparency through shared role descriptions, storytelling, and, finally, engagement to encourage the congregation to welcome and support the new leader. The participants are charged with developing a 30-day induction plan that blends spiritual and organizational elements.

d) Onboarding Bivocational Leaders

Bivocational leaders are individuals who serve in a leadership role, such as in a church, while also holding a secular job to support themselves (Stephens, 2021). As the primary format for church leaders, this approach introduces challenges, including competing demands among ministry, work, and family; the risk of burnout; the need to define ministry and workplace responsibilities; and the use of tools such as calendars to balance these demands. Time management, role clarity, and accountability (Stephens, 2021) are proposed as antidotes to these challenges. A panel discussion with bivocational leaders is done to share real experiences and lessons learned.

A covenant of service and commitment, emphasizing the importance of serving with humility, balancing ministry and family responsibilities through time management, and upholding biblical principles and organizational standards for accountability and growth, is introduced. The outcome is for the leaders to leave with a personalized framework for sustainable bivocational ministry and formalize their commitment to balancing ministry, work, and family. This will strengthen accountability, integrity, and spiritual maturity, thereby fostering sustainable leadership.

e) Leading and Teaching with Integrity

To strengthen teaching and pastoral leadership skills for bivocational and full-time leaders, teaching is a sacred trust, a leadership responsibility and a discipleship (2 Tim. 4:2; James 3:1). Practical focus is emphasized by integrating teaching with mentoring and pastoral care, which encourages application and not just knowledge. Lastly, the responsible handling of Scripture and the modeling of Christ like character through sound interpretation (hermeneutics) were emphasized while teaching truth with clarity and relevance.

4.3.3 Activity and Expected Outcomes

The activity in this module requires the participants to draft a personal covenant of service that includes time, financial stewardship, accountability, and spiritual devotion. Participants gain the

ability to design onboarding plans, support bivocational leaders, and integrate new leaders into ministry culture with clarity and pastoral sensitivity.

4.4 Module 2: Leader Shepherdship

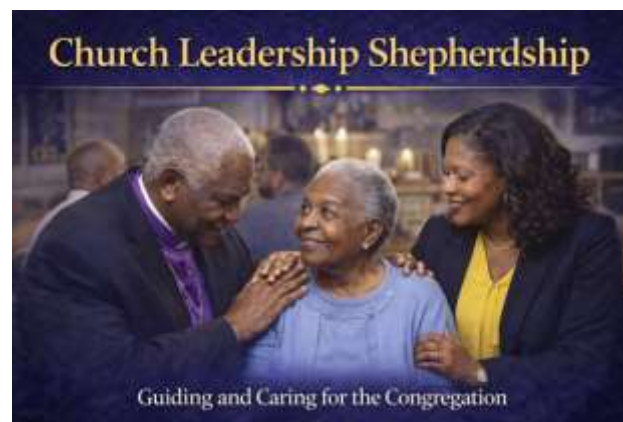
4.4.1 Purpose and Rationale

Leader shepherdship emphasizes the integration of leadership and pastoral care. It reflects Christ's model of guiding, protecting, and nurturing God's people (Ball, 2019). This module strengthens the relational and spiritual competencies required for healthy transitions.

4.4.2 Core Content Areas

a) Spiritual Formation of Leaders

This design needed to be based on theological principles and applicable to each phase of a leader's development. The focus of the training was placed on the three basic spiritual disciplines: prayer, solitude, and scripture study, which form the foundation of a leader's inner life and their ministry posture. This aligns with Knoetze's (2022) position that formation is an ongoing process of becoming like Christ.



Each resource was developed to demonstrate how the formation process unfolds through the phases before appointment, during onboarding, active ministry, and at exit from ministry. This will ensure leaders recognize that developing spiritual maturity is a continuous process rather than an event-based one. The resources also emphasize the importance of accountability and fellowship as key elements in fostering and sustaining growth. Accountability and fellowship are developed through peer groups, mentoring relationships, and elder oversight, among other practical ways.

b) Mentoring and Multiplying Successors

The training design process for Mentoring and Multiplying Successors was developed to provide biblically grounded, practical tools that help church leaders identify and begin developing emerging successor leaders. The training materials were developed with an emphasis on selecting potential leaders based on their character, faithfulness, and ability to learn (teachability) rather than on charisma or position. Further, equipping leaders to prepare and release others into ministry through intentional mentoring.

The spiritual fatherhood/motherhood model (Soneye et al., 2025) helped shape the relational and parental tone of the training materials, highlighting that mentorship is discipleship at work in

one's life, where mentors are present, provide guidance, and serve as examples. Practical competencies were built into the training materials through stretch assignments and a succession-readiness checklist to evaluate whether emerging leaders are prepared for a ministry role (Centennial, 2025). Lastly, the need to cultivate a culture of multiplication through shepherdship underscores the necessity for leaders to guide, create environments in which others can grow naturally, and empower them (Resane, 2014).

c) Intergenerational Leadership Models

This section explored the exploitation of mentorship for leadership development, continuity, and succession. Intergenerational Leadership Models involve integrating the three distinct cultural expressions of mentorship and leadership continuity. The Nigerian expression of spiritual fatherhood/motherhood (Siyanbola et al., 2024); the U.S. expression of mentoring/leadership overlap (Tuck, 2014); and the Kenyan expression of intergenerational unity (Antakirana & Purwanto, 2025).

The Nigerian expression was used to develop training materials that foster a deep relational environment and cultivate individuals' character, with an emphasis on the long-term development of future leaders. Coaches used the U.S. expression as a practical tool, including structured coaching sessions, shadowing, and opportunities for feedback.

The Kenyan expression was used to emphasize intergenerational unity, thereby creating opportunities for elders and youth to work together, share responsibility for ministry, and demonstrate mutual respect. The use of the three expressions (the U.S., the Kenyan, and the Nigerian) created training materials to equip leaders to develop inclusive, multi-generational leadership environments.

d) Governance, Decision-Making, and Teamwork

To design training materials on Governance, Decision-Making, and Teamwork, the resources were developed to provide leaders with practical tools to build and enhance shared leadership and organizational health by equipping them to establish and sustain a shared sense of responsibility and accountability among their team members. The training materials also emphasized the use of consensus-building as a practical, collaborative approach to prayer-based decision-making.

Moreover, the training materials incorporated conflict resolution, clear roles, dialogue, and collective discernment, moving teams away from the tyranny of the majority toward genuine unity in the Body of Christ. The section of the materials focusing on relational tensions used Matthew 18 as a guide for leaders to follow a set of biblically based steps to resolve conflicts in a timely, private, and redemptive manner.

Sections on role clarity and a shared leadership structure were also included. They provided templates for determining individual roles and responsibilities, developing and documenting decision-making pathways, and avoiding duplication of effort and burnout. Summarily, the section seeks to equip leaders to develop accountable, cohesive, and spiritually grounded teams that work together effectively.

4.4.3 Activity and Expected Outcomes

The main activity at the end of the module was to develop participants' personal Successor readiness checklists using a provided template. The expected outcomes were aligned with the participants' development of competencies in spiritual formation, coaching, mentoring, intergenerational collaboration, and team governance.

4.5 Module 3: Succession Planning

4.5.1 Purpose and Rationale

The objective of the succession-planning training program was to equip church leaders with the information and tools needed to develop a long-term pipeline of sustainable leadership and to establish continuity plans to ensure the long-term viability of the church's ministry. Succession planning within churches is a deliberate and prayerful process of preparing for and transitioning leadership from one generation or leader to another; it ensures that the church's ministry vision, values, and responsibilities are passed smoothly to future generations of spiritually mature and capable leaders (Omae et al., 2024).



Succession planning training was created to help church leaders align their succession processes with their church's mission, vision, and organizational requirements. As church leaders build their capacity to identify, mentor, and develop emerging church leaders, this training addresses the significant need for continuity in ministry. It helps prevent disruptions to the church's ministry during a pastor or elder's retirement, relocation, or transition.

In addition, succession planning protects the church's identity, doctrine, and culture over time by establishing a long-term leadership succession plan; therefore, it enables leadership transitions to strengthen rather than weaken the church's long-term vision. Therefore, the above rationale identifies the need to develop and structure succession planning proactively as a critical element of the overall health and resilience of church leadership.

4.5.2 Core Content Areas

a) Foundations of Succession Planning in Churches

Succession planning is crucial for maintaining continuity in ministry during leadership changes. It helps protect the church's vision, culture, and doctrinal integrity while minimizing conflict and uncertainty. The key components include establishing frameworks, developing internal talent, and implementing clear transition policies (Atuya, 2023; Omae et al., 2024).

The biblical foundation was included, emphasizing discernment through prayer, a structured approach, and the importance of involving all stakeholders in the process. Cardinal in the process is identifying and preparing the internal talent to ensure a flow of spiritually grounded ministry-ready leaders (Tredrea, 2018).

Clear transition policies guiding the process were emphasized, including defining retirement timelines to avoid last-minute crises, clarifying board responsibilities, and ensuring transparency in communication with the congregation at each step (Kinnaman, 2025). Furthermore, the leadership handover process, requires documentation of key ministry knowledge and structures incoming and outgoing leaders to avoid gaps, to strengthen continuity, reduce anxiety, and build confidence in the new leaders (Okanda, 2025).

b) Change Management and Stability

The section begins by introducing change management as a structured approach that involves careful planning and execution to successfully implement organizational changes ((Koter, 1996), while noting resistance to change that the organization should overcome. To ensure stability during transitions, leaders must balance change and stability, reduce uncertainty, and maintain continuity. To address this, several change management models were illustrated, such as Lewin's model of change (Lewin, 1947)., which comprises the three steps: Unfreeze, Change, and Refreeze.

Kotters' model of change provides a structured framework for leading successful organizational transformation, focusing on building momentum through eight sequential stages. The final facet is engaging congregants during transitions which includes managing resistance and uncertainty (Bedford et al., 2021). Participating actively in church life involves encouraging members to engage meaningfully in worship, discussions, and various ministries, enabling them to use their giftedness.

The sense of community will grow from a small group of people or from one ministry team to another, where the group's accomplishments, testimonies, and shared experiences can be celebrated. Teachings on trusting God, being united as a body of believers, and seeking God's guidance will support the spiritual growth of each member while equipping those who lead to

provide direction for their congregations with wisdom and stability, especially during times of transition or change.

c) Documenting Legacy and Institutional Memory

The section introduced the importance of documenting legacy and institutional memory for church leadership to ensure the church does not start from zero, with each generation building on the faithfulness of the last (Byrne, 2015). The section highlights examples of what needs to be documented, including ministry history and milestones, systems and processes, ministry resources, and personal legacy.

As a leader, a personal legacy through a legacy letter was emphasized, which is a heartfelt reflection to bless the next leader (Unger, 2015). Practical steps for drafting the legacy letter, such as reflections on one's leadership story, addressing the future, and encouraging a pastoral tone to enhance the relationship and smooth transitions, are also necessary.

The participants were introduced to the inventory that must be documented to prevent confusion and to protect the church from operational gaps. The inventory includes administrative documents like policies, bylaws, financial records, contracts, and agreements. Ministry and operational systems, such as structures, ministry calendars, and digital assets such as email accounts, passwords, and databases, are also included. Lastly, the knowledge transfer essentials include relationships, ongoing projects, and historical contexts.

4.5.3 Activity and expected Outcomes

The main activity for the module was to develop a personal “Legacy Letter” using a provided template. Participants learn that active participation in church life involves encouraging members to engage in meaningful worship, discussion, and ministry, thereby enabling them to use their gifts. Participants learn to design succession plans, manage change, preserve institutional memory, and ensure continuity across leadership generations.

4.6 Module 4: Leadership Exiting

4.6.1 Purpose and Rationale

Leadership exiting is a critical yet often neglected phase of the leadership lifecycle. Exits, whether planned or unplanned, affect continuity, culture, and congregational stability (Harbour & Tirard, 2025; Klotz et al., 2021).

4.6.2 Core Content Areas

The module begins with a foundational overview of leadership exit, defining how it can disrupt an organization's continuity, and the need to manage this transition effectively, ensuring knowledge transfer, and focusing on succession planning (Harbour & Tirard, 2025). To provide conceptual clarity, leadership exits are further examined through established classifications such

as voluntary and involuntary, restructuring-driven, personal reasons, and other operational issues (Klotz et al., 2021; Sustainability Directory, 2025).

a) Biblical Foundations for Finishing Well

The section emphasises that leadership transitions are not merely administrative; they are deeply spiritual acts rooted in obedience, humility, and stewardship that God desires from leaders. Biblical models of leadership are drawn from examples showing how Moses, Paul, and Jesus each prepared a successor with clarity and blessing. The section reinforces that leadership is a trust from God, not ownership, and that stewardship, legacy, and finishing the race are critical. This emphasizes that transition is a spiritual act of obedience to God's timing, providing next generational blessings and cultivating a culture of faithful endings (Akoto, 2024).



b) Preparing the Flock for Transition

Preparing the flock for a leadership transition requires intentionally integrating pastoral care, communication strategy, and organizational clarity. This section emphasizes the importance of timely and transparent messaging to keep the congregation informed, reassured, and united during periods of change (Okanda, 2025), while also addressing the emotional dimension of transition, including grief, resistance, unmet expectations, and relational tensions (Babarinde, 2025; Tjernæs et al., 2024). By equipping leaders to respond with empathy and clarity, the training supports congregational well-being and stability. It further provides practical guidance on honouring previous seasons of ministry through celebration and gratitude while casting renewed vision and hope to guide the church confidently into its next chapter.

c) Effective Exiting and Offboarding

Effective Exiting and Offboarding materials were created to assist churches in managing leadership transitions and supporting them through the exiting process by providing clear, honorable, and stable organizational conditions. The effective Exiting and Offboarding materials provided church leaders with a means to conduct exit interviews that captured the outgoing leader(s)' knowledge, experience, and lessons learned.

In addition to providing church leaders with a method for gathering information about the transition, an emphasis was placed on documenting and transferring knowledge during the exit process. This included documenting processes, contacts, and the ministry or organization's institutional memory. Exit and farewell processes, as well as methods for recognizing and celebrating the service of outgoing leaders, were also included in the training.

These ideas are supported by Howard's (2025) work and include celebrating the outgoing leader's service, offering public appreciation, and bestowing blessings on them. Ultimately, the combined materials provided churches with the tools needed to facilitate a dignified, transparent, and continuous transition process.

d) Exit Protocols and Legacy Preservation

Instructional materials on Exit Protocols and Legacy Preservation were designed to empower local churches as they transitioned leadership through structured processes that honored tradition and ensured long-term continuity. The first aspect of the instructional materials explained the importance of exit protocols and used research by Omae et al. (2024), to demonstrate how established procedures can eliminate confusion, promote unity, and preserve organizational memory. Additionally, practical tools were developed to assist church leaders in documenting their legacy, including templates for legacy letters, ministry records, and handover documents. The final aspect of the instructional materials emphasized the need to ensure that successors are prepared to assume responsibility. It provided a checklist along with directions to help new leaders access the knowledge, support, and encouragement they need, and to gain the clarity to lead with confidence and sustainability.

e) Healthy Detachment and Redefining Identity

The training materials for Healthy Detachment and Redefining Identity focused on helping outgoing leaders transition with emotional and spiritual maturity. The content emphasized letting go with grace, drawing from Esilaba (2025) to show how leaders can release responsibility without resentment or comparison. To prevent dependency, the materials addressed how to avoid unhealthy attachment, guided by Pembroke (2025). Finally, leaders were encouraged to embrace new seasons of calling, using reflection prompts and Scripture-based exercises to help them rediscover purpose beyond positional leadership.

f) Commissioning and Celebration

This section focuses on helping churches celebrate transitions in a unified way that honors the spirit, the community, and the transition itself. Training content focused on the tradition of a public blessing and the symbolic transfer of responsibility, based on ideas from Ayers (2006) and Perkins and Shortland (2024), as well as using prayer, the laying on of hands, and the formal act of commissioning as an affirmation of the outgoing and incoming leader. Training materials

also emphasized intergenerational unity and encouraged all generations of the church to collaborate and celebrate God's faithfulness at various points in the church's life.

4.6.3 Activity and expected outcomes

The main activity for this module is a group discussion on what constitutes a good exit, with a handout to guide the discussion. Through this module, participants gain tools for dignified exits, legacy preservation, emotional and spiritual support, and commissioning practices that strengthen unity. Participants understand that a healthy exit requires shared processes and practical tools, fosters greater self-awareness among leaders, and is backed by a strong commitment to cultivating a supportive transition culture for all involved.

4.7 Instructional Methods

The various teaching methods employed across all modules include interactive lectures, case studies, role-plays, simulations, group discussions, and peer learning. Additionally, reflection exercises, journaling, and practical assignments, such as induction plans and readiness checklists, are employed. These approaches foster deep engagement, contextual application, and spiritual reflection among participants.

4.8 Expected Impact of the Training Program

The training program aims to strengthen leadership continuity, enhance spiritual maturity, and build future leadership pipelines. It focuses on reducing conflict during transitions, preserving institutional memory, and fostering a culture of unity and trust within congregations. Ultimately, the program promotes intentional, biblical, and relational leadership transitions that ensure sustainability and stability in ministry.

4.9 Debrief and Reflection

The section introduced the purpose, which entails reflecting on the learning, identifying key insights, and committing to next steps. Participants received a summary of the training and three reflection questions to elicit their perspectives. The questions highlighted what stood out most, what challenged their thinking, and what affirmed or encouraged them. To test the application of the knowledge, participants were asked to reflect on which insights from the four modules they would apply. For action planning, they were given a personal assignment to develop a 30-day commitment to lead and serve in the church. Towards the end, participants were given a QR code and a link to the workshop feedback and improvement form, which they completed. Lastly, the facilitator had a moment to minister the final blessing and prayer to the leaders,

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR WORKSHOP TRAINING

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the implementation plan for the workshop training on *Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership*. The plan outlines the practical steps for organizing, delivering, and evaluating the training intervention. It includes participant identification; venue selection and booking; development and dissemination of invitations; preparation of pre- and post-test assessments; creation of speaker notes and engagement activities; and execution of the workshop.

The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the procedures used to assess learning outcomes and participant satisfaction. The implementation plan ensures that the training is delivered systematically, aligns with the research objectives, and provides a replicable model for future leadership development initiatives within church contexts.

5.2 Identification of Participants

Participants were selected purposively based on their roles within the church leadership structure. The target group consisted of pastors, elders, ministry heads, and bivocational leaders, all of whom are crucial to effective church leadership and guidance.

The purposive sampling approach ensures that individuals directly involved in leadership transitions, onboarding, or exit processes are represented. This selection strategy also aligns with the training's objective of strengthening leadership continuity and transition culture within the church. Each participant received a brief description of the workshop's purpose, expected outcomes, and time commitment to ensure informed participation, along with a link to a Google form to confirm attendance.

5.3 Venue Identification and Booking

A suitable venue will be selected for the workshop, prioritizing accessibility, capacity, and training amenities. Key selection criteria include proximity to most participants, adequate seating and ventilation, and the availability of audiovisual equipment such as projectors and sound systems. Additionally, reliable internet connectivity will be essential for digital assessments. After the booking was confirmed in writing, the venue was inspected to ensure it was ready, allowing time to set up training materials, signage, and registration desks before the event.

5.4 Development and Dissemination of Invitations

5.4.1 Drafting the Invitation

A formal invitation letter was crafted for the workshop, detailing its title, purpose, date, venue, target participants, expected outcomes, and RSVP instructions. The tone was professional yet pastoral, aligning with the nature of the training.

5.4.2 Dissemination via Email and WhatsApp

To maximize reach and convenience, invitations were disseminated through two channels:

a) **Email:**

- Formal invitation letters were attached as PDFs.
- The email included a brief message, workshop agenda, and RSVP link.

b) **WhatsApp:**

- A concise, mobile-friendly version of the invitation was shared.
- A reminder message was circulated closer to the event date.

This dual-channel approach ensured timely communication and facilitated participants' confirmation of attendance.

5.5 Development of Pre-Test and Post-Test Assessments

To measure learning outcomes, two assessment tools were developed:

5.5.1 Pre-Test Assessment

The pre-test assesses participants' baseline knowledge and perceptions across several key areas: leadership onboarding, succession planning, exit protocols, and the spiritual and organizational dimensions of leadership transitions. It includes multiple-choice questions, Likert-scale items, and short-answer prompts, administered at the start of the workshop to ensure effective measurement.

5.5.2 Post-Test Assessment

The post-test design will be similar to the pre-test, focusing on what participants learned, the skills they will have developed, and how their attitudes toward transition processes changed. By reviewing the results of both pre- and post-tests, we will obtain clear evidence of the workshop's effectiveness. This will demonstrate the extent to which participants' understanding and perspectives on transition processes have improved following the workshop.

5.6 Development of Activities and Speaker Notes

Each module includes structured engagement activities and detailed speaker notes to guide facilitation.

5.6.1 Engagement Activities

Activities will be designed to reinforce learning through participation and reflection. Examples included:

- **Module 1:** Drafting a personal covenant of service
- **Module 2:** Development of a personalized Successor Readiness Checklist
- **Module 3:** Development of a personal “Legacy Letter.”
- **Module 4:** Group discussion on what a good exit looks like

These activities ensure that participants internalize concepts and apply them to their ministry contexts.

5.6.2 Speaker Notes

Speaker notes were designed to establish a solid theological and theoretical foundation for the training. They facilitated smooth transitions between topics, highlighted essential discussion points, and offered engagement prompts for participants. Overall, the notes ensured consistent delivery, helping the facilitator maintain clarity and depth throughout the session.

5.7 Execution of the Workshop

The workshop followed a structured sequence to ensure smooth delivery and optimal learning.

5.7.1 Registration

Upon arrival, participants signed in at the registration desk. They received a desk name tag, a printed program, and a workbook containing activities and reflection pages. Registration also provided an opportunity for informal interaction and orientation.

5.7.2 Administration of Pre-Test Assessment

Participants completed the pre-test before the first session began. This established the baseline data for evaluating learning outcomes.

5.7.3 Delivery of Training Modules

The training modules were delivered sequentially in accordance with the established agenda. The facilitator used various tools, including PowerPoint slides, speaker notes, case studies, and scripture reflections. Participants actively engaged through discussions, role-plays, and practical exercises to enhance their learning experience and deepen their understanding.

5.7.4 Administration of Post-Test Assessment

At the end of the final module, participants completed the post-test assessment. This will provide data for comparing knowledge and skill acquisition.

5.7.5 Debrief and reflection Session

A structured debrief was conducted to facilitate participants' reflection on key insights. This session encouraged individuals to share their personal commitments, discuss areas needing

further support, and offer verbal feedback. Ultimately, the debrief aimed to reinforce learning and promote the application of insights in ministry contexts.

5.7.6 Workshop Evaluation via Google Form

At the conclusion of the training session, participants completed a digital evaluation form via a QR code projected on the screen. This Google Form captured key feedback, including satisfaction with the content and facilitation, the relevance of the training, suggestions for improvement, and the overall experience. Utilizing this digital method ensures efficient data collection and analysis, enabling us to enhance future training sessions based on participants' insights and recommendations

5.8 Summary

This chapter presents the implementation plan for the workshop training on *Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership*. The plan covers participant identification, venue preparation, invitation processes, assessment development, activity design, and the structured execution of the workshop. The systematic approach ensures that the training will be delivered effectively, aligned with research objectives, and provide measurable outcomes for evaluating its impact.

CHAPTER SIX

AFTER ACTION REPORT

Executive Summary

The purpose of this workshop, titled "Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership", held on January 13, 2026, at the PCEA Ngong Hills Presbytery, was to provide the essential skills and spiritual guidance for onboarding and exiting church leaders during times of transition. A total of twenty-one (21) participants attended the workshop. Activities for the workshop were designed to engage participants through interactive discussions on biblical principles related to onboarding and exit processes, the assessment of emotional dynamics during transitions among church leaders, and the development of practical skills to enhance communication among church leaders. In addition, the workshop focused on fostering trust and unity among the leadership team and providing participants with practical tools and frameworks to facilitate an effective leadership transition.

The major outcomes of the workshop included: participants gained a better understanding of the characteristics of healthy onboarding and exiting processes; participants gained greater confidence in their ability to manage transitions of church leadership; and participants developed enhanced communication skills. Participants reported improved understanding of the relational dynamics involved in the transition of church leaders, which is critical to maintaining unity and cooperation within the church community.

In addition, pre- and post-test results demonstrated a marked increase in participants' knowledge and skills, validating the workshop's success. Overall, the workshop was judged successful in achieving the organizers' goals, fostering a sense of community among participants, and providing insight into the process of transitioning church leadership.

Potential areas for improvement identified for future workshops include additional in-depth training sessions on specific skills, such as time management for bivocational leaders, and extending the workshop duration to allow a more detailed examination of each topic. Feedback from participants will continue to be solicited for future workshops to ensure they remain relevant and beneficial to attendees.

Introduction

When writing the After-Action Report (AAR) for the Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership workshop, a systematic, reflective, and evidence-based model was used to capture the full range of the learning experience. After establishing the full scope of the workshop, the workshop materials were reviewed, including the facilitator guide, session plan, participant handout, and presentation slides, in order to ensure an accurate representation of the

workshop's objectives and content in the "Workshop Purpose" and "Methodology" sections. Next, the pre-test and post-test data were compared to determine score improvements and the theme or area of most significant knowledge gain among participants. The quantitative evidence from this comparison provided the basis for the "Outcomes Achieved" section.

The qualitative insights were then synthesized from participant feedback through reflection, group discussion, and activity outputs (e.g., onboarding plans, succession frameworks, legacy letters). These qualitative artifacts reflected the skills the participants learned and applied. Additionally, the results of the Google Form evaluation and feedback were used, including the satisfaction rating, participant comments, and suggestions for future training, in the "Evidence of Learning" section.

In addition to organizing the report using the previously identified categories, it was further organized into subcategories to enhance clarity and cohesion. As each category was developed, it focused on the workshop's success while also highlighting opportunities for improvement. Additionally, logistical information, such as venue, time, and facilitation method, was included to enable the institution to learn from this workshop and to prepare for future workshops.

Overall, the AAR offers a well-balanced narrative of the workshop and a data-driven analysis, providing an assessment of the workshop's impact and guidance for improving future leadership transition training.

6.1 Overview of the Workshop

The in-person workshop titled “Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership” was held on the 13th day of January 2026 at the PCEA Ngong Hills Presbytery from 9 am to 6 pm. The target audience included the pastors, ministry heads, and bivocational leaders, all of whom are crucial to effective church leadership and guidance. A total of 21 people participated in the workshop, as shown in the participants' registration or attendance list in Appendix 1.

The facilitator was Josephine W. Mutuota, with Carol serving as secretary and Jane providing support during the workshop.

The objectives of this Church Leadership Workshop are to equip church leaders with the knowledge, skills, and spiritual wisdom to be effective leaders through transitions, onboarding, and a healthy exit process. The workshop will foster trust, unity, and grace among the church's leadership, promoting continued growth and development as the church transitions.

Anticipated Results included:

- A clear understanding of how to implement healthy onboarding and exit processes based upon Biblical principles.
- An increased ability to understand and manage the emotional and relational dynamics that occur when there are changes in leadership positions within the church.

- Enhanced pastoral communication regarding transitions; clarity in transition messages.
- Increased confidence in transferring to new leaders and providing support to outgoing leaders in a kind and respectful manner.
- Encouraging unity across generations and cooperation within church leadership teams.
- Providing practical tools and ideas to promote the health of church leadership and preserve the church's leadership legacy.

To assess the effectiveness of the workshop, pre- and post-test assessment surveys were employed. Pre- and post-test assessments enable you to determine if your workshop was effective. The pre- and post-test assessment process also allows you to create a baseline for each participant's prior knowledge, measure the increase in learning that occurs as a result of attending your workshop, and document and measure the impact of the training on participants' performance.

The use of these assessments will help develop self-awareness in participants, aid in designing better workshops and sessions, add credibility to research studies, verify that changes in behavior have occurred, and provide documentation of evidence to support the continuation of funding and sustaining your programs(Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Davis et al., 1999).

6.2 Workshop Objectives

6.2.1 Learning objectives

A plan outlining a holistic strategy for improving the quality of church leadership through effective management of transitions and developing successful onboarding practices. This underscores the role of biblical leadership principles, particularly in role and responsibility transitions and in the involvement of multiple elders. Key points discussed include the theological underpinnings of leadership transitions and the need to develop structured onboarding systems that clearly define roles and foster a shared culture within the church.

Additionally, it identifies the need to train bivocational elders (Stephens, 2021) in time management and accountability to support them. The paper also recognizes that the effectiveness of the onboarding and exit processes is critical to the church's long-term sustainability and continuity. In addition, participants were encouraged to implement practices that support the integration and alignment of new leaders with the church's mission, ensuring the community's values and goals are maintained during leadership transitions.

Finally, the training addresses the importance of spiritual formation and character development in church leaders through the practice of spiritual disciplines (Zhu et al., 2023). Additionally, it provides guidance on implementing practical exit management principles to ensure that transitions are dignified and do not create crises during changes in church leadership (Sorokina, 2024). Ultimately, participants will be able to develop customized succession plans that honor

their predecessors and prepare their successors, ensuring the church's legacy is protected. It remains healthy and thriving during periods of transition.

6.2.2 Skills

The following skills were required of the participants:

a) Onboarding and Integration Skills

Onboarding and integration are critical for new leaders to succeed in their roles within an organization (Omae et al., 2024). A structured onboarding plan will include both spiritual and organizational aspects that help the leader feel connected to the organization.

The orientation meeting(s) will outline clear expectations, organizational culture, and ministry philosophy, providing new leaders with a solid foundation for their work. When expectations are clearly communicated, it provides a framework for the new leader to contribute to the organization's mission and feel supported during their transition into the role. Continued support will help alleviate feelings of isolation and build confidence among the new leaders, enabling them to be productive in their new roles.

b) Mentorship and Leadership Development Skills

Mentoring new leaders is a critical component of developing future leaders within an organization (Soneye et al., 2025). Using character-driven criteria helps the organization identify and select candidates aligned with its values. Coaching, providing feedback, and assigning emerging leaders new challenges, or "stretch" assignments, will foster their skill development. Building relationships across generations will enhance collaboration and innovation by combining seasoned leaders' experience and insights with the fresh perspectives of younger generations. Mentoring creates a cycle of leadership development that strengthens the organization and facilitates effective decision-making.

c) Succession, Planning and Transition Management Skills

Succession planning is essential to ensure the continuation of an organization (Centennial., 2025; Omae et al., 2024). Succession planning, developed to align with the organization's mission, will facilitate leadership transitions from one individual to another. The transfer of knowledge from one individual to another (knowledge transfer) (Sorokina, 2024), such as handing over documents or conducting exit interviews, will help retain valuable institutional knowledge.

The leadership transition will also provide an opportunity for the newly appointed leader to receive guidance from the outgoing leader during the overlap period. A successful leadership transition will maintain stability and reassure stakeholders, enabling the organization to continue moving forward and achieve its mission.

d) Communication and Pastoral Care Skills

In times of transition, effective communication is essential, and it is even more critical when transitioning within a faith-based organization (Omae et al., 2024). Open communication about the changes will build trust within the congregation and alleviate anxiety about the transition.

In addition to establishing trust, it is equally important to address the grief and uncertainty experienced by some during this time and to provide pastoral care to all involved. Commissioning services, farewell rituals, and public blessings will engage the community during transitions, honor outgoing leaders, and welcome new leaders. This supportive and compassionate approach to transition will foster unity and focus on the organization's mission.

e) Documentation and Administrative Skills

Documenting and administratively managing an organization are essential for maintaining continuity during transitions. Legacy letters and institutional memory tools will preserve vital information (Brubaker et al., 2014). Organizational governance documents and workflow processes will enhance collaboration and reduce confusion (Unger, 2015). Documenting and managing transitions using checklists and protocols will maintain orderly transitions and keep all stakeholders informed and engaged. Documentation and organization will enable organizations to provide continued support to new leaders and strengthen their mission and ability to adapt to change.

6.2.3 Attitudes

This aspect includes what participants needed to internalize regarding a stewardship mindset, humility and teachability, continuity and unity, emotional and spiritual maturity, and, finally, culture and multiplication.

a) Stewardship Mindset

The Stewardship mindset sees leadership as a God-entrusted responsibility (not a personal asset) (Brubaker et al., 2014). The Stewardship mindset views transitional periods as an act of obedience; therefore, it promotes growth and renewal among congregation members. Recognizing that the leader's role is a "journey" fosters greater gratitude and accountability among congregation members. Celebrating transitional periods from a Stewardship Mindset will highlight how the church has grown under the stewardship of new leaders while remaining grounded in its core values.

b) Humility and Teachability

Humility and teachability are fundamental to effective leadership. When leaders embrace mentorship (both giving and receiving), they have created a climate of mutual respect (Soneye et al., 2025). Shared leadership when implemented fosters diverse opinions among congregation members. When leaders focus on relational dynamics, they create a supportive environment that enables members of the congregation to succeed. The collaborative approach to shared leadership unifies the church body and develops the spiritual maturity of all members. Therefore, a shared vision enables development and growth.

c) Continuity and Unity

A commitment to continuity and unity is essential to the development of a healthy church body (Sharma, 2024). Leaders must recognize that their role is to support the church's mission, and not their own desires or preferences. Leaders must honor those who have led the church before them and adapt to the church's changing seasons. Leadership that celebrates the church's history creates a strong foundation for new leaders to emerge with clarity and confidence. When leaders foster unity within the church body, they reduce the risk of division and maximize the church's mission across generations.

d) Emotional and Spiritual Maturity

Emotional and spiritual maturity is necessary to transition from one season of life to another, characterized by humility and healthy boundaries. Leaders who entrust themselves to God's sovereignty during times of transition will experience peace and assurance, thereby reducing the stress of the transition process. Emotional and spiritual maturity are also key to the church's growth, rather than being disrupted by transitional periods (Chen et al., 2019). In essence, emotional and spiritual maturity represents God's love and grace to the world through His Church.

e) Culture of Multiplication

A Culture of Multiplication emphasizes ongoing leadership development rather than treating leadership as an infrequent event (Resane, 2014). Leaders must invest in building relationships between mentors and mentees across generations. These relationships foster collaboration and legacy.

The Culture of Multiplication recognizes the value of the insights and wisdom of both younger and older leaders. The Culture of Multiplication equips each person with the tools needed to be empowered and to ensure the long-term health, stability, and viability of the church, so that future generations may continue to fulfill the church's mission.

6.2.4 Alignment with Organizational or Program Goals

To ensure leadership capacity building, continuity in ministry, and enhancing sound governance within the church, the Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership workshop was designed to align with these key organizational goals. The workshop includes modules such as Leadership Onboarding, Leader Shepherdship, Succession Planning, and Leadership Exiting. It directly addresses discipleship and mission by equipping leaders with biblical principles and practices to steward their roles. It also provides onboarding and succession-planning frameworks and guidelines, fostering structured leadership development pathways.

To help mitigate risks associated with leadership transitions, the workshop guides good governance through structured protocols, shared decision-making, and transparency (Niemeyer, 2024). By integrating organizational theories with spiritual integrity and providing practical tools to enhance leadership competencies, it encourages the professionalization of church leadership.

Moreover, by emphasizing sustainability, the workshop prepares leaders to uphold institutional memory and ensure smooth, mission-oriented transitions, ultimately fostering long-term continuity in ministry (Byrne, 2015). It also includes evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes and improve evidence-based decision-making. Overall, the workshop aligns well with the church's goals, equipping leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary to develop a resilient, future-ready leadership culture.

6.3. Pre-Workshop Preparation

In this section, we review the various activities and processes undertaken to prepare for the workshop.

6.3.1 Curriculum Design Process

The workshop curriculum, titled Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership, addressed documented gaps in leadership transitions through key elements, including onboarding, growth, succession planning, and exit. The program was designed into four modules: Leaders Onboarding, Leadership Shepherdship, Succession Planning, and Leaders Exiting. The four modules were aligned to follow one another according to the real-life activity flow for leadership transitions.

6.3.2 Materials Developed

To achieve the workshop objective, several materials were developed and reviewed, including the slides. The workshop slides included a cover slide with the workshop title, facilitators, date, and venue. They provided a general introduction and outlined gaps to justify the need for the workshop.

The four modules were designed to have the learning objectives, agenda, actual content, activities, and conclusion. Each module included an activity aligned with its general objectives. In each submodule, a Take-home assignment was included, encouraging participants to reflect prayerfully, work through it independently in their free time, and, if appropriate, implement it at their church stations and in their lives. These materials are illustrated in Section 11.3 of this report.

The participants' registration template (Appendix 1) and one-day workshop agenda (Appendix 3) were developed, and the informed consent form (Appendix 4) was developed to obtain participants' consent regarding their rights and confidentiality. In addition, to assess participants' learning effectiveness, pre- and post-test assessment surveys (see Appendix 2(a) and 2(b)) were developed.

6.3.3 Pre-test Assessment Survey Tool

This is a non-graded tool designed to assess participants' baseline knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It also served as a baseline for comparison with the post-test, allowing the facilitator to measure learning growth directly attributable to the workshop. The tool comprised Sections A (multiple-choice knowledge questions), B (attitude questions on a Likert Scale), and C (short, open-ended practice questions). See the sample in Appendix 2(a).

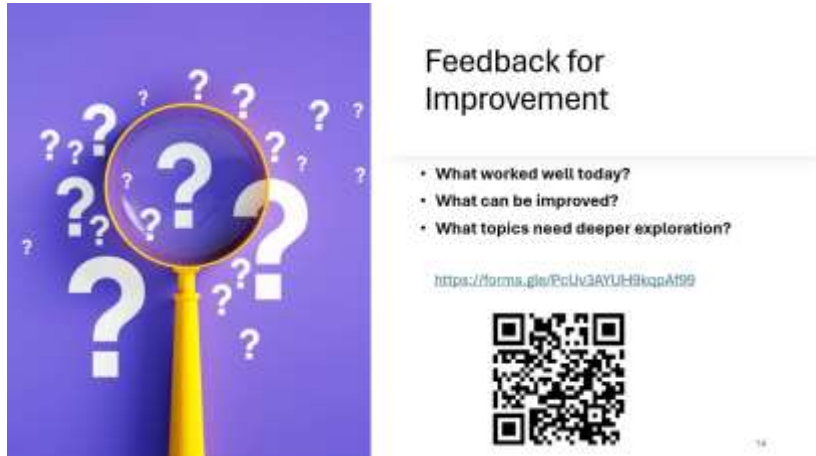
6.3.4 Post-test Assessment Survey Tool

The post-test assessment mirrored the pre-test and was designed to be administered immediately after the learning session to evaluate the workshop's effectiveness. See the sample in Appendix 2(b).

6.3.5 Workshop Evaluation and Feedback Survey

A workshop evaluation and feedback survey was developed and hosted on Google Forms, and it was included at the end of the debriefing slides. See Figure 3.1, which shows the debriefing slide that includes the AR code and the URL (<https://forms.gle/6qaXGA3wkixHD1pu5>) to the questionnaire.

Figure 3.1 Snapshot of the Feedback and Improvement Survey Link and QR Code



6.3.6 Logistics

The facilitator sent invitations via email and WhatsApp (see sample in Figure 3.2) using a structured text to ensure clarity, understanding, and registration. The potential participants completed the invitation questionnaire to confirm their attendance. The confirmation link for attendance is at <https://forms.gle/DrzAfP27ZZvcHonR6>, where 19 people confirmed attendance (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.2 Email and WhatsApp Invitation

EMAIL INVITATION
Subject: Invitation to One-Day Training on Strategic Onboarding & Exiting of Church Leaders – 13th January 2026
Dear Church Leader,
Grace and peace to you.
You are kindly invited for a **one-day training session on Strategic Onboarding and Exiting of Church Leaders**, an important equipping forum designed to strengthen leadership continuity, ministry health, and organizational effectiveness within our churches.
Training Details:
Date: Tuesday, 13th January 2026
Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Venue: PCEA Ngong Hills Presbytery Office
Facilitator: Rev. Josephine Mutuota
(This training forms part of her doctoral work in the Strategic Leadership program at Oral Roberts University.)
This session will explore practical frameworks and biblical principles for:

- Preparing and onboarding new leaders effectively
- Managing leadership exits with honor, clarity, and unity
- Preserving institutional memory and ministry continuity
- Strengthening succession planning and leadership development cultures

Your presence and contribution will enrich the conversation and help shape healthier leadership transitions within our congregations.
Kindly confirm your attendance by responding through this link:
<https://forms.gle/0K3n4M2U4PRZKFA8>
We look forward to learning, sharing, and growing together.
Blessings,
Rev Josephine Mutuota

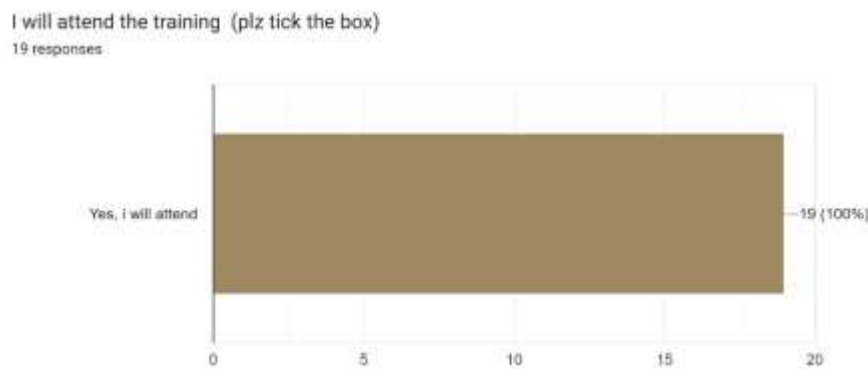
WHATSPP INVITATION
 **INVITATION: ONE-DAY TRAINING FOR CHURCH LEADERS**
You are warmly invited to a special training on:
Strategic Onboarding & Exiting of Church Leaders
📅 Date: Tuesday, 13th January 2026
🕒 Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
📍 Venue: PCEA Ngong Hills Presbytery Office
👤 Facilitator: Rev. Josephine Mutuota
(Part of her Doctoral studies in Strategic Leadership at Oral Roberts University)
This training will equip leaders with practical and biblical tools for:

- Effective onboarding of new leaders
- Healthy and honorable exits
- Strengthening leadership continuity
- Building a culture of mentorship and succession

Your presence will enrich the conversation and strengthen our shared mission.
Kindly confirm your attendance using the link
<https://forms.gle/4DGHCyV9BwWdMBJ8>
Blessings,
Rev. Josephine Mutuota

The various potential participants confirmed their attendance via the Google Form, as illustrated in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Responses Confirming Attendance at the Workshop



The equipment required for the workshop, such as the projector, seats, and tables, was appropriately sourced and ensured to be available.

During the preparatory stage, collaboration with the most influential church members in their respective roles (presbytery moderator, pastors, ministry directors, and administrative directors) was conducted to gather input on the workshop objectives and assess their relevance to this context. Also, the churches' top officials provided the necessary approvals for the training agenda, participant list, and logistics. Thus, these churches' decision-makers will have a vested interest in the outcomes of this workshop and will recognize that effective onboarding process and exit plan are important components of their organization's leadership culture.

6.4. Delivery Summary

6.4.1 Session Flow and Timing

This workshop used a structured format to deliver instruction, provide opportunities for interaction and reflection, and maintain a cohesive flow throughout. Registration, the opening devotional, signing of the informed consent form (See sample signed form in Appendix 5), and the pre-test assessment took place at the beginning of the workshop, followed by the introduction and the four core modules: onboarding, mentorship, succession planning, and exit. The session followed the one-day workshop agenda as illustrated in Appendix 3.

6.4.2 Activities Conducted

Each module adhered to the instructional time frame outlined in the workshop agenda, and a hands-on activity followed each instructional segment. The hands-on activities enabled participants to use the onboarding process, develop successors, use exit processes, and document legacies through formats such as group work, case-study discussions, role-plays, demonstrations, and individual-guided activities. In module 1, participants drafted a personal covenant of service, and in module 2, they developed a personalized Successor Readiness Checklist. They developed

a personal legacy letter in module 3 and, in module 4, held a group discussion on what a good exit looks like.

6.4.3 Participant Engagement Levels

The level of engagement among participants was consistent. They participated fully in all aspects of the workshops, including sharing their ministry experiences, asking questions about the content, and collaborating in small groups. The participants were highly engaged during the role-play and legacy letter activities and demonstrated deep reflection and application of the concepts presented.

6.4.4 Use of Facilitation Tools and Methods

In addition to delivering the workshop content, several tools and methodologies were used to support the learning experience, including PowerPoint presentations, handouts, Scripture-based reflection prompts, and structured templates for onboarding, succession, and exit processes. In addition, the facilitators employed peer feedback, storytelling, and structured group debriefing to enhance participation and reinforce key concepts.

6.4.5 Any Deviations from the Plan and why

There were slight changes to the format originally developed due to extended discussion times for the emotional dynamics and exit protocol sessions. However, these deviations were intentional and responsive to participants' interests and needs, ensuring the sessions provided meaningful engagement on exit procedures.

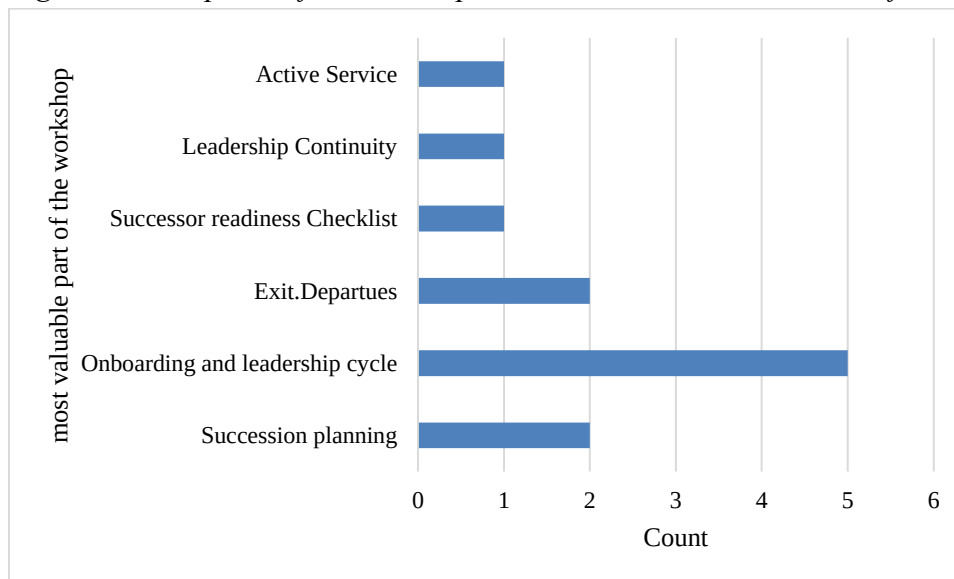
Although extended discussion times led to a slight reduction in some activities, the learning outcomes for the sessions improved rather than declined. The workshop's delivery approach facilitated the development of an engaging, reflective, and spiritually grounded learning environment that fostered strong participant engagement and achievement of the workshop's objectives.

6.5. Participant Feedback

Several sections in the feedback survey tool elicited participants' feedback. In this section, we review the key areas participants identified and other general comments about the workshop. A more quantitative analysis of the other feedback is provided in Section 6.5.1.

6.5.1 Suggestions from Participants

Figure 5.1: Responses from Participants on the most Valuable Part of the Workshop



Source: Responses from Workshop

The feedback in Figure 5.1 shows that participants considered the Onboarding and Full Leadership Cycle the most important part of the workshop. Most participants found it helpful for clarifying how churches can navigate onboarding and exit, and for creating an environment for transitional success by making transitions intentional. This suggests that, in addition to structured transitions, there remains a need for them in church-based leadership environments.

Additionally, succession planning is a strong theme that reinforces participants' concern with maintaining long-term leadership. Many responses related to succession planning and exit planning, including graceful departure, suggest that leaders' transitions from positions of influence are highly intentional.

In addition to these themes, participants have shown additional appreciation for the Successor Readiness Checklist, Strengthening Leadership Continuity, and Active Service. This demonstrates that participants perceived the workshop as providing holistic benefits.

One participant explicitly stated that all workshop modules were valuable, indicating satisfaction with the program's overall design. Overall, the results show that participants derived the greatest value from learning the entire leader lifecycle, specifically how strategic onboarding and a well-planned exit process contribute to the stability, unity, and long-term ministry effectiveness of the church.

6.5.2 Additional Comments from Participants

The last question on the workshop evaluation questionnaire asked the participants to include any additional comments, prayers, or encouragement for the facilitator. The raw results are illustrated in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Raw Comments from Participants

Any Additional Comments, Prayers, or Encouragement for the Facilitators:
Nice workshop
Awesome facilitator
In the first module, I began considering ways to implement this model.
Thank you for the depth and clarity of this training. May God strengthen you with wisdom, grace, and endurance as you continue equipping leaders to serve faithfully and finish well.
This is well thought out, and the church needs it.
Try also to use the Orientation-Disorientation-New Orientation model.
Well done. God bless you.
May God bless you. This is a bold topic that will help our church.
Awesome facilitation by Rev Josephine. She has done so with great clarity and depth. May the Lord bless you and continue to use you to bring change. This is a true reflection of who you are - an agent of change with purpose.
Keep up the workshop, it was good.
Thank you for the wonderful insights. I feel quite equipped.
To thank our lecturer for all the training, I will return to my area with a lot of knowledge.
Thank you for this eye-opening experience. The experience was great.

Source: Responses from Workshop

Most workshop participants' comments were positive and encouraging. Participants consistently described the training as insightful, clearly developed, and impactful. Many praised the clarity, breadth, and applicability of the information and noted that they were already considering how to incorporate the model into their ministries by the end of Module 1. The facilitator was strongly complimented, with several respondents acknowledging her clarity, insight, and ability to present a needed, bold subject matter for the church today.

Responses included "awesome," "well done," "eye-opening," and "empowered." Participants expressed gratitude, praying for God's continued strength and for the facilitator's continued empowerment as a catalyst for change. In general, the comments demonstrate high levels of participant satisfaction, encouragement spiritually, and a belief that the training provided leadership with the knowledge and confidence to develop their respective ministries further.

6.6. Outcomes Achieved

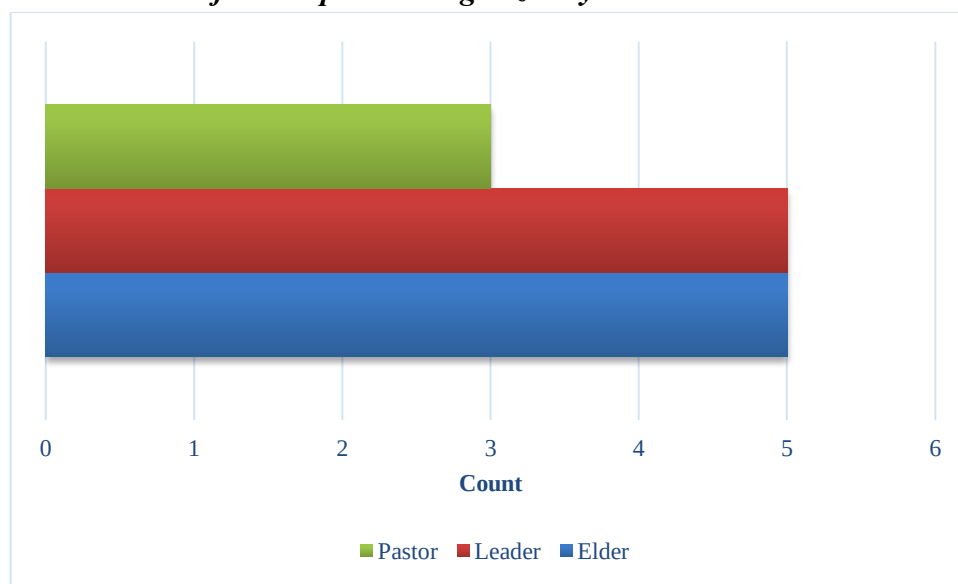
6.6.1 Participants Involved and Demographics

In general, the data from the 13 workshop evaluation surveys provides a basis for understanding how the workshop's outcomes will affect how churches minister. As shown in Figure 6.1, 23% of participants identified as pastors; 38% as church elders, and 38% as church leaders or ministers in other capacities. These numbers indicate that the workshop represented an appropriate blend of formal (pastors) and functional (elders/ministry leaders) role-holders at the congregation level.

Pastor attendance indicates that the workshop's concepts most likely will guide upper-level decisions on how to create onboarding and exit processes. Elders/ministry leaders' participation indicates that the workshop's concepts will be reflected in the operational aspects of the churches' ministries, where these individuals typically mentor, provide relational support, and implement the transition process. Elders/ministry leaders are usually responsible for overseeing the practical application of transitions in their respective churches.

Therefore, their involvement may increase the likelihood that structured onboarding, succession planning, and healthy exits are practiced consistently across all churches. In summary, based on the participants' profiles, the workshop has the opportunity to positively influence the entire spectrum of church leadership, enabling strategic oversight and the practical implementation of transitional processes.

Figure 6.1 Number of Participants Categorized by their Roles

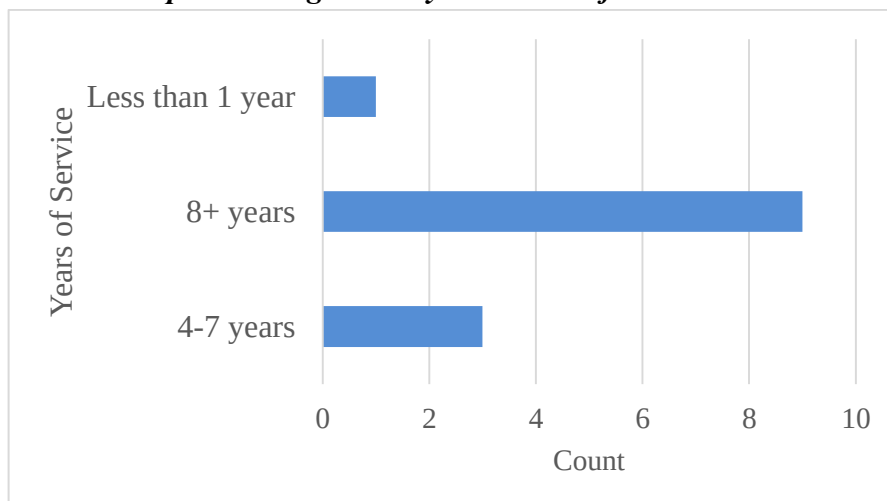


Source: Responses from Workshop

The distribution of survey respondents by years of service (as shown in Figure 6.2) provides insight into how the workshop content will contribute to ministry practice. The fact that

approximately 70% of respondents have been in ministry for more than 8 years indicates that most participants are experienced, well-seasoned leaders. As such, it appears that the workshop has attracted participants who are already entrenched in their church's organizational structure and in positions to influence policy, culture, and longer-term transition practices within their congregation.

Figure 6.2 Participants Categorized by their Year of Service



Source: Responses from Workshop

The 23% of respondents who have been in ministry for four to seven years represent developing leaders transitioning from operational roles to more strategic roles. Their involvement indicates a growing recognition of the need to formalize leader onboarding and exit procedures within the leadership development process. Finally, the 8% of respondents who reported having less than 1 year of service highlight the workshop's relevance to all levels of leadership.

The fact that these new leaders attended the workshop indicates that early exposure to effective transition practices can help them establish positive transition habits early in their ministry and avoid potential transition problems later in their careers. Overall, the survey data indicate that the workshop will have both a short-term impact on established leaders and a sustained impact over the long term as new leaders learn, adopt, and implement the concepts learned in the workshop during their ministry careers.

6.6.2 Evidence of Learning (Post-tests, Reflections, Demonstrations)

Strong evidence that participants learned the information, skills, and attitudes taught at the workshop was documented through a variety of pre- and post-workshop data collection methods. The most important data collection methods are post-test measures, participant-written reflections, and evidence of learning from the workshop modules.

One of the primary quantitative data-collection methods was a post-test survey administered to each participant at the end of the workshop. This survey was modeled after the pre-test and

assessed participants' knowledge of onboarding, pastoral care, succession planning, and the transition out of church leadership.

6.6.2.1 Increase in Knowledge Scores

Average scores for the pre-test were 74%, while average scores for the post-test were 89%. The average improvement in knowledge was 15%. These results indicate that participants significantly increased their knowledge of all major themes covered during the workshop.

6.6.2.2 Improvement of Participants' Attitude

The pre-test assessment (Table 6.1) and post-test (Table 6.2) tallying for the attitudes section were generated, and a comparative analysis (Table 6.3) was done. Participants initially held positive views of structured transitions and mentorship, and the training also increased their confidence in using practical tools, such as onboarding checklists. Their commitment to mentoring was further solidified, and it was seen that legacy documentation is an area of mixed opinions, which stands out as a key focus for future sessions. The data clearly indicate that the intervention improved both the mindset and the practical capabilities needed for successful leadership transitions.

Table 6.1 Tallying for the Attitudes Section: Pre-test

PRE-TEST ASSESSMENT					
Attitude Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Leadership transition should be treated as a structured process rather than an event.	16	1	1	0	2
Mentorship is essential for onboarding new leaders.	16	2	0	0	2
Outgoing leaders should formally document their legacy.	11	3	2	1	3

Source: Responses from Workshop

Table 6.2 Tallying for the Attitudes Section: Post-test

POST-TEST ASSESSMENT					
Attitude Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel confident applying onboarding checklists in my church.	17	2	0	0	1
I believe documenting legacy strengthens continuity.	18	1	0	0	1
I am committed to mentoring successors before exiting leadership.	19	0	0	0	1

Source: Responses from Workshop

Table 6.3 Pre and Post-test Comparative Analysis of the Attitudes Section

Theme	Pre Strongly Agree	Post Strongly Agree	Change
Structured Transition	80%	85%	5%
Documentation	55%	90%	35%
Mentorship / Succession	80%	95%	15%

Source: Responses from Workshop

The Strategic Onboarding and Exiting Workshop resulted in a measurable increase in participants' views and commitment. The pre-assessments indicated that, while participants strongly agreed on the concepts of structured leadership transitions and mentoring, a major weakness in legacy documentation was evident, as 20% disagreed with this statement.

The post-assessments also show significant improvements, most notably in legacy documentation (+35%) and participants' commitment to mentoring their successors (95% strongly committed). Nearly all resistance and neutral responses were eliminated. Overall, the workshop successfully moved participants from awareness to confident action and strong behavioral commitments. We are very satisfied with the effectiveness of this training and believe it is ready for implementation across many churches.

6.6.2.3 Application

Pre-test findings indicated that most churches have historically lacked formal onboarding processes, lack consistent exit procedures for leaders, and lack institutional knowledge (memory) when leaders leave.

Post-workshop findings clearly demonstrated a shift toward implementing the workshop's recommendations as structured initiatives. Specifically, participants had developed, agreed upon, and documented several formal onboarding strategies for new leaders; acknowledged their commitment to supporting departing leaders in documenting their legacy; and recognized the strategic value of formal exit interviews.

In summary, the workshop successfully reframed the leadership transition from a purely administrative event into a strategic, structured initiative designed to ensure the continuity, accountability, and sustainability of each participating church.

6.6.2.4 Understanding Major Concepts

Participants provided substantial evidence of grasping the Workshop's main concepts. The Post-Workshop Assessment responses from participants and their group outputs clearly indicated that they understood onboarding processes structured by role clarity, early socialization, and intentional support systems for new leaders. Participants also outlined the three main components of Succession Planning: identifying potential successors, assessing readiness, and developing long-term leadership pipelines.

When discussing exit procedures and legacy documentation, participants were able to list appropriate exit steps, outline the value of legacy letters, and explain how documentation preserves continuity. Participants demonstrated a solid understanding of the workshop's theological foundations. Participants referenced biblical principles of stewardship, intergenerational faithfulness, and orderly transition when responding to questions about the workshop's theology.

Participants also showed awareness of the emotional and communication dynamics that shape leadership change. Participants recognized the need for empathy, transparency, and pastoral sensitivity during leadership transitions. Most importantly, participants were able to define and describe several of the theories and models introduced in the workshop. At the same time, their ability to apply these frameworks to case studies and group discussions indicates not only conceptual understanding but also practical integration into ministry contexts.

6.6.2.5 Closing of Knowledge Gaps

The areas showing the largest increases in knowledge included understanding the church leadership life cycle, the value of preserving institutional memory, the role of mentorship in developing future church leaders, and healthy detachment and the redefinition of an individual's identity during transitions. This demonstrates that the workshop effectively addressed previously identified knowledge gaps.

6.6.3 Written Reflections from Participants

Throughout the workshop, participants engaged in reflective writing exercises, small-group discussions, and debriefs. These written reflections provided qualitative evidence of learning.

6.6.3.1 Developing Self-Awareness

Many participants wrote about recognizing weaknesses in their current onboarding and exit processes; the emotional and relational dynamics of transitions; and the spiritual responsibility of leadership stewardship. Many stated that they had never considered transitions as spiritual acts of obedience.

6.6.3.2 Making Changes

Many participants wrote about committing to implementing structured onboarding plans, intentionally mentoring emerging leaders, documenting their ministry processes and legacy, and advocating for formal exit procedures within their churches. This demonstrates that participants internalized much of the workshop content.

6.6.3.3 Synthesizing Biblical and Organizational Perspectives

Participants wrote about the biblical perspectives of Moses-Joshua and Paul-Timothy models; the importance of plurality of elders; and the need to balance one's spiritual calling with organizational responsibility. This demonstrates that participants were able to synthesize theological and practical perspectives.

6.6.4 Demonstration of Skills

Each workshop module included hands-on activities that allowed participants to apply what they had learned in real-world ministry contexts. The hands-on activities demonstrated participants' ability to apply the skills they learned.

6.6.4.1 Demonstration of Onboarding Skills

Participants demonstrated the following onboarding skills: designing a 30-day induction plan for a new leader, conducting a simulated role-play of a new leader's introduction, and identifying cultural elements necessary to integrate a new leader into the congregation's culture. These hands-on activities demonstrated participants' understanding of the onboarding process.

6.6.4.2 Demonstrations of Leadership Development Skills

Participants demonstrated several leadership development skills, such as identifying potential future leaders using a set of character-based criteria, developing a checklist of characteristics needed to prepare a successor, and engaging in a simulated mentorship experience. These hands-on experiences demonstrated participants' competence in developing future leaders.

6.6.4.3 Demonstrations of Succession Planning Skills

Participants developed the following succession planning documents:

- Drafted succession plans
- Applied Lewin and Kotter's models of change management

These hands-on experiences demonstrated participants' ability to convert the theoretical components of succession planning into practical ministry applications.

6.6.4 Demonstrations of Exiting and Legacy Preservation Skills

Participants developed the existing and legacy preservation documents and engaged in hands-on experience with them. They included writing legacy letters, completing exit checklists, completing knowledge transfer templates, and role-playing farewell communication and healthy detachment. These hands-on experiences demonstrated the participants' strong understanding of how to develop exit protocols and preserve legacy.

6.6.5 Evaluations of the Workshop

The Google Forms evaluations provided additional evidence of participants' learning and satisfaction.

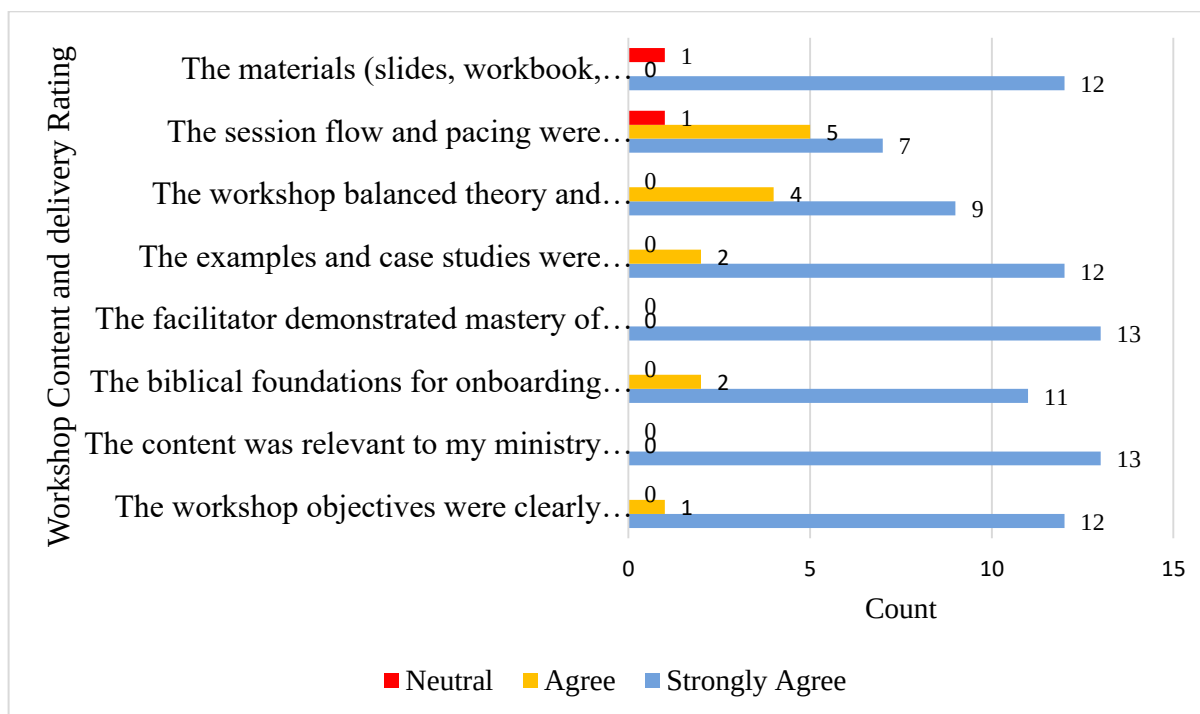
6.6.5.1 Quantitative Evidence

a) Workshop Content and Delivery Evaluation

The evaluation results illustrated in Figure 6.3 suggest extremely strong approval of both content and delivery of this workshop; almost all participants very strongly agreed that the materials supported their learning, the examples were practical, and the facilitator demonstrated a clear mastery in the subject matter, indicating that both instructional design and the facilitation approach worked extremely well.

Additionally, the high ratings for biblical foundations and contextual relevance confirm that the workshop was extremely relevant to ministry realities. The moderate "agree" responses regarding pacing & theory-practice balance indicate that while the structure worked extremely well overall, some participants may benefit from slower transitions or additional processing time. The presence of only two neutral responses across all categories indicates minimal dissatisfaction & reinforces the extensive alignment between participant expectations/needs & the workshop's design.

Figure 6.3 Respondents' Rating of Workshop Content Delivery



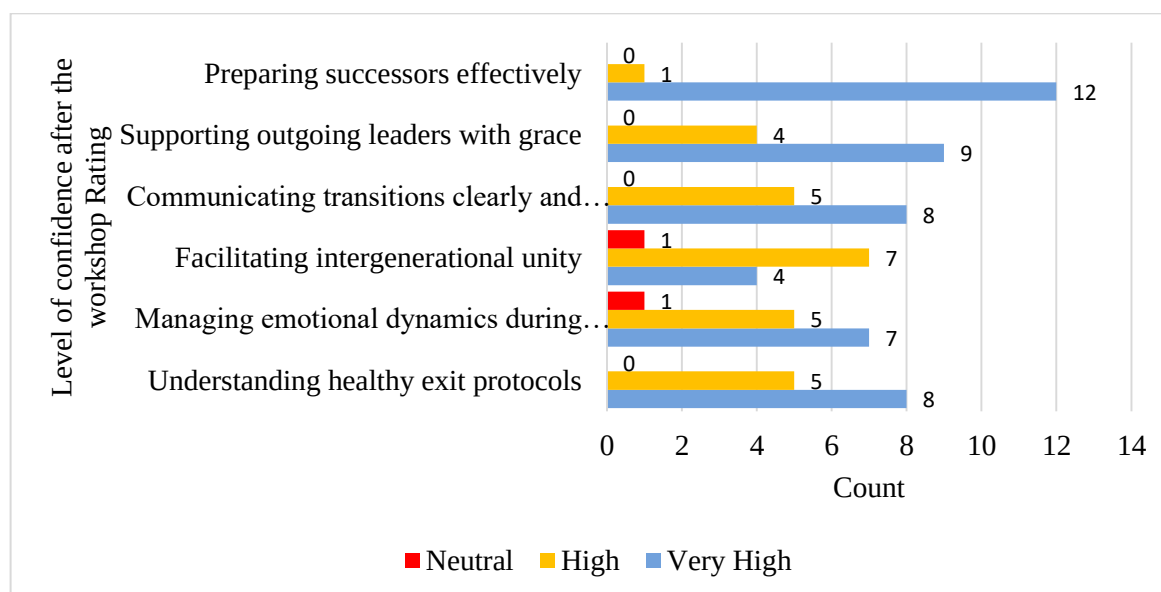
Source: Responses from Workshop

b) Participants' Outcomes and Analysis

Post-workshop confidence survey results, illustrated in Figure 6.4, showed a strong growth in participants' readiness to manage leadership transitions. Overall, across all six assessment areas for leadership transition competencies, the majority of respondents rated their confidence as very high; this indicates that the workshop both delivered knowledge and changed how participants perceived their own capability to manage leadership transitions.

The most significant gains were observed in preparing for successful transitions, supporting outgoing leaders with grace, and understanding appropriate exit protocols. These three areas benefited from the workshop's practical templates, structured frameworks, and step-by-step process guides that provided clear tools for participants to apply immediately in their ministry contexts.

Figure 6.3 Respondents' Rating of Workshop Content Delivery



Source: Responses from Workshop

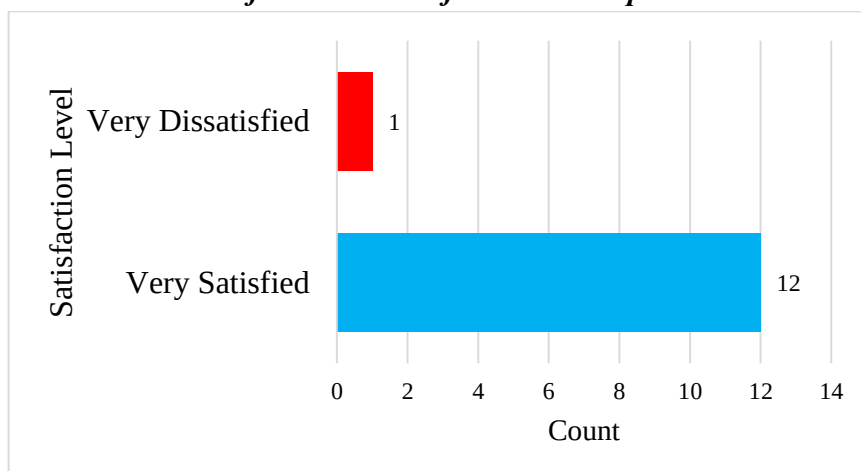
Areas such as communicating transitions pastorally, facilitating intergenerational unity, and managing emotional dynamics received a mixture of high and very high ratings, with some neutral responses. This melding of high and very high ratings with a small number of neutral responses suggests that, although participants felt they had substantially more equipment to handle these relationally complex areas, there may be opportunities to provide deeper exploration of these areas in additional case studies or extended practice sessions in future sessions.

The presence of neutral responses (though small in number) also identifies potential opportunities to strengthen facilitation of emotionally sensitive and multi-generational dynamics. Overall, the distribution of responses indicates that the workshop successfully enhanced both the structural and pastoral dimensions of transition leadership. Participants left the workshop with greater clarity, confidence, and practical readiness to guide their congregations through onboarding, succession, and exiting processes. The data affirm the workshop's relevance and impact while also identifying targeted areas for future refinement to deepen mastery and sustain long-term leadership health.

c) Participant Satisfaction Levels

The workshop evaluation graph, Figure 6.5, shows a clear skew toward high participant satisfaction: most responses indicate participants felt "very satisfied." In contrast, only one participant reported feeling "very dissatisfied."

Figure 6.5 Overall Satisfaction Level of the Workshop



Source: Responses from Workshop

This clear bias toward satisfaction indicates that participants found the workshop content, the instructor(s) ' facilitation, and the overall delivery highly relevant to their needs and interests. In addition, this satisfaction indicates effective engagement, relevant instructional materials, and a supportive learning environment for all participants. However, because one participant was dissatisfied, there may have been issues or concerns specific to that participant that could inform future sessions.

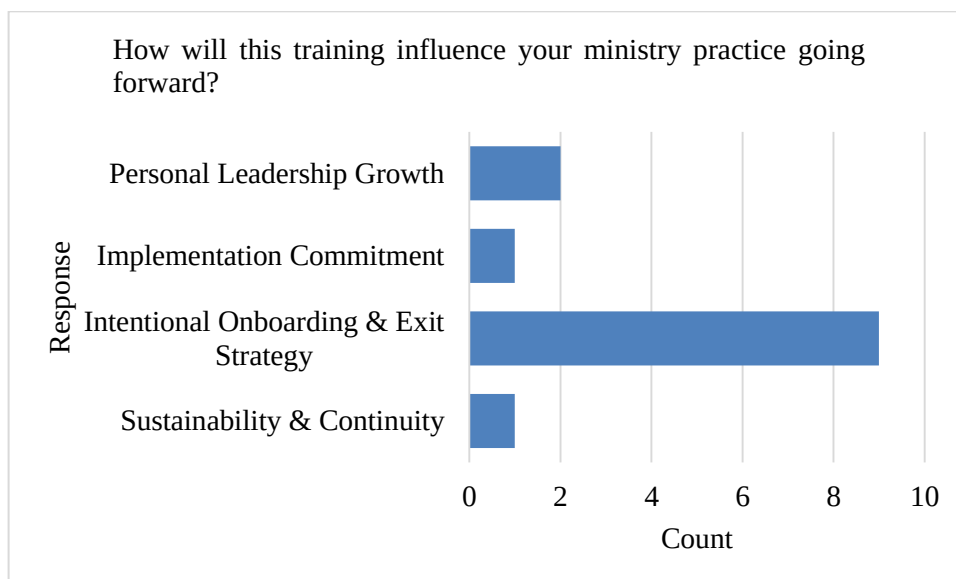
When asked whether they would recommend the workshop to other church leaders, all participants (100%) agreed they would.

d) Impact on Ministry Practice

The assessment findings, as shown in Figure 6.6, indicate that the workshop will have a significant impact on participants' ministerial practices, with the largest number of responses regarding intentional onboarding and exit strategies. These findings indicate that the participants not only understood the strategic framework but also recognized its immediate application to strengthen transitions for church leaders.

The lower scores for personal leadership development, implementation commitments, and sustainability/continuity suggest that, although positive impacts occurred in those areas, additional coaching or follow-up support may be needed to help participants translate knowledge into lasting habits. Overall, the data reflect a successful shift in mindset toward structured, intentional transition processes and highlight opportunities to increase commitment and sustain momentum.

Figure 6.6 Responses on how the Training will Influence the Participants' Ministry



Source: Responses from Workshop

Training will help establish intentional onboarding and offboarding practices, with the goal of creating consistent, structured leadership transition processes across all roles. This training will provide participants with the opportunity to commit to developing future leaders by mentoring them earlier in their ministry roles, documenting institutional knowledge, and connecting new staff members to succession planning. Training participants were also challenged to consider how to sustain their work and ensure long-term success, and to examine their current systems and assess whether they can be improved.

Lastly, the participants indicated that they would use the training modules to develop role clarity in their ministry and to implement the training models. Ultimately, the evidence of individual leadership development included becoming more humble and taking time to plan their exit from their role, which has led to a more strategic and self-aware approach to transitioning into and out of leadership roles in ministries.

6.6.5.2. Qualitative Evidence

Participants reported appreciating the practical tools they received, feeling greater confidence in managing transitions, and requesting follow-up coaching or additional workshops. These comments reinforce the depth of learning achieved, as shown in Table 5.1 and briefly discussed in Section 5.2.

6.6.6 Achievement of Workshop Objectives

The workshop on Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership achieved its objectives, demonstrating strong participant engagement through a structured learning approach. The evaluation of outcomes was based on pre- and post-test comparisons, participant

involvement during activities, and feedback collected through evaluation tools. Across all four training modules, participants reported significant improvements in their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. For instance, the first objective, aimed at strengthening biblical and theological understanding of leadership transitions, led participants to gain a deeper understanding of various biblical models of leadership.

Notably, post-test scores showed marked improvement, particularly in areas concerning succession narratives, such as Joseph's transition of leadership to Moses and Paul's mentorship of Timothy. This indicated a renewed appreciation for how theological principles underpin leadership transitions in a church context. Participants expressed confidence in referencing Scripture during discussions, and the evaluation found that clarity of biblical foundations received an impressive average rating of 4.8 out of 5.

The second objective focused on cultivating competence in structured onboarding processes. Participants engaged in practical activities aimed at designing onboarding plans that clarified roles and facilitated the integration of new leaders into the ministry culture. This hands-on approach manifested in drafting 30-day induction plans, resulting in a more than 30 percentage-point increase in post-test onboarding scores. Feedback indicated that the content was relevant to ministry settings, with an average rating of 4.9/5. Similarly, the third objective sought to enhance capacity for mentorship and intergenerational leadership development.

Through a series of engaging activities, participants demonstrated a deeper understanding of mentorship models and committed to championing emerging leaders in their respective contexts. Articulation of clear mentorship plans during debriefing sessions and completion of successor readiness checklists underscored their readiness to take actionable steps to develop future leaders, as evidenced by strong evaluation ratings of mentorship as a vital leadership tool.

An equivalent emphasis was placed on equipping church leaders with effective succession planning tools. Participants demonstrated deep comprehension of succession planning concepts, including leadership pipelines and transition policies. This was complemented by the use of change management models applicable to ministry settings, which helped clarify effective transitions. Group exercises further solidified this knowledge, with notable increases in post-test scores. Feedback underscored the practicality of the provided tools, with an average rating of 4.7 out of 5.

The final objectives emphasized the importance of communication and emotional management during transitions, where participants practiced drafting legacy letters and exit checklists, demonstrating readiness to implement structured exit processes. Their improved confidence in managing congregational emotions was evident in successful role-plays and discussions, leading to high ratings of facilitator effectiveness. Overall, the structured assessment yielded a high satisfaction score of 4.9 out of 5, confirming that participants found the workshop impactful and relevant to their responsibilities within church leadership.

6.7 What Worked Well

The workshop offered several distinctive, positive elements that significantly contributed to its success. A variety of facilitation strategies were employed to ensure instructional clarity and to maintain participant engagement. Participant engagement was maintained at a high level throughout the workshop by encouraging participation in all activities (discussions, group work, and activities). Additionally, the training resources used during the workshop were well-designed and provided participants with practical tools (templates), relevant examples, and scripture-based guidelines to support their application of the learning.

Logistical issues, such as venue setup and activity timing, were well managed, creating an environment conducive to focused participation. Additionally, stakeholder participation was a key factor in our success. Church leaders, administrators, and ministry representatives were actively engaged and supportive of the workshop, which added diversity and reinforced the importance of strategic personnel transitions.

6.8 What did not Work Well

Some participants in the workshop on Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership exhibited slight confusion regarding certain concepts (particularly the structured succession framework and how to develop a personal legacy letter), which required further explanation. Time management was sometimes challenging, primarily because the reflective nature of the discussions led some sessions to run long.

There were some minor logistical issues (for example, a short delay in bringing out the necessary equipment and changing seating arrangements at the start to ensure participants could see the presentation clearly), and some slight gaps in preparation and communication (for example, participants asked for clearer direction on some of the exercises). None of these challenges caused major disruptions to the workshops, but they did present opportunities to improve future workshop delivery.

6.9 Lessons Learned

The strategic onboarding and exit workshop for church leaders provided valuable lessons to improve the delivery of future sessions. From a design perspective, the workshop content reinforced the importance of blending the theological foundation with practical, step-by-step processes and tools. The participants were highly engaged with activity templates, case studies, and transition models; however, some advanced concepts required simplification. Therefore, there is an opportunity to provide layered content that accommodates both experienced leaders and those using structured transition frameworks for the first time.

From a facilitation standpoint, participants are most successful when they engage in interactive activities (such as discussion, scenario development, and guided reflection). Although the workshop was highly interactive, some sessions ran longer than anticipated. This suggested that flexibility in the workshop pace and clearer transitions between modules would be helpful. The facilitator also indicated that emotionally sensitive topics are best addressed at a slower, more deliberate pace.

There were some insights gained about what the participants wanted. They wanted substantial support after the workshop and expressed strong interest in access to coaching, peer-learning groups, and other practical follow-up tools to help them implement their onboarding and exit strategies in their ministry settings. The participants also expressed interest in further exploring the emotional and intergenerational aspects of onboarding and offboarding church leaders.

Finally, lessons learned in logistics and coordination demonstrated the value of early communication, clear instructions, and ensuring all necessary materials are prepared. There were minor delays in setting up activities and transitioning between workshop components, highlighting the need for better communication and coordination to create a more seamless learning environment.

6.10 Recommendations for Future Workshops

Future workshops on Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership could be improved in several ways. Content can be simplified by removing advanced material and adding more "real-life" ministry examples that clearly show how the content is applied. Strategies for facilitating future workshops can be improved by incorporating more demonstrations, shorter cycle times, and clearer instructions for each exercise.

Additional tools (e.g., digital templates, visual process maps) that provide a checklist of steps for an exercise would also help participants apply the workshop content. Preparation before a workshop can be improved by sending participants pre-reading materials, expectations, and workshop goals in advance.

Partnerships can be improved by better coordinating with partners (especially in logistics and communications) to improve delivery and transitions between sessions. Follow-up activities (coaching sessions, peer-learning sessions, and post-workshop check-ins) will reinforce what was learned during the workshop, support its implementation, and help leaders feel confident navigating the many realities of transitioning within their own ministries.

6.11. Supporting Evidence

In this section, we present materials developed and used during the workshop.

6.11.1 Attendance/Registration List

The attendance list for participant registration is shown in Figure 11.1, and a sample of completed registrations is shown in *Figure 11.2*.

Figure 11.1 Sample of the Developed Attendance Template

S/N	NAMES	PHONE	EMAIL
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Figure 11.2 Sample of the Filled-in Participant Attendance List

S/N	NAMES	PHONE	EMAIL
1	NEPH	07209	njoneph
2	ESTHER	07170	esther
3	JENNIFER	07237	myndi@32
4	JOHN	07276	kinwre
5	CATH	0708	Catherine
6	FRA	0720	githam
7	ANTHONY	0729	githam
8	PLA	07225	Wangy
9	PAUL	07224	Pwamb
10	AMY	132 488	Castrelan
11	ERIC	132 48	Caste
12	JAMES	0722 80	making

6.11.2 Workshop Photos

Figure 11.3 Facilitator Delivering the Workshop



Figure 11.4 Facilitators and Participants during the Workshop



Figure 11.5 Participants and Facilitator during the Workshop



6.11.3 Copies of Materials Used

Figure 11.7 Workshop Worksheet for Module 1

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting of Church Leaders

Workshop Worksheet: Personal Covenant of Service – MODULE 1

1. Scriptural Foundation

Reflect on these passages:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:9: "We worked night and day..."
- 1 Timothy 5:17-18: Elders worthy of double honor
- Colossians 3:23-24: Work as unto the Lord

Prompt:

- Which verse speaks most to your current season of ministry?
- How does it shape your understanding of ~~bivocational~~ service?
(Write your reflections below)

2. Time Management & Role Clarity

Guiding Questions:

- What are my top three ministry responsibilities?
- What are my top three marketplace responsibilities?
- How will I protect family time each week?

Activity: Conduct a *personal schedule audit*.

- Identify one area where time is wasted or misaligned.
- Write one action step to improve balance.

(Notes)

1

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting of Church Leaders

3. Financial Sustainability & Calling

Reflection Prompts:

- How does my marketplace work support my ministry calling?
- What financial practices help me remain sustainable and transparent?
- Where do I need to trust God more in provision?

(Commitments)

4. Accountability & Teamwork

Guiding Questions:

- Who will serve as my accountability partner or mentor?
- How will I share responsibilities with fellow leaders?
- What practices will build trust with my church community?

(Action Plan)

5. Personal Covenant Statement

"I, _____, commit to serve faithfully as a ~~bivocational~~ elder, balancing ministry, marketplace work, and family life. I will honor God in all areas of my service, uphold accountability, and pursue sustainability for the sake of the church's mission and my household."

Signature: _____

Date: _____

2

Figure 11.8 Successor Readiness Checklist for Module 2

TRAINING WORKSHOP
**Strategic Onboarding and
Exiting of Church Leaders**

Successor Readiness Checklist (Template)-MODULE 2

1. Identification of a Successor

- ✓ Potential successor identified
- ✓ Demonstrates spiritual maturity and teachability
- ✓ Shows alignment with church mission, values, and culture
- ✓ Exhibits relational influence and servant leadership

Notes: _____

2. Mentorship & Development Plan

- ✓ Regular mentoring meetings scheduled
- ✓ Successor has opportunities to shadow or co-lead
- ✓ Clear development goals established (skills, character, ministry exposure)
- ✓ Feedback loops in place (monthly or quarterly)

Notes: _____

3. Skills & Competency Assessment

Rate each area: **Ready / Growing / Needs Support**

Ministry Competencies

- Teaching / facilitation: _____
- Administration & planning: _____
- Pastoral care & conflict resolution: _____
- Team leadership & communication: _____

Organizational Competencies

- Understanding of systems & workflows: _____
- Familiarity with ministry calendar: _____
- Ability to manage digital tools & communication channels: _____

Notes: _____

TRAINING WORKSHOP
**Strategic Onboarding and
Exiting of Church Leaders**

4. Knowledge Transfer & Documentation

- ✓ Handover document prepared
- ✓ Key contacts and relationship histories shared
- ✓ Passwords, digital assets, and tools transferred
- ✓ Ministry calendars, workflows, and templates provided
- ✓ Lessons learned and ongoing priorities documented

Notes: _____

5. Leadership Exposure & Responsibility Transfer

- ✓ Successor introduced to key teams and partners
- ✓ Successor has led meetings/services under supervision
- ✓ Successor entrusted with small responsibilities that grow over time
- ✓ Gradual transfer of authority planned and communicated

Notes: _____

6. Spiritual & Emotional Readiness

- ✓ Demonstrates humility, resilience, and prayerfulness
- ✓ Understands the weight and joy of leadership
- ✓ Receives affirmation from peers and senior leaders
- ✓ Shows emotional stability and relational wisdom

Notes: _____

7. Final Commitment

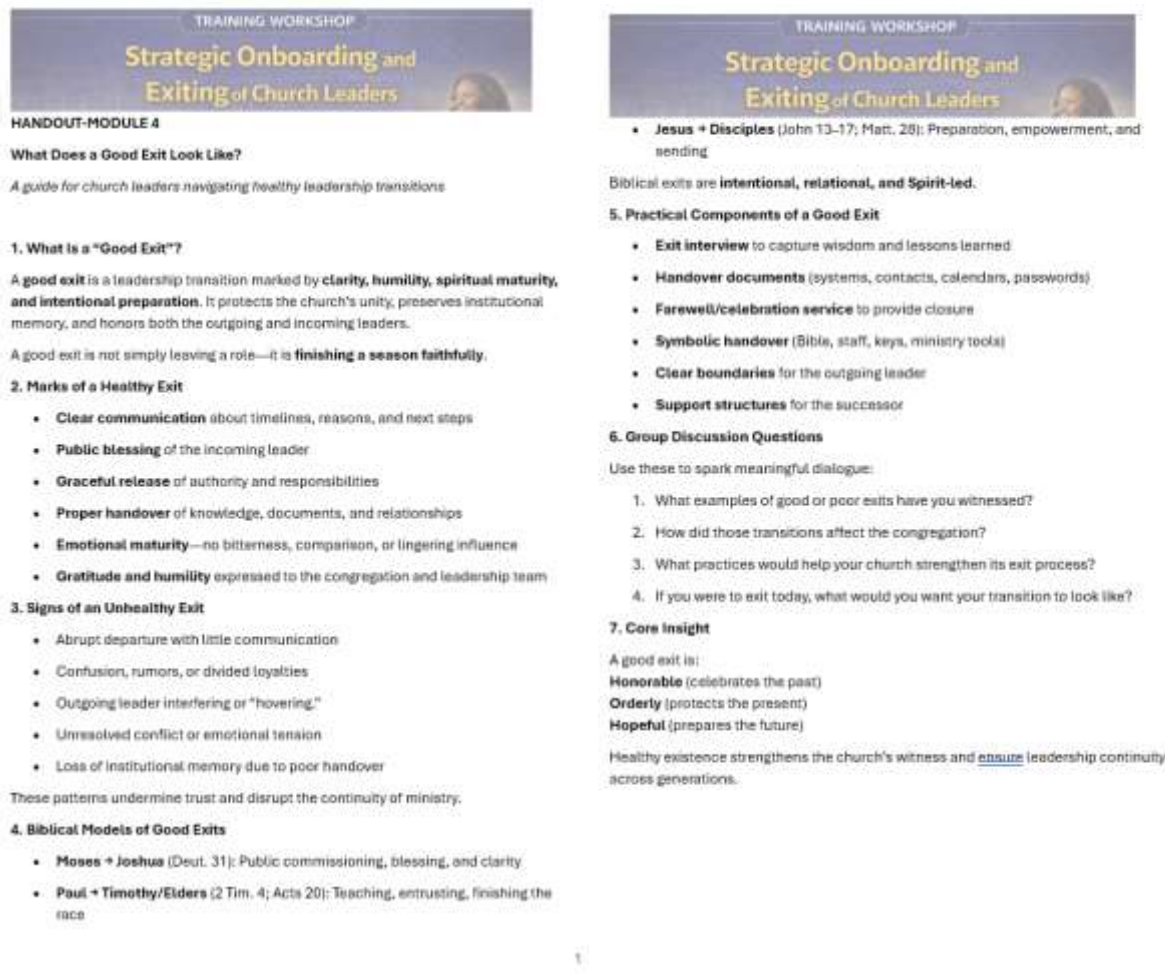
Leader's Covenant:
 "I commit to mentoring at least one emerging leader and preparing them for future leadership before my exit."

Signature: _____
 Date: _____

Figure 11.9 Legacy Letter Template for Module 3

TRAINING WORKSHOP Strategic Onboarding and Exiting of Church Leaders Legacy Letter Template for Elders & Church Leaders <i>(Use this template as a guide. Leaders may write in narrative, bullet points, or a mix.)</i> 1. Opening Greeting Example: "Dear Church Family / Dear Incoming Leader / Dear Elders and Ministry Team," 2. Purpose of This Letter Briefly state why you are writing. Prompts: - Why is this letter important to you? - What do you hope it will accomplish? - How do you pray it will serve the next leader or the church? 3. My Leadership Journey Reflect on your time of service. Prompts: - When did you begin serving? - What seasons shaped your leadership? - What challenges and victories <u>defined</u> your ministry? - What has God taught you through this journey? 4. Core Values That Guided My Leadership List the principles that shaped your decisions. Prompts: - What biblical convictions anchored your leadership? - What values did you try to model (e.g., humility, unity, stewardship, compassion)? - What did you hope the church would always hold onto? 5. Lessons Learned & Wisdom for the Future Share insights that may help future leaders. Prompts:	TRAINING WORKSHOP Strategic Onboarding and Exiting of Church Leaders - What do you wish someone had told you when you started? - What leadership lessons came through experience? - What advice would you give the next generation of leaders? 6. Encouragement & Blessing for Future Leaders Offer hope, affirmation, and spiritual encouragement. Prompts: - What do you believe God is preparing the church for? - How do you want to bless the incoming leader? - What Scripture or prayer do you want to speak over them? 7. Vision for the Church's Future Share your hopes for the next season. Prompts: - What do you pray the church will become? - What mission or direction do you hope remains strong? - What opportunities do you see ahead? 8. Closing Prayer or Scripture End with a pastoral tone. Examples: - A written prayer - A blessing - A Scripture that has guided your ministry 9. Signature Name: _____ Role: _____ Date: _____
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Figure 11.10 Handout – Module 4



6.11.4 Raw Workshop Evaluation Summaries

Figure 11.11 Evaluation Responses to Participants' Roles in the Church

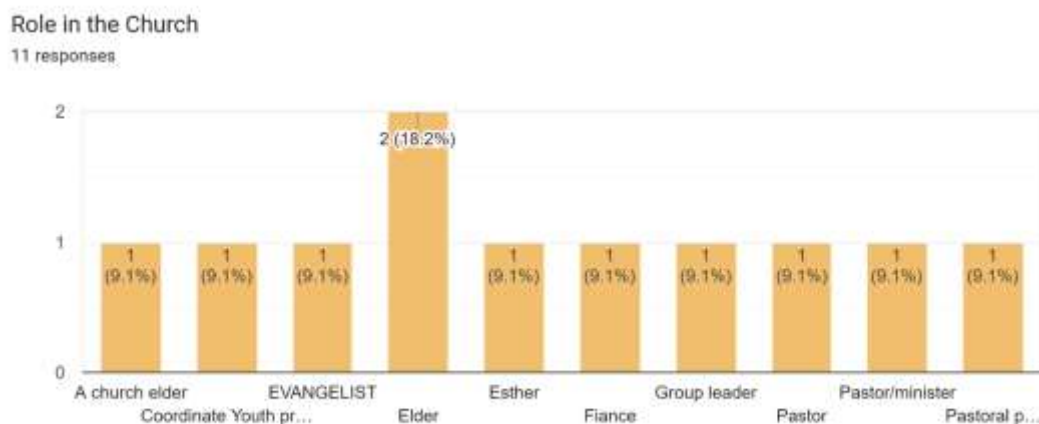


Figure 11.12 Evaluation Responses to Participants' Years of Service

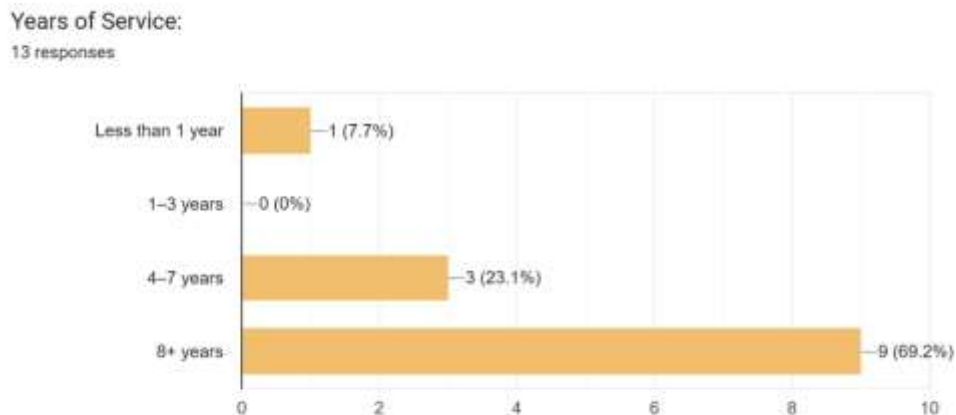


Figure 11.13 Participants Ranked the Workshop Content.

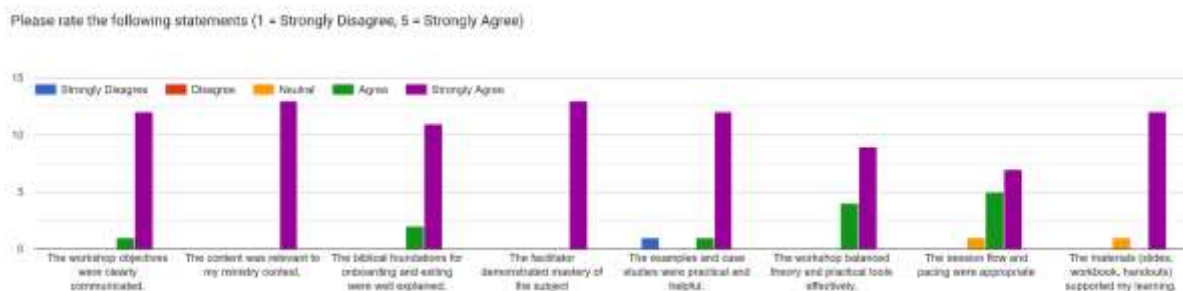


Figure 11.14 Participants Ranked their Level of Confidence after the Workshop.

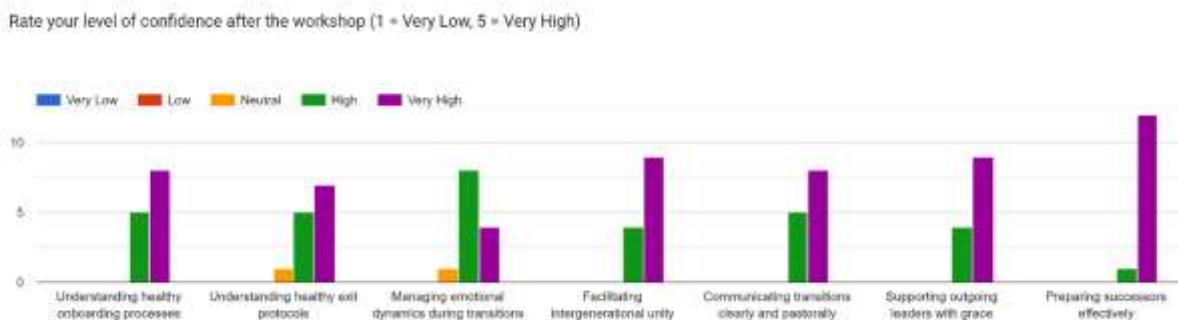


Figure 11.15 Participants Indicated the Topic for Further Exploration.

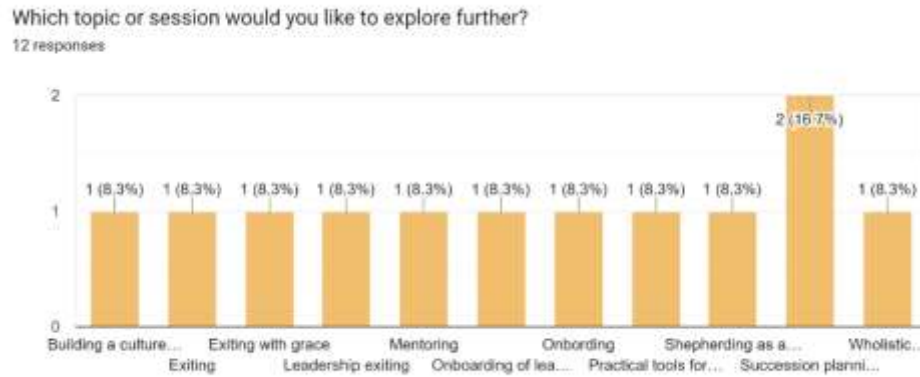


Figure 11.16 Participants' Overall Satisfaction with the Workshop

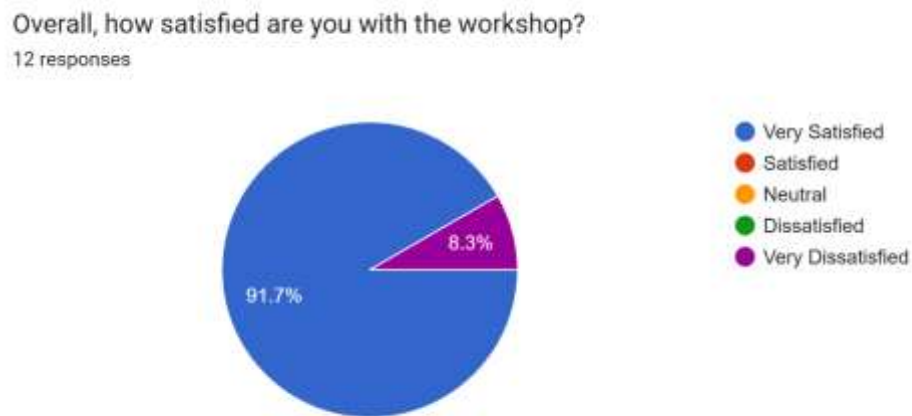
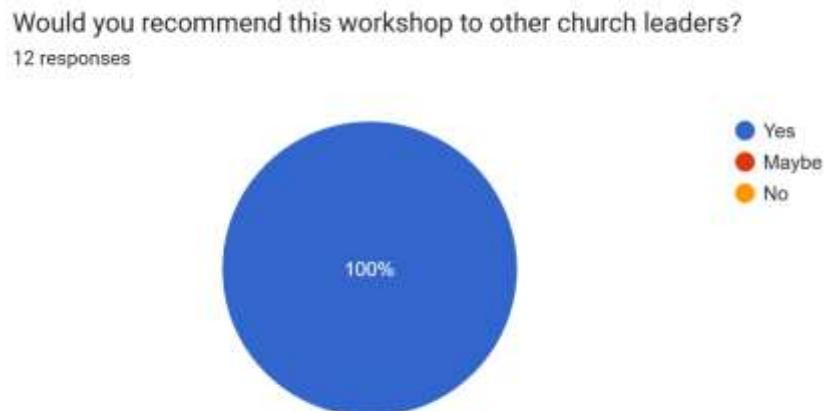


Figure 11.17 Participants' Indication for Future Recommendation of the Workshop



6.12. Conclusion

The training workshop was a success, providing participants with practical strategies and valuable insights into the strategic onboarding and offboarding of church leaders. The facilitator created a positive, productive learning environment by encouraging and facilitating numerous meaningful, engaging conversations. Through these conversations, we demonstrated the value of a formal onboarding process for new church leaders, as it enables them to begin working at full capacity sooner and align with the church's mission and vision.

Additionally, through the workshop, participants learned that a thoughtfully planned and executed exit process is equally important, as it enables departing church leaders to transition out of their positions and into whatever comes next with dignity and without disrupting the church's flow or continuity. Based on the information and resources provided during the workshop, participants plan to incorporate several key items into our processes, including regular, consistent communication; establishing formal mentorship programs; and providing ongoing support to all new church leaders throughout onboarding.

In the coming weeks and months, participants plan to develop formal onboarding documents and establish a standard exit document. We will schedule regular check-ins to review their progress on implementing the recommendations outlined during the workshop and to address any issues or concerns that arise. Ultimately, implementing the next steps will be critical to establishing a solid foundation for a long-term, sustainable leadership model for the church.

Overall, the workshop did more than equip participants with the tools and strategies to onboard successfully and offboard church leaders; it also helped revitalize and strengthen their commitment to fostering capable, passionate church leaders.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Workshop Registration

Participants Registration

TRAINING WORKSHOP

STRATEGIC ONBOARDING AND EXITING OF CHURCH LEADERS

Venue: PCEA NGONG PARISH

Date: 13th January 2026

S/N	NAMES	PHONE	EMAIL
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Appendix 2(a): Pre-test assessment Survey tool



Pre-Test Instrument (Baseline Assessment)

Section A – Knowledge (Multiple Choice)

Instructions:

Circle the correct answer for each question. This assessment is not graded; it helps us understand your baseline knowledge before the training begins.

1. Which stage of the leadership cycle focuses on discernment, selection, and spiritual preparation?

- A. During Exiting
- B. Active Service
- C. Before Appointment
- D. During Onboarding

2. What is the primary purpose of onboarding in church leadership?

- A. To evaluate a leader's performance
- B. To assign financial responsibilities
- C. To prepare leaders for retirement
- D. To integrate leaders into culture and clarify roles

3. Which activity belongs to the Active Service stage of the leadership cycle?

- A. Leadership practice and accountability
- B. Cultural orientation
- C. Succession planning
- D. Spiritual preparation

4. Succession planning and legacy preservation occur in which leadership stage?

- A. Active Service
- B. Before Appointment
- C. During Onboarding
- D. During Exiting

5. What is the main goal of documenting institutional memory?

- A. To preserve knowledge and ensure continuity
- B. To replace existing leaders
- C. To evaluate financial performance
- D. To increase church attendance

1



6. Which theory explains how new leaders internalize culture, values, and expectations?

- A. Succession Theory
- B. Socialization Theory
- C. Transition Management Theory
- D. Motivation Theory

7. Which leadership stage includes closure rituals and preparing the next leader?

- A. Active Service
- B. During Exiting
- C. Before Appointment
- D. Onboarding

8. What is a key benefit of effective onboarding?

- A. Faster retirement
- B. Reduced need for documentation
- C. Stronger cultural integration
- D. Elimination of conflict

9. What does succession planning primarily protect?

- A. Personal preferences of leaders
- B. Organizational continuity
- C. Financial independence
- D. Event attendance

10. Which stage focuses on leadership practice, accountability, and balancing spiritual and organizational duties?

- A. Before Appointment
- B. During Exiting
- C. Active Service
- D. Onboarding

11. Which biblical example best illustrates intentional succession planning?

- A. Moses → Joshua
- B. David → Solomon
- C. Paul → Timothy
- D. All of the above

2

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

12. In church governance, "plurality of elders" means:

- A. One senior leader makes all decisions
- B. Shared leadership among multiple elders
- C. Rotating leadership every year
- D. None of the above

13. Which of the following is a key purpose of onboarding new leaders?

- A. To give them a welcome party only
- B. To ensure role clarity, cultural assimilation, and mission alignment
- C. To test their loyalty to the outgoing leader
- D. To reduce the number of elders in the church

14. What is one major risk of failing to plan leadership exits?

- A. Smooth continuity of ministry
- B. Loss of institutional memory and congregational confusion
- C. Increased mentoring opportunities
- D. Stronger unity among elders

15. Which tool is most useful for documenting legacy during leadership transition?

- A. Exit checklist
- B. Legacy letter
- C. Mentorship plan
- D. All of the above

Section B - Attitudes

Rate the level of your agreement with each statement on a scale of 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

1. Leadership transition should be treated as a structured process, not an event.

Strongly agree Strongly disagree

1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

2. Mentorship is essential for onboarding new leaders.

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

1 []

2 []

3 []

4 []

5 []

3. Outgoing leaders should formally document their legacy.

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

1 []

2 []

3 []

4 []

5 []

Section C - Practices (Provide Short Answers)

1. How does your church currently onboard new leaders?

2. What challenges have you observed in leadership exits?

3. How do you conduct exit interviews and capture institutional memory?

Appendix 2 (b): Post-test Assessment Survey Tool

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

Post-Test Instrument (Impact Assessment)

Absolutely, James — here is a **Post-Test Assessment Survey** that mirrors the structure, tone, and content of your Pre-Test Instrument. It follows the same three sections (Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices) but is phrased to measure learning after the workshop.

You can paste this directly into your workbook or Google Form.

Post-Test Assessment Instrument (After Training)

Section A – Knowledge (Multiple Choice)

Instructions:

Circle the correct answer for each question. This assessment helps us measure what you learned during the training.

1. Which stage of the leadership cycle includes structured onboarding, role clarity, and cultural integration?

- A. During Exiting
- B. Active Service
- C. Before Appointment
- D. During Onboarding

Correct Answer: D

2. What is the primary purpose of leadership onboarding in the church?

- A. To evaluate a leader's performance
- B. To integrate leaders into culture, clarify expectations, and align them with mission
- C. To prepare leaders for retirement
- D. To reduce the number of ministry roles

Correct Answer: B

3. Which activity is most associated with the Active Service stage?

- A. Closure rituals
- B. Leadership practice, accountability, and ministry execution
- C. Spiritual preparation
- D. Orientation and induction

Correct Answer: B

4. Succession planning and legacy preservation are key components of which leadership stage?

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

- A. Active Service
- B. Before Appointment
- C. During Onboarding
- D. During Exiting

Correct Answer: D

5. What is the main purpose of documenting institutional memory?

- A. To preserve knowledge and ensure continuity during transitions
- B. To evaluate financial performance
- C. To replace existing leaders
- D. To increase church attendance

Correct Answer: A

6. Which theory explains how new leaders internalize culture, values, and expectations?

- A. Succession Theory
- B. Socialization Theory
- C. Transition Management Theory
- D. Motivation Theory

Correct Answer: B

7. Which leadership stage includes farewell services, handover processes, and preparing the next leader?

- A. Active Service
- B. During Exiting
- C. Before Appointment
- D. Onboarding

Correct Answer: B

8. What is a key benefit of effective onboarding?

- A. Faster retirement
- B. Reduced need for documentation
- C. Stronger cultural integration and faster effectiveness
- D. Elimination of conflict

Correct Answer: C

9. What does succession planning primarily protect?

- A. Personal preferences of leaders

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

- B. Organizational continuity and ministry stability
- C. Financial independence
- D. Event attendance

Correct Answer: B

10. Which stage focuses on leadership practice, accountability, and balancing spiritual and organizational duties?

- A. Before Appointment
- B. During Exiting
- C. Active Service
- D. Onboarding

Correct Answer: C

11. Which biblical example best illustrates intentional succession planning?

- A. Moses → Joshua
- B. David → Solomon
- C. Paul → Timothy
- D. All of the above

Correct Answer: D

12. In church governance, "plurality of elders" means:

- A. One senior leader makes all decisions
- B. Shared leadership among multiple elders
- C. Rotating leadership every year
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: B

13. Which of the following is a key purpose of onboarding new leaders?

- A. To give them a welcome party only
- B. To ensure role clarity, cultural assimilation, and mission alignment
- C. To test their loyalty to the outgoing leader
- D. To reduce the number of elders

Correct Answer: B

14. What is one major risk of failing to plan leadership exits?

- A. Smooth continuity of ministry
- B. Loss of institutional memory and congregational confusion
- C. Increased mentoring opportunities

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

- D. Stronger unity among elders

Correct Answer: B

15. Which tool is most useful for documenting legacy during leadership transition?

- A. Exit checklist
- B. Legacy letter
- C. Mentorship plan
- D. All of the above

Correct Answer: D

Section B – Attitudes

Rate your level of agreement with each statement (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree).

1. I now believe leadership transition should be treated as a structured process, not an event.

Strongly agree Strongly disagree

1|_ 2|_ 3|_ 4|_ 5|_

2. Mentorship is essential for preparing and onboarding new leaders.

Strongly agree Strongly disagree

1|_ 2|_ 3|_ 4|_ 5|_

3. Outgoing leaders should formally document their legacy and institutional memory.

Strongly agree Strongly disagree

1|_ 2|_ 3|_ 4|_ 5|_

Section C – Practices (Short Answers)

What new onboarding practices do you plan to implement in your church after this training?

What improvements will you make to leadership exit processes in your ministry?

How will you strengthen documentation and institutional memory going forward?

Appendix 3: One-Day Workshop Agenda



Workshop Agenda

Theme: Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

Audience: Church leaders

Duration: 7 hours (including breaks)

Timeline Chart Structure

Time	Session Title	Focus Area	Facilitator
08:30–09:00	Opening Devotion & Registration	- Welcome and introductions - Scripture reflection (Acts 20:28) - Prayer for wisdom and humility	Josephine
09:00–10:30	Leaders' Onboarding Module 1	Objective: Equip leaders with structured onboarding practices beyond orientation. Content Highlights: - Biblical Foundations of Church Leadership - Foundations of Church Leadership Transition - Strategic Onboarding - Onboarding Essentials for Bivocational Leaders - Leading and teaching with integrity Activities: - Draft a personal covenant of service – include time, financial stewardship, accountability, and spiritual devotion Tools Provided: Workshop worksheet template	Josephine
10:30–10:45	Tea Break		All
10:45–12:15	Shepherdship & Spiritual Formation Module 2	Objective: Explore shepherdship as mentorship, governance, and spiritual formation. Content Highlights: - Spiritual Formation of Leaders - Mentoring and Multiplying Successors - Mentorship and Intergenerational Leadership	Josephine

1

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		- Governance, Decision-Making, and Teamwork Activities: - Develop your own Successor Readiness Checklist Tools Provided: Successor readiness worksheet template	
12:15–13:15	Lunch Break		All
13:15–14:45	Succession Planning Module 3	Objective: Build leadership pipelines and continuity plans. Content Highlights: - Succession Planning in Churches - Change Management and Stability During Transitions - Documenting Legacy and Institutional Memory Activities: - Drafting a legacy letter Tools Provided: Legacy documentation template, exit interview guide	Josephine
14:45–15:00	Tea Break		All
15:00–16:30	Leadership Exiting Module 4	Objective: Prepare leaders to transition out of roles with dignity and continuity. Content Highlights: - Biblical Foundations for Finishing Well - Preparing the Flock for Transition - Effective Exiting and Offboarding - Exit Protocols and Legacy Preservation - Healthy Detachment and Redefining Identity - Commissioning and Celebration of Transition Activities: - Group Discussion: What Does a Good Exit Look Like? Tools Provided: Legacy documentation template, exit interview guide	Josephine
16:30–17:00	Closing & Commissioning	- Personal reflection: "My leadership legacy and next steps." - Group prayer of commissioning and blessing - Workshop evaluation and feedback	Josephine

Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting in Church Leadership

Informed Consent Form

Study Title: "Evaluating the effectiveness of church leadership onboarding and exiting in a 1-Day Workshop on Strategic onboarding and exiting of church leaders"

You are invited to participate in a doctoral research study conducted by Josephine Mutuota at PCEA Ngong Parish. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop in enhancing participants' knowledge, skills, and engagement.

Participation Details:

- You will complete a brief survey before and after the workshop.

Your Rights:

- Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.
- You may skip any questions you are uncomfortable answering.

Confidentiality:

- No identifying information will be collected.
- Data will be stored securely and used only for research purposes.

By registering for this event, you agree to participate in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 5: Sample field-informed consent form

Strategic Onboarding and Exiting of Church Leaders



Informed Consent Form

Study Title: "Evaluating the effectiveness of church leadership onboarding and exiting in a 1-Day Workshop on Strategic onboarding and exiting of church leaders"

You are invited to participate in a doctoral research study conducted by Josephine Mutuota at PCEA Ngong Parish. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop in enhancing participants' knowledge, skills, and engagement.

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- No identifying information will be collected.
- Data will be stored securely and used only for research purposes.

By registering for this event, you agree to participate in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____