Curbing Hindrances to Effective Urban Missions Through Transformational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This article explores biblical views on urban missions and several challenges facing its success. The researchers employ descriptive analysis to discuss the two central concepts in the work. The research aims to identify challenges confronting urban missions and proffer transformational Leadership to solve them. The study identifies rapid growth, Lack of theological knowledge, cultural differences, and competition as hindrances threatening urban missions. The researchers opine that intentional leadership development, discipleship, Provision of human services, strategic planning, and character formation are transformational means of curbing identified hindrances with an urban mission. The research concludes that urban missions can become opportunities for bigger harvests when followers are equipped to get a deeper insight into the variety of difficulties facing it through transformational ideologies.

Introduction

Missionaries and church leaders often fail to look at the possible hindrances to effective urban missions. Transformational Leadership is an executive set over two decades ago; many studies have revealed that followers of transformational leaders display above-average performance. Transformational leaders should have a burden and vision of the mission of God here on earth. A transformational leader should be able to identify hindrances responsible for effective urban missions and provide possible solutions to those hindrances affecting the work of the Gospel in the urban setting. The result will use a descriptive method. Exploring the biblical view of urban missions, conceptual definition of terms, some hindrances to effective urban missions, and how a transformational leader can help curb these hindrances to effective urban missions. The work draws conclusions and recommendations to strengthen the position of missions in urban contexts.

Conceptual Clarification

Transformational Leadership: is a guidance style in which leaders support, instigate, and motivate their followers to innovate and create amend that will help grow and form the future success of the Church. The transformational leader aims to establish and communicate a clear vision for the subordinate. This leadership style seeks to help followers grow and develop, inspire others to higher performance, educate and explore new ways to solve old problems, and meet their needs. (Bass & Stogdill's 1974, 53-54). In addition, the transformational leadership approach is marked by four distinctive transactional characteristics. Leaders employing this approach seek to present themselves as charismatic or idealistic role models who motivate others to follow their vision. Transformational leaders communicate high expectations, generally using emotionally-appealing techniques. They will challenge subordinates to develop innovative problem-solving

skills. Leaders employing this approach tend to be highly relational and are inclined to focus attention on the individual needs of others.

The transformational leader aims to raise the bar on motivation and morality across all organizational echelons. (Drury 2003, 18). These are accomplished by setting an instance at the administrative level through a strong sense of corporate culture, employee ownership, and self-determination in the workplace.[1] Therefore, the work of transformational leaders is to train discipliners that will educate others; it curbs the long-time challenge in society.

Hindrances Prevent something else from happening or make it more difficult. Meanwhile, this seminar paper uses those elements that hinder Christian leaders from achieving God-given tasks in their lives and the city.

Urban Area: urban is mainly understood as or about the city most of the time. A City is moderately significant, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals. (Harvie & Manuel 2001, 159). The city has the most excellent attentiveness of persons, with the most significant ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic diversity. Two related terms are *urbanism and urbanization.* By *urbanization,* individuals submit to the city as an attraction. Urbanization pulls the populace in from local areas. When one refers to *urbanism,* people submit to the city as a transformer, transmitter, and magnifier of culture. (Harvie 2002, 30).

Missions: are the precise work of the Church and agent of change to reach people for Christ by crossing cultural boundaries. (Scott and Gary 2004, 17). But for this seminar paper research, missions refer to the Church's activity aimed at evangelism, the Gospel towards the cities.

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[1] (https://www.cio.com/ article/ 3257184/what-is-transformational-leadership-a-model-for-motivating-innovation.html).

The Four Components of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders is a developers of their followers to the point where followers can take on leadership roles and perform beyond established standards or goals. Bernard Bass offers four essential characteristics of the transforming leader: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. (Rick Langer 2014, 78-79)

- Idealized influence represents the philosophy that leaders can profoundly influence their followers based only on practices and words. The lead stands out as a model for its followers to seek to emulate. Such a leader is respected, and gains trust from the follower's behaviors. They first place the followers' needs above their own, sacrificing and maintaining a high moral and ethical conduct.

- Inspirational Motivation: The foundation of transformational Leadership is promoting a consistent vision, mission, and values to the members. These leaders do very thing possible to communicate vision. Transformational leaders guide followers by providing them with a sense of meaning and challenge. They work enthusiastically and optimistically to foster the spirit of teamwork and commitment.

- Intellectual Stimulation: Such leaders advise and encourages their followers to be innovative and creative. They encourage new ideas from their followers and never criticize them publicly for their mistakes. The leaders focus on the "what" in problems and do not blame them. Transformational Leadership theory.[2] They have no hesitation in discarding an old practice they set if it is found ineffective. The followers are treated differently

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[2] (https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/transformational-leadership-theory-saad-alrefai

according to their talents and knowledge. Followers are empowered to make decisions and are always supported to implement their choices (Edith & Namusonge 2015, 01-07).

Based on these definitions, transformational leaders create a dynamic organizational vision that often necessitates a metamorphosis in cultural values to reflect more significant innovation. To achieve the vision, leaders attempt to secure tremendous effort and commitment from followers by bonding individual and collective interests. (Pawar and Eastman 1997, 80-109)

Some Biblical Examples of Leaders in the Urban Missions

It is important to note that urban missions are not a new occurrence. It has it root in the Bible. Roger asserted that the kind of missions' work that gives God joy and can wait for his blessings is done carefully on sound biblical foundations. Meanwhile, leaders cannot expect lives to be transformed or changed, city neighborhoods improved, and essential churches established if our labors spring from feeble, even distorted, theological roots. (Greenway & Timothy 1989, 1). Fact from the Bible demonstrates that Jesus' life and ministry were built in the urban towns Luke 9:51, 19:41 because he went concerning all the cities and villages of Galilee, which implicates large settlement areas or meetings. (Harvey & Manuel 2000, 122-137). Bakke supports his view of states that city savior and provides proof that Jesus reached an urban world by linking Pentecost to Jerusalem Luke 24 and Acts 1 and 2. (Bakke 1984, 127-137). After the grief of Jesus, the persecution of early apostles and followers of Jesus then Christians led to the dispersion of Jews who fled to pagan cities of the world to form Jews in Diaspora and were accountable for preaching the Christian belief in the city.

Paul is an outstanding example, an apostle who preached in the urban areas. Stark and other historians suggest that the early

Church was peculiarly a city movement because the disciples and imitators of Christ first took the news to urban areas Roman cities. This eventually trickled into the rural areas that had remained un-evangelized. (Stark 1997, 161-162). These leaders in the Bible were able to explore and overcome the challenges in the city because they were abiding by the word of God. Green demonstrates how in Genesis, the construction of the tower of Babel, a city, was connected to a symbol of their influence, their common language, and showing of the worldwide reach of their communication expertise, even though it did not last. (Green 2003, 18).

This is still relevant today. Keller suggested that world cities are economically, socially, and scientifically developed to form the culture and principles of cities. These are easily transmitted worldwide to every tongue, tribe, people, and nation, so world cities are increasingly vital in location the way of culture, and life as a whole, making them very important to the Christian missions and growth. (Keller 2010, 4). This means that urban towns are of a tremendously significant base for spreading Christian tasks. There will be resistance and challenges, but it will take a transformational leader to seek God's presence, break and handle such hindrances.

Some Hindrances to Effective Urban Missions

The mission's most important task is using urban missions (Johnstone & Jason 2001, 711). Scanlon further asserted that the Reason is that urban is the centrality of every state. It seems overwhelming but does not signify that it cannot be achieved. (Scanlon 1984, 9). Effective and adequate programs and methods for urban tasks to succeed in urban contexts are necessary as the city church struggles with reaching urban people with the good news using old and irrelevant strategies. Today's Church needs to find strategic and creative ways to cope with the current trends of the urban environment. Patrick Johnstone laments that Christian leaders are not effectively reaching the major cities in the same way as elsewhere.

(Johnstone 1993, 618). Urban missions, despite their demanding difficulties, are highly possible, and urban missions could serve as its indispensable strategy as the following barriers it poses.

Rapid Growth in Urban

There is rapid growth in urban missions, which hinders tasks mostly in our contemporary churches. Some cities in Africa grow at twofold the rate of their nations. So, there is a need to comprehend the explosion of cities across the area rather than become unfair against them. (Vencer 1988, 16-17). An effective urban mission in its commitment to social ministry faces six types of social organizations: cosmopolites, ethnic villagers, singles, socially deprived or economically oppressed, disassociation, and migrants and immigrants. (Swanson 1991, 1-5). Financial growth, specific by rising self-governing governments and political firmness, results in rapid urbanization. Thus, strategic cities have been urbanized, expanded, and converted into metropolitans across the African areas, with large towns hopeful of becoming cities.

This results in the affluence of this day urban societies. As cities grow, so does the increasing challenge posed by the problems of overpopulation, pollution, environmental issues, unemployment, moral and social breakdowns, injustice, abuse of human rights, and housing, among others. (Rose & Hadaway 1984, 27). In most cases, getting landed properties is very hard and expensive. Urban, both old and new, must persist in drawing people from all walks of life. Many people from rural areas know the hardships and expenses of lodging in a city but still take the risk. Rural-based people tend to recognize the city as a place of unlimited socio-economic, political, and educational opportunities without knowing the overabundance of the problems and difficulties involved in living there.

Lack of Theological Knowledge

Ray Bakke, an urban missiologist, noted significant barriers to Christian involvement in the cities. The urban experience is so new that many have not had time to catch up with it in terms of the revelation of God. (Bakke 1988, 76). We struggle from what Alvin Toffler calls future shock, the premature arrival of the future. (Alvin Taffler 1970). Many of us idea the little brown Church in the wildwood, forgetting that our fastest-growing churches are in the urban according. Bakke states that we need to expand our knowledge of theology until it encompasses God's vision of the city. (Bakke 1988, 76). It becomes a barrier when the Church, missionaries, and leaders have no deep understanding of the one who sent them to reach the world.

Cultural Hindrances

Our churches can no longer be culturally from different religious clubs speaking one language and operating on a rural schedule. The urban setting must celebrate the three angels' messages in a rich diversity of cultures and languages—the cities need solid urban churches with encounter leadership. The custom differentiation between foreign and home missions is a thing of the past. There are two significant challenges in terms of cultural differences that Urban missions face is. First, cultural shock about differences in food, view of clothes, language, relationships with people and older people, change in behavior leading to too much freedom, being hard-working, or needing time for members and converts, class system, insecurity, fear, or mistrust of others. Secondly, he mentioned privacy or individualism in urban areas, which makes one independent but lonely, selfish, lacking teamwork instead of communal life and a sense of belonging in rural areas.[3] Meanwhile, loneliness, insecurity, and privacy challenge urban

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[3]https://dlibrary.aiu.ac.ke/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/175/Ruth%20Otsyula%20final%20thesis%20for%20binding%20doc.doc?sequence=1=y.

missions. When a leader betrays her members' trust in him, it brings unseriousness in the member's hearts.

Competitiveness in Urban Missions

Some people have the notion that urban has a challenge in rivalry in who progress and who is not making it in missions; however, successful and effective urban missions exist. Observably, the researcher found that some missionaries and church leaders are not working with one mind in the city; as a result, there will not be fruitiness because many leaders have not understood that success in missions is success for all. Many ministers of envy and jealousy will go extreme to a native doctor for a charm to gain success in urban missions. Most we discover that it does not least because the spirit of God is far from such an enterprise. Many leaders compete in terms of number, not the souls of men that have been transformed; the Scripture vividly states it, that may affect a kingdom that is divided and can never stand. Effective urban missions will never impact lives if their base is competition.

Financial Constraints and Poverty in Urban

Lack of finances hinders providing a common mission needed in urban areas. Many churches have struggled with these financial constraints that limit the urban tasks they can deliver within and outside their locality, which is a barrier to an effective urban ministry. Therefore, it still needs a permanent structure for the Church, replacing tents already used at some branches and planting many more churches. Thus, small or deficient in finances can hinder effective urban missions. (Waneye, Interview 2022). If urban missions must affect lives positively, with their needs and through buying of land properties for building the Church, meeting the needs of students through payment of school fees requires money. Meanwhile, churches can go into investment, and it also requires money. For the Church to function effectively, it requires

Urban has been a significant problem in terms of the poverty rate. But, by its nature, the Church is established to elevate Jesus' missions of catering to individuals' physical and spiritual needs. Meanwhile, we must understand that despite the opportunities in the urban centers, there is a high poverty rate in the urban centers. Adeyanju and Babalola asserted that many persons in the urban are living and swimming in Poverty in Nigeria. (Adeyanju & Babalola 2017, 1). Furthermore, the reality of poverty in the nation is making the major missions work of the Church of Christ, which involves the conversion of souls, showing mercy to the needy, and other generosity of services to the masses to be achieved. He further that leaders of churches must strive to invest, either through farming or the opening of missions schools, to help poverty in the urban centers.

Lack of Hope in Urban Communities

The hope for jobs, better education, better medical care, and health care, drive many cities. The African does not yet understand the Western anti-urban bias but still looks to the city hopeful. Because white-collar and blue-collar jobs are concentrated in the urban, there are few job opportunities in the rural centers. In the city, one finds factories, schools in their thousands, hotels, airports that need cleaning every day, so many cars that need drivers, roadside materials to sell, and several others.[4]

Indeed, the urban promise many things to African people; on that note, so many Africans move to the cities in their numbers to hope for a better life. But because most people are going to the cities, the hope for jobs and the promise of a good living is no longer there or very restricted. The people become jobless in the cities but cannot even consider returning to their villages. He furthermore asserted that, After all, the city still promises some hope. The city becomes crowded with several other

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[4] https://www.academia.edu/31298188/Theology_ of_Urban_Mission.

accompanying effects. The Church must address these effects in her missions' enterprise in the city. The researcher discovered that in all of these assets in the urban centers, one still finds out there are many who are living without hope. Meanwhile, some people live in the street without work; even feeding is a serious issue; the urban missions must strive to care for and support this group of helpless people.

Transformational Leader's as Means for Curbing the Hindrances to Effective Urban Missions

 Church of Christ stands as an agent for the world's salvation. It was organized for service and missions to carry the Gospel to the world through transformational leaders. This session will identify four relevant practical means that transformational leaders will use to curb the Church's hindrance to urban tasks. Dever 2004, 247-248 gave characteristics that church leaders should embed in order to lead the Church well: Be truthful – Never underestimate the power of teaching truth; Be trustful – Give your ambitions to the Lord. Be willing to trust Him with your life; Be positive – Set forth a positive agenda. Be careful not to be perceived as a critic; Be particular – Do every possible to understand and lead the culture of your congregation and History.

Empowering Leaders for Leadership Development

There is a need for the development for an effective urban minister or leader; mainly, these new congregations being started necessitate a new kind of Leadership that has encountered Christ. To continue promoting the growth and expansion of the kingdom in the Church in the urban, one needs a different approach towards Leadership. Leaders must understand that empowerment occurs when they redistribute authority and power by delegating decision-making to lower-level organizational managers and employees. Empowerment is more than the practice of charging control, roles, and leadership tasks; it can be structural and accrued from the

position. It affords church leaders and laity access to information, resources, support, and opportunities for advanced personal development.

Empowerment can be psychological and accrued as apprentices or developing leaders gain self-confidence, artistry, or enjoyment from completing their job tasks. (Bass & Bass 2008, 304-5). Psychological empowerment is associated with inherent motivation: leaders coach and mentor apprentices toward workplace autonomy, competency, team building, and meaningful purpose. (Louis 2003, 698-99). Barkley asserted that to develop leaders, there are five things one needs to look out for, be educated, sponsor, coach, counsel, and confront (Barkley 2013, 342). The researcher believes that when believers are empowered spiritually, academically, and psychologically, they will represent Christ. In any church, they are found to spread the Gospel, most notably in the urban centers.

Discipleship

Discipleship calls for urgency in urban centers. Moreover, the city is increasing and growing daily, and the Gospel easily influences the fresh arriver to the city. Therefore, there is a need to register them and train them in a discipleship class. Once the new city inhabitant has become urbanized beyond a certain point, receptivity changes to resistance and the opportunity to win them to Christ is lost. In some parts of the world, more people can be won to Christian discipleship in rural villages than in large cities. But with the movement of masses of people to the urban center, unique opportunities are created to present the claims of Christ. [5] For the period of their coming to the city, transformational Leaders should welcome and accept them; it will help to accept the spiritual truth and the chance for

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[5] (https://lausanne.org/content/urban-evangelism)

personal fellowship. That is the time when they will be reached with the Gospel, then nurtured and trained for discipleship.

Provisions of Human Services

The happening of the Church providing human services to persons in need is not a new one. Since colonial times and even earlier, American congregations have sought to provide for the social and spiritual needs of the community. (Turner 2010, 142-160). Religious groups were the primary providers of human services until the end of the 19th century. The split between religious and secular social work occurred in 1935 with the passing of the Social Security Act. (Allen 2017, 43). With the government assuming more responsibility for helping people experiencing poverty, the burden shifted from the religious community to the government. Yet, they are not handling the challenge; therefore, the role of a transformational leader is to mobilize the Church in providing human services is for the poor and the hopeless in the urban center. Building schools, venturing to agriculture and establishing of Hospitals and opening of community bore-holes will help, and also provide privileges for employment

Strategic and Planner Leader

A transformational Leader should plan strategically his missions work in the urban center. As says Guy S. Saffold, "action without planning is aimless, but planning without action is fruitless, a good plan can bring focus, direction, and effectiveness to an organization's efforts. (Saffold 2008, 11, 21.). He further says a leader, strategic planning emphasizes "prayer and the seeking of God's Leadership as the first steps toward action. We must plan- but dependently.

Character Formation (Humility)

As a transformational leader, one should build up a character of humility to understand his followers and listen from the Holy Spirit's voice to lead with righteousness God's people; because "the Holy Spirit is not the missing link in our management techniques and action plans. He is the enabling power of Christ himself working with and through our struggles to do what is right and what is effective, so that in the end, Christ is glorified" (Harris 2003, 173.) Even in an urban center, the Holy Spirit is the enabler of missions' work.

Conclusion

It is clear that no matter how influential a leader seems, intelligent, powerful, and great, if He is not born again or transformed, he may not be able to handle heavenly vision. Therefore, for a transformational leader to curb these hindrances affecting the urban missions, the leader will need to empower and develop through discipleship, and provisions of human services. The leader must remain strategic in his approaches, prayerfully and constantly remain humble to the One Big God who has called him for the task. Hence, the study identifies six hindrances that are working against effective urban missions: rapid urban growth, Lack of theological knowledge, cultural hindrances, competitiveness in urban missions, financial constraints and poverty in urban, and hope in urban. Furthermore, the researcher has also explained how a transformational leader should break those hindrances in urban missions. Which is empowering leaders for Leadership development through intensive discipleship training, Provisions of Human Services, Strategic and planner leader, and the leader must be humble. The researchers, therefore, recommend the need for leaders to be informed and trained for theological study, to enable them to see beyond the wall, and have clear visions and missions for them to transform the urban area with the declaration of God's counsel to the church community, but such training must be taken to advanced levels to benefit the

urban inhabitant. This can be done by inspiring the worshippers to serve and give, which can be accomplished through preaching and teaching at the pulpit level on good stewardship.

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