

AN ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF BAPTIST
CHURCHES IN CHOSEN GENERATION ASSOCIATION, LAGOS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the leadership development strategies of Baptist Churches in Chosen Generation Association, Lagos. An attempt was made to establish whether or not Baptist Churches have enough volunteer leaders in terms of quality and numbers; identify the leadership development strategies being used and the most effective of these strategies. It also examined if Baptist churches have intentional internal leadership development architecture and what roles can pastors and the Baptist denomination play in leadership development effort. The sample comprised 123 individuals (being pastors and church members) randomly selected from churches within the Chosen Generation Baptist Association. Questionnaire was administered to obtain answers to the questions guiding the research. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics; simple percentiles based on the frequency of occurrence of the responses to each item of the research instrument. Results revealed that Baptist Churches are generally satisfied with the quality but fewer number of lay leaders, but churches are less likely to have enough quality leaders to operate as effectively as they would; Baptist churches have intentional leadership development process; the most widely used strategies for leadership development are discipleship, creating leadership opportunity for potential leaders, leadership seminars, mentoring and teaching, coaching and discernment of leadership abilities before appointment; Discipleship is the most effective strategy of leadership development in Baptist Churches. Other effective strategies include creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders, mentoring and teaching. Based on the findings, it was evident that Baptist Pastors and the denomination play significant role in driving leadership development in a local assembly and by implication pastors need to pursue personal development, demonstrate leadership competencies and prioritize youth development for the purpose of succession and so on. Recommendations were made on the basis of the findings.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the foregoing, it is safe to conclude that intentional leadership development may be an answer to leadership dearth in a typical Baptist Church. Every local assembly need lay leaders who are not just people of quality but sufficient number to do the work of the church as desired. Churches should engage strategies that ensure leadership development in their members. In other words, the concern for leadership development is critical for succession in the Baptist Churches.

The Pastors have a major responsibility in leading the leadership development process in their local assemblies. This can be achieved by ensuring an atmosphere filled with love, care and understanding; developing internal framework to discover, nurture and develop emerging leaders; adopting innovative and creative leadership programs; modelling leadership and demonstrating leadership competencies, and focusing on youth development, amongst others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommended to enhance leadership development in the Baptist Churches:

1. Every Baptist Church should develop and document a leadership development strategy – a document that defines how the church will intentionally raise leaders.
2. The potentials of discipleship, as a strategy for leadership development, should be fully harnessed to raise leaders and not just classroom training – it should be made experiential, convertible and not just an academic exercise
3. Each local Baptist Church should adopt integrated methodologies for leadership development.
4. Pastors should model servant leadership in their congregations.
5. Baptist Pastors should pursue personal development and not just academic degrees.
6. The church should focus on the training and development of young people to engender succession
7. The church and denominational leaders should allow young people take active part in leadership by deliberately appointing mature believers among them, into various positions in the church.
8. Curriculum writers, planners and designers of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, should deliberately develop materials on leadership development for various age categories; children and youth.

9. The Seminary training should include detailed and comprehensive modules on leadership and strategy