

Influence of Succession Program on the Growth of Church Projects in Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania in Northern Diocese

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Abstract

The study aimed to examine the influence of succession planning on the growth of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania In Northern Diocese church projects. A cross-sectional research design was used, with 264 samples from registered employees and project management selected through random and purposeful sampling. Data collection was conducted through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, with face-to-face interviews with 12 management. The study was conducted ethically, ensuring participant privacy and confidentiality. The study considered reliability and validity where a pre-test for internal consistency obtained 0.78 Cronbach's alpha coefficient that indicated the items were measuring the same context. Data was analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics and measure of central tendency. The results revealed that the succession planning program is not well-structured, regularly reviewed, and updated. The majority of the respondents showed no active involvement of the church's leadership in supporting and promoting the program, and no preparation of potential leaders for adequate resources and training to ensure the continuity and sustainability of church projects. The current project does not lead to projected growth, as leadership does not support or promote the succession planning program. The study recommends that the church leadership and stakeholders critically evaluate and reassess the existing succession planning program, actively involving the church leadership in supporting and promoting the program, and effectively identifying and preparing potential leaders.

Key terms: Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania; Succession planning; Growth of Church; Church Projects; Church leadership

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Succession planning in church-owned projects is unique and vastly different from that in corporations, and it is important to understand the process to maintain the viability of religious firms and their crucial role in the economies of African and other emerging nations (Ungerer & Mienie 2018, Bettinelli et al., 2017). Churches offer a wide range of services to their communities, such as education, healthcare, and social support, and the way church leaders handle succession planning is critical to the long-term growth and survival of these businesses (Megaravalli & Sampagnaro, 2019).

Church projects are incredibly important all over the world. They provide a sense of community and support for those who are in need. Churches often provide food, shelter, and clothing to those who are homeless or living in poverty. Recognizing the significance of succession planning within the context of church-owned projects is crucial for their smooth operation and long-term sustainability. (Sreih et al., 2019). Private business ventures play a critical role in the world economy's growth and development; this sector has been recognized as the primary driver of job creation, poverty reduction, wealth creation, income distribution, and income disparity reduction, and it is a fact that most business projects in the world is private organizations (Cater et al., 2019). The Kongo Gumi, founded in 578AD in Osaka, Japan, is the world's oldest private group enterprise. Over the course of ten centuries, the Kongo family has worked in the industry for 39 generations (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018).

Church-owned projects employ a vast number of people and make important contributions to the economies of industrialized countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as many other countries (Bozer et al., 2017). Religious projects are extremely important in Asia and India, religious projects accounting for 99.9% of all private sector businesses in India alone (Chirapanda, 2019). The prevalence of religious projects in India is staggering, with almost all the private sector businesses (99.9%) being family owned. This is reflective of the traditional values and culture of India, which often places a high value on the importance of

family. This is especially true when it comes to religious enterprises, as many of these projects are often passed down from generation to generation, ensuring that the same values and practices are maintained. This is indicative of the strong religious ties that are often seen in India, which is why private company and business are so prevalent in the country (Chirapanda, 2019).

Over 5.5 million private organizations in the United States alone create 57 percent of the country's GDP, or \$8.3 trillion on average, and employ more than 63 percent of the workforce (Dekker et al., 2017). Privately owned firms account for 90% of UK businesses, accounting for half of GDP and employing half of the workers (Bkiewicz, 2020). Among the world's largest private groups are Bechtel Group (\$30 billion), Comcast (\$37 billion), Koch Industries (\$100 billion), Ford Motor Company (\$128 billion), and Walmart (\$421 billion) (Umans et al., 2019). This highlights the importance of large-scale organizations and their ability to generate wealth. This is especially relevant to churches, which can often be seen as large-scale organizations. Churches are often responsible for a large portion of their local community's economic activity, and it is important to recognize the importance of these organizations to ensure their continued success.

African projects, particularly those owned by private entities, account for a significant portion of private-sector employment in the region (Zaki et al., 2018).

Succession planning is a crucial part of business project strategy, involving the identification and development of current and future leaders to ensure the continuity and growth of the business. Effective succession planning helps prepare for changes in leadership, fosters a culture of development, and has been linked to the growth and survival of private enterprises. Despite its importance, many private organizations, including church-owned projects, lack adequate succession planning techniques and suffer from a lack of formal plans. Studies show that many church projects face challenges in achieving predicted profits in future generations, partly due to a lack of strong succession plans among church leaders in management. Research is needed to explore the relationship between church and corporate leadership succession, and the impact of church projects succession planning on growth.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Effective CEO succession is vital for business continuity and maintaining its identity (Agbim, 2019). Research indicates that around 30% of privately owned businesses endure the transition from the first to the second generation. Only 12% survive the transition to the third generation, while a mere 3% make it to the fourth generation and beyond (Chiang & Yu, 2018; Chang et al., 2021).

Managing succession from one generation of leaders to the next is one of the challenges that religious management also faces (Daspit *et al.*, 2017). Many churches owned projects struggle with succession planning because there are no clear plans or systematic procedures in place to implement succession, which is why many church investments do not survive beyond the first generation (Helsen *et al.*, 2017). The absence of succession planning procedures is a leading cause of Church-owned project mortality not only in Tanzania but around the world as well. In Tanzania, there is a lack of succession planning procedures in the church projects itself. This could be due to the lack of an effective succession plan or process by the owner. According to research, succession planning has an impact on the performance and growth of any business and therefore performance of church projects is heavily influenced by succession planning.

Studies conducted by Daspit et al. (2017), Helsen et al. (2017), Chang et al. (2021), and Chiang & Yu (2018) highlight a concerning trend: the majority of businesses tend to cease operations within three years after the founder's death. Despite various factors affecting the longevity of private firms, such as poor business planning, limited financial understanding, undercapitalization, operational inefficiencies, dysfunctional management, and a declining market, inadequate succession planning remains a primary reason for the disappearance of many privately owned businesses (Bkiewicz, 2020).

In relation to church projects, the literature reveals a lack of understanding regarding succession planning (Villegas et al., 2019). While family business research has garnered increased interest in recent years, there has been limited attention given to succession planning procedures and influential factors in church-owned business projects in Tanzania. Insufficient planning emerges as a significant cause of unsuccessful successions. However, there is a dearth of knowledge concerning succession planning procedures in the E.L.C.T church northern dioceses. Furthermore, private organizations, including church-owned projects, often lack adequate succession planning techniques and suffer from a lack of formal plans. Consequently, this study aims to examine the impact of succession planning on the growth of church projects within the (ELCT) Northern Diocese.

1.3 Research Objective

To find out succession programme that influences the growth of the church projects.

1.4 Research Question

What are the influences of succession programme on growth of the church projects?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Literature Review

Helen et al., (2022) investigated the factors that influence the successor selection process during succession planning on the growth of family businesses in Moshi municipality. The research employed a convergent parallel study design, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The findings revealed the key elements that influence successor selection and their significant influence on the family business. Most of the surveyed family companies demonstrated awareness of these factors. However, not all of them consistently considered these aspects throughout the succession selection process. This is because there are no established business processes. While organizational structure and contract language indicating whether a position is permanent or probationary are minor considerations. As a result, the study advised that the highlighted criteria be considered throughout the successor selection approach and succession planning for the expansion of the family business for long-term sustainability of the family business. The gap to be addressed in this study is that previous studies focused mostly on family businesses, but this study will include church programs to raise awareness in this area as well.

Olufemi's (2021) purpose was to explore the tactics employed by family company owners in Nigeria to implement the succession planning required for their firms to survive. This investigation utilized a qualitative multiple case study approach, focusing on four Nigerian family companies with a track record of operating for over ten years. The participants were carefully selected based on their expertise and recommendations. Due to Covid-19 guidelines, interviews were conducted both in person and over the phone. The report highlights that all the family firms included in this case study have demonstrated remarkable longevity, having been in existence for a minimum of 20 years. This finding underscores the strength and resilience of well-managed family enterprises. As seen in the four scenarios, managerial talents, experience, negotiation skills, people management, market awareness, gender, and religious bias are all elements that influence succession planning. These variables reflect what the owners are searching for when deciding who will be their heirs. Finally, in a family firm, key decision-makers are more concerned with the company's long-term health than with making sentimental mistakes that may hurt the company. The research only looked at four Nigerian family businesses, which may not be typical of the greater population of Nigerian family enterprises. The study only looked at the tactics employed by family company owners to conduct succession planning, not the consequences of these efforts.

Ezima et al. (2017) conducted a study to examine the impact of succession planning on the long-term viability of Family-owned Businesses (FOBs) in Anambra State. The research employed a survey research design and targeted a population of 275 FOBs, with 50 being incorporated and 225 being unincorporated. The entire population was included in the study. Data was collected through a questionnaire, and statistical analyses, including Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test, were employed to explore the relationships and mean differences. The findings indicated a strong positive relationship between mentorship and sustainability ($r = .858$, $p < .05$), and no significant statistical difference was observed in the perceptions of succession planning between incorporated and unincorporated FOBs in Anambra State ($t = -218$, $p > .05$). The study emphasized the crucial role of mentorship in preserving the longevity of family businesses, highlighting the importance for owners/managers to approach mentorship as a gradual and thoughtful process. It also emphasized the significance of ensuring that potential successors possess genuine interest in the business, and advised owners/founders to view succession as a means of sustaining their business. However, it is important to note that this study exclusively focused on family-owned businesses in Anambra State, limiting its generalizability to the wider population of family businesses in Nigeria. Furthermore, the study solely examined the relationship between mentorship and sustainability, without exploring other potential factors that could impact the long-term viability of family businesses. Given the survey research design utilized, the study may not have captured comprehensive insights into the experiences of family business owners regarding the implementation of succession planning.

The objective of Bashir and Ahmed's (2019) study was to explore the significance of succession planning in small and medium-sized family businesses (SMEs) in Pakistan. The research employed a qualitative research approach, focusing on a sample of 20 family businesses located in the Lahore region of Pakistan. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of participants, including owners, managers, and employees of these businesses, in order to gather insights and information. The results showed that most family businesses in Pakistan lack a formal succession plan, and those that have one, face challenges in its implementation. The authors concluded that there is a need for SME owners to prioritize succession planning to ensure the long-term sustainability of their businesses. The focused on the challenges faced by family businesses in Pakistan in implementing succession planning, however, it did not explore the specific strategies used by family business owners to address these challenges. The study also did not examine the role of mentorship in succession planning, which was highlighted as important. The study was limited to a specific region of Pakistan, so the results may not be generalizable to other areas in the country or beyond.

Adeyemo and Adebawale (2019) conducted a study to investigate the influence of succession planning on the sustainability of family-owned businesses in Nigeria. The research employed a mixed-methods research design, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The study's target population consisted of 200 family-owned businesses, with a sample size of 100 family-owned businesses selected through convenience sampling. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data, and both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between succession planning and the sustainability of family-owned businesses ($r = .838, p < .05$). The study concluded that succession planning plays a crucial role in ensuring the long-term viability of family-owned businesses, emphasizing the importance for owners/managers to prioritize succession planning. However, it is important to note that the study was limited to Nigeria and solely focused on the impact of succession planning on the sustainability of family-owned businesses. Further research is needed to explore succession planning in other countries and investigate other dimensions of the topic, such as key positions to be filled and the strategies employed by family-owned businesses in implementing succession planning.

Kargbo and Sesay, (2018) conducted a study to investigate the challenges of succession planning in family-owned businesses in Sierra Leone. The study used a qualitative research design, with data being collected through in-depth interviews with owners/managers of 10 family-owned businesses. The findings showed that the main challenges of succession planning in family-owned businesses in Sierra Leone include a lack of trust between family members, a lack of succession planning policies and procedures, and a lack of communication and transparency. The study concluded that owners/managers of family-owned businesses in Sierra Leone need to address these challenges to ensure the long-term viability of their businesses. Research gap: The study was limited to only Sierra Leone, and only focused on the challenges of succession planning in family-owned businesses. Further research is needed to examine the issue of succession planning in other countries and to explore potential solutions to the challenges identified in the study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded in the leadership succession hypothesis, which was proposed by Stogdill (1974). According to this hypothesis, effective leadership succession involves maintaining redundancy in the management structure to ensure comprehensive coverage, appointing successors in advance to prepare for the departure of current leaders, providing opportunities for selected individuals to shadow and learn from current leaders, and facilitating quick leadership changes to prevent conflicts (Ibrahim et al., 2001). This theory has been applied in the corporate sector, where organizations strive to maintain control over company plans and organizational direction by supporting existing leadership structures. Successful companies have the potential to surpass the lifespan of their founders. However, since leadership styles and models vary significantly, the specific modalities of succession planning can differ based on how a company has been managed.

The Stogdill Leadership Succession Theory, as proposed by Stogdill in 1974, highlights the importance of having a plan in place for leadership succession. In the context of assessing the influence of succession planning on the growth of church projects in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, the theory can provide valuable insights into how to approach this important issue. The importance of having a plan in place for leadership succession and preventing conflict through swift changes cannot be overstated, and the Stogdill Leadership Succession Theory provides a useful framework for understanding how organizations can approach this issue. In the context of church projects, having a well-designed succession plan in place can ensure that the vision and mission of the project are carried out effectively, even in the event of a leadership change.

The theory emphasizes the need for a redundant management structure and the importance of grooming successors to ensure the continuity of an organization in the event of a leadership change. These principles can be applied to church projects to help ensure their long-term growth and sustainability.

Leadership Succession Theory, while providing valuable insights into the process of transitioning leadership roles, has some weaknesses and limitations. It tends to oversimplify the complexity of leadership transitions, neglects the contextual factors and organizational culture, and underestimates the emotional aspects involved. Additionally, it may lack a long-term perspective and fail to fully explain how selected leaders' performance affects the organization's outcomes over time.

3. METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional research design was employed in this study to examine how succession planning impacts the growth of Church projects within the ELCT in the Northern Diocese. The target population consisted of 1017 individuals, including employees and management affiliated with registered investments within the ELCT. A sample size of 264 participants was selected using simple random techniques for quantitative data collection, while purposive sampling was utilized to select individuals from the management level. The sampling technique ensured equal participation of the participant. Data collection was conducted through questionnaires and in-depth interviews collecting both qualitative and quantitative. Both open-ended and closed-ended

questions were included in the questionnaires, while face-to-face interviews were conducted to 12 management.

The tools were given to experts from MWECAU for validation by checking the relevance of the questions, language used, and ambiguity so as assure tools reflect the study questions in terms of their contents. To test reliability, the instruments were piloted to test if the tools measure what it is supposed to measure. The pilot results obtained 0.78 Cronbach's alpha coefficient that indicated the items were measuring the same context after data collection, a template was developed using SPSS 23 (SPSS) then the entered information was cleaned and then analyzed descriptively for quantitative information by presenting frequency, and percentage. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented in line with descriptive findings.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study focused on one objective to find out how succession planning program influences the growth of church projects. The data were analyzed using SPSS presenting descriptive in terms of frequency and percent and presented in Tables. The study started with the presentation of the questionnaire return rate, and participant's demographic characteristics then followed by a presentation, interpretations, and discussion. This part elucidates the number of tools administered and returned after data collection. Two groups (an interview for management and a quantitative administered (Table 1).

Table 1: Return rate of Instruments.

Participants	Target sample administered	Returned	Shortfall	Rate
ELCT Leaders and Project manager	15	12	3	80%
ELCT Project Employees	272	264	8	97%
Total	287	276	11	96%

Source: Field data, (2023)

The return data in Table 1 provide an illustration of the percentage return rate of tools corrected and used for analysis. Of 272 tools administered for quantitative, 264 of the participants returned representing a response rate of 97% [264/272]. Also, 15 instruments were administered to management, and 12 were returned indicating a response rate of 80% [12/15]. The rate of response not reached 100% percent because some of the participants were busy with office duties though we had an appointment for data collection. Due to reasons beyond the control of the researcher, 8 questionnaires were not returned, and 3 interviews were not conducted. This counts a total of 11 shortfall rates of 4% [11/287]. Hence the researcher decided to conduct data analysis with a sample size of 276 out of 287 by considering 96%% is an excellent sample size to provide the findings.

The succession program on the Growth of the church projects

The study sought to find out how influences of the succession planning program on the Growth of the church projects. Likert scale five items were used rated 1 to 5. The participants were administered questionnaires to provide the response based on the succession planning program on Growth. The responses are summarized in Table 2

Table 2: Succession program influences the growth of the church projects (n=264)

Items	SD f %	D f %	N f %	A f %	SA f %	M (SD)
The church's succession planning program is well-structured and comprehensive.	70 (26.5)	131 (49.6)	17 (6.4)	27 (10.2)	19 (7.2)	2.2 (0.3)
The succession planning program is regularly reviewed and updated.	42 (15.9)	137 (51.9)	11 (4.2)	46 (17.4)	28 (10.6)	2.5 (0.4)
The implementation of the succession planning program has led to significant growth in church projects.	75 (28.4)	129 (48.9)	7 (2.7)	26 (9.8)	27 (10.2)	2.2 (0.3)
The church's leadership is actively involved in supporting and promoting the succession planning program.	25 (9.5)	91 (34.5)	122 (46.2)	11 (4.2)	15 (5.7)	2.6 (0.5)
The succession planning program effectively identifies and prepares potential leaders for managing church projects.	77 (29.2)	120 (45.5)	9 (3.4)	30 (11.4)	28 (10.6)	2.3 (0.3)
The church provides adequate resources and training for the implementation of the succession planning program.	116 (43.9)	97 (36.7)	6 (2.3)	31 (11.7)	14 (5.3)	2 (0.2)
The succession planning program has helped to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the church projects.	125 (47.3)	87 (33.0)	10 (3.8)	25 (9.5)	17 (6.4)	1.9 (0.2)
The church projects have experienced improved performance and growth due to the succession planning program.	90 (34.1)	150 (56.8)	7 (2.7)	12 (4.5)	5 (1.9)	1.8 (0.4)

Source: Field data (2023).

SD=Strong Disagree; D=Disagree; N= Neutral/ Undecided; A=Agree; SA=Strong Agree.

The response as peer objective one presented in Table 2 show that regarding the church's succession planning program being well-structured and comprehensive 70 (26.5%) strongly disagreed and 131 (49.6%) disagreed with the statement. The study found that the church succession program was not well structured and compressive to influence the growth of ELCT projects. In a study conducted by Dusor (2020), the focus was on exploring the significance of succession planning in family businesses, as well as the factors that influence it and the practices employed. The results indicated that succession planning plays a crucial role in maintaining the culture, practices, and smooth leadership transition within family businesses. It also contributes to business continuity and fosters a supportive environment among employees towards family executives, without feelings of envy. Therefore, the findings reveal a diverse range of opinions regarding the effectiveness of the church's succession planning program in fostering project growth. This suggests that there might be concerns about the program's design and implementation, which may hinder its ability to identify and nurture future leaders effectively. It is essential for the church to address these concerns to maximize the impact of the program on project growth.

Additionally, on the issue of the succession program being regularly reviewed and updated the data showed that 15.9% strongly disagree and 51.9% disagree. The study found that most project workers disagreed that the succession program is not being regularly reviewed and updated. This is another issue for the failure of the growth of ELCT projects. On implementation of the succession planning program led to significant growth in church projects. The findings are like Helen *et al.*, (2022) who reported that not all people or management took the succession program into consideration during the successor selection process. Also, there is a lack of formal business practices that makes succession unsuccessful as not regularly reviewed and updated and can affect the growth of the ELCT project. Therefore, regular reviews and updates are crucial for ensuring the program's relevance and alignment with the changing needs of the church projects. Without regular evaluations, the program may become outdated and fail to meet its intended objectives, hindering overall project growth.

The results show that 75 (28.4%) strongly disagreed and 129 (48.9%) disagreed. The findings indicate that there was no implementation of the succession program which can lead to significant growth in church projects. This indicates that there might be skepticism about the program's actual impact on project growth. The findings concur with Ezimma *et al.*, (2017) who concluded that mentorship is critical in the quest to keep the project alive and that owners/managers of FOBs to consider succession for the long-term survival of the projects. Therefore, to enhance the program's effectiveness, the church should focus on providing tangible evidence of its positive influence on project outcomes.

Again, the response on the church's leadership is actively involved in supporting and promoting the succession planning program., 25 (9.5%) strongly disagreed and 91 (34.5%) disagreed. Also, the result showed that the church leaders are not actively involved in supporting and promoting the succession program. The study also highlights the importance of leadership involvement in supporting and promoting the succession planning program. This finding goes hand in hand with Bashir and Ahmed, (2019) who examine the importance of succession planning in businesses and reported that lack a formal succession plan, and those that have one, face challenges in its implementation. Therefore, active leadership engagement is vital for driving the success of the program and ensuring that potential leaders receive the necessary guidance and mentorship to excel in managing church projects.

Moreover, observation from Table 2 also indicates that the succession planning program effectively identifies and prepares potential leaders for managing church projects 77 (29.2%) of the participants strongly disagreed and 120 (45.5%) disagreed. This indicates still succession promotion not working good same not effectively identify and prepare potential leaders. These findings concur with Olufemi's (2021) as reported management abilities, experience, negotiating skills, people management, market understanding, gender, and religious bias are all factors that affect succession planning. Since respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that the succession planning program effectively identifies and prepares potential leaders for managing church projects. This suggests that there may be challenges in the identification and preparation of future leaders, hindering the program's ability to foster project growth. The church should focus on improving its talent identification and development strategies to strengthen the impact of the program on project management.

Furthermore, the data in Table 2 indicated that 116 (43.9%) strongly disagreed and 97 (36.7%) disagreed that the church provides adequate resources and training for the implementation of the succession program. Additionally, respondents disagreed that the church provides adequate resources and training for the implementation of the succession planning program. Sufficient resources and training are essential for empowering potential leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to contribute effectively to project growth. The church should prioritize allocating appropriate resources to ensure the program's success.

Furthermore, the data in Table 2 showed that 125 (47.3%) strongly disagreed and 87 (33.0%) disagreed that, the succession planning program has helped to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the church projects. Most of the employees disagreed that the succession program has helped to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the church projects simply because there is no clear program mentioned. Similarly, to Kargbo

and Sesay, (2018) as reported owners/managers of businesses in need to address challenges to ensure the long-term viability of their businesses. Hence the result reveals the succession planning program has not helped to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the church projects. This highlights the need for the church to focus on long-term planning and strategic management to ensure the seamless continuation of projects even in the absence of current leadership.

Lastly, Table 2 revealed that 90 (34.1%) of participants strongly disagreed and 150 (56.8%) disagreed. Still, the results on the church projects have experienced improved performance and growth due to the succession planning program, these findings go in hand with Ezimma et al., (2017) who reported mentorship is critical in the quest to keep businesses and succession. Also, owners/managers should view mentorship as a gradual and not rushed process to enhance succession to ensure that the people who will take over are genuinely interested in the business and should view succession as a process of sustaining their business. Since the results show disagreed, church projects have experienced improved performance and growth due to the succession planning program. The church should work on providing evidence of the program's positive impact on project outcomes to instill confidence and support from its members.

In conclusion, the findings of this study reveal critical insights into the influences of the succession planning program on the growth of church projects within the E.L.C.T church. Addressing the concerns raised by the respondents will be instrumental in enhancing the program's effectiveness and impact on project growth. By prioritizing regular reviews, leadership involvement, talent identification, resource allocation, and long-term planning, the church can strengthen its succession planning efforts and ensure the sustainable growth and success of its projects.

5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND LIMITATION

5.1 Conclusion

Basing on the findings respondents strongly disagreed with the church's succession planning program and its impact on church project growth. They did not perceive the program as well-structured, regularly reviewed, or effective. They also disagreed with the church's leadership's active involvement in supporting and promoting the program. They also disagreed with the program's ability to identify and prepare potential leaders, provide adequate resources and training, ensure continuity and sustainability of church projects, and contribute to improved performance and growth. The lack of agreement indicates a need for further examination and improvement in these areas, suggesting potential gaps in the current succession planning program within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania in the Northern Diocese.

5.2 Implications and Recommendation

The findings suggest and recommend that the church leadership and relevant stakeholders critically evaluate and reassess the existing succession planning program. This evaluation should focus on enhancing the program's structure, regular review, and updating processes. Additionally, efforts should be made to actively involve the church leadership in supporting and promoting the program, as well as ensuring that it effectively identifies and prepares potential leaders.

Moreover, there should be a concerted effort to provide adequate resources and training to support the implementation of the succession planning program. This will help strengthen the program's ability to ensure the continuity and sustainability of church projects. By addressing these areas of concern and implementing necessary improvements, the church can potentially enhance the performance and growth of its projects.

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