

Transformational Leadership Approach Towards Church Growth in a Multicultural Setting

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Abstract

In today's increasingly globalized and interconnected world, churches are becoming more culturally diverse. transformational Leadership has emerged as a vital paradigm capable of inspiring inclusive growth, empowering diverse members, and cultivating a shared vision that transcends cultural boundaries. When applied within a multicultural church context, it enables leaders to address the exclusive needs of diverse congregants, foster mutual respect, and create an environment where all cultures feel valued and represented. This approach does more than manage diversity; it leverages it as a strength for holistic church development. This paper explores the role of transformational Leadership in encouraging effective church growth in multicultural settings. It investigates how the principles of transformational Leadership can address cultural complexity, build cohesive communities, and drive spiritual and structural expansion. The paper concludes that the impacts of Transformational leadership for church growth in a multicultural setting should engage Cultural intelligence, employ an effective communication style, practice contextualized leadership, promote change and innovation, and employ conflict management and resolution. Transformational leadership should instill confidence in its followers, helping them strive for excellence. It also challenges the status quo, promotes problem-solving, and creates new ideas without fear of criticism, driving collective progress towards organizational goals.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Church Growth and Multicultural Setting

Introduction

In today's increasingly globalized and interconnected world, churches are becoming more culturally diverse. This shift presents both an opportunity and a challenge for church leaders seeking to foster unity, spiritual growth, and numerical expansion within multicultural congregations. Traditional leadership models often fail to address the complexities of cross-cultural dynamics, hindering church development if not properly managed. As such, transformational Leadership has emerged as a vital paradigm capable of inspiring inclusive growth, empowering diverse members, and cultivating a shared vision that transcends cultural boundaries. Transformational Leadership, characterized by visionary guidance, personal influence, individualized consideration, and the encouragement of innovation, has proven effective in various organizational settings, including religious institutions. When applied within a multicultural church context, it enables leaders to address the exclusive needs of diverse congregants, foster mutual respect, and create an environment where all cultures feel valued and represented. This approach does more than manage diversity; it leverages it as a strength for holistic church development. This paper explores the role of transformational Leadership in

encouraging effective church growth in multicultural settings. It investigates how the principles of transformational Leadership can address cultural complexity, build cohesive communities, and drive spiritual and structural expansion. Also, by examining leadership practices that align with both biblical principles and contemporary organizational theory, this research aims to provide practical insights for pastors, ministry leaders, and scholars working in today's multicultural church landscape.

Concept of Transformational Leadership

What is Transformation? Bass and Riggio said Transformation is a marked change in form, nature, or appearance. Transformation is the radical shift from one state of being to another, so significant that it requires changes in culture, behavior, and mindset. It demands a shift in human awareness that completely alters how the organization and its people see the world.¹ It is a radical change from one nature, culture, behavior, and form to another, modifying how an organization and its people see the world. Different scholars from different angles of life have defined Leadership. Don Page said that Leadership is described as a set of functions that leaders perform, such as strategic planning, speaking, team building, vision casting, and goal setting.² It is also an influential relationship among leaders and collaborators who plan real changes that reflect their mutual purpose. Dan C. Hammer said, "Leadership in the Kingdom of God is about serving and ministering to those He gives you. A servant leads by example. "A servant leader never asks anyone to do something they would not be willing to do themselves."³ Leaders influence followers' attitudes, behavior, and performance. Leadership development and organizational management consider personality constructs, individual differences that concern personality, perception, abilities and skills, attitudes, and work behavior, including productivity, creativity, and performance.⁴ Leadership is not just the domain of people at the top; it arises at all levels and by any individual. According to Simon Ishola, "Transformational Leadership is a style that is utilized by leaders owning specific traits who look to work alongside their team members to identify change and grow the next action steps. But transform others, developing and empowering their individual followers to become leaders in and of themselves."⁵ Transformational Leadership is simply equipping followers to turn around an organization or group for tremendous success and to pursue a better, more robust relationship to promote a group's organizational goals or targets. Transformational and leadership models are categorized as the new leadership paradigm.⁶ Bernard M. Bass & Ronald E. Riggio also posited that Transformational leaders can arouse and inspire followers to accomplish extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their leadership capacity. Transformational leadership can help build follower commitment in different ways. This kind of leadership style can influence followers, enabling them to emulate the leader or identify emotionally with the leader, leading to alignment with the leader's goals, interests, and values. They support followers in growing and developing into leaders by addressing their needs,

¹ Bernard M. Bass & Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2006),3

² Don Page, *Servant Empowered Leadership*. (Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House,2008).18

³ Dan C. Hammer, *Servant Leadership* (Washington: Pacific Creek Books, 2012).24

⁴ Stuart .W. Boyer, *Biblical Leadership Development* (Indianapolis, USA: Palgrave Macmillan,2019).9

⁵ Simon Ishola *Class Note on Transformational leadership*, Faculty of Education, The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho, Nigerian, accessed 20th January, 2024.

⁶ Isabelle My Hanh Derungs *Trans-Cultural Leadership for Transformation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010),44

empowering them, and aligning the purposes and goals of followers, the leader, the group, and broader organizations. Transformational Leadership can motivate followers to exceed expectations and lead to high follower satisfaction, commitment, and obligation to the group and organization.⁷ Transformational Leadership is essential for driving change within an organization or group. Though it favors individuals with specific personality traits or experiences, it can be utilized by anyone who understands when and how.⁸ John Maxwell, in his work, puts “true leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from influence.”⁹ Roberto, in his works, further explains that transformational leadership influences, motivates, and inspires people to enact the kinds of changes and vision articulated by the leader.¹⁰ This leadership approach is characterized by leaders' ability to motivate their followers through a compelling vision, fostering an environment where innovation and personal development thrive. Leaders serve as role models for their followers and embody the values and behavior they wish to see in others, fostering trust and admiration that influence and encourage followers to emulate their leaders, creating a culture of commitment and ethical behavior. This leader projects a compelling vision for the future, inspires enthusiasm among team members, and communicates how to achieve leadership goals. Additionally, Transformational leadership helps develop leadership competencies, abilities, and skills. It is also important to understand that competency depends on context; organizations need to define the behaviors and processes that align with their strategy, culture, and industry.¹¹ The leader gives attention to each of his followers' unique aspirations and needs and provides support, mentorship, and opportunities for growth.

Overview of Church Growth

Church growth is the study of the nature, expansion, functioning, health, and multiplication of the Christian church for the effective implementation of God's mission. Orlando E. Costas states that "The term 'growth' suggests mobility and change; it indicates a dynamic reality. Where there is growth, there is increase, expansion, development, and multiplication or reproduction. Where there is growth, there is also mutation, transformation, renewal, and creativity."¹² Church Growth is the study of the well-being, characteristics, and roles of Christian churches in relation to their effective fulfillment of God's command to make disciples of all nations.¹³ Donald A. McGavran views Church Growth as the faithfulness of God. He further stresses that Christians are sent, just as Jesus Christ was sent by God, to seek and save the lost. It can be experienced only where Christians, constrained by love, obediently press on, telling men the good news of the Savior.¹⁴ George W. Peters, Church Growth, both qualitatively and quantitatively, is the handiwork of God Himself. In

⁷ Bernard M. Bass & Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2006), 3, 36

⁸ Simon Ishola.

⁹ John C. Maxwell *Leadership 101 What Every Leader Needs To Know* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002) 45

¹⁰ Michael A. Roberto, *Transformational Leadership: How Leaders Change Teams, Companies, and Organizations* (Virginia: The Great Courses, 2011), 7

¹¹ Michael A. Roberto, 14

¹² Orlando E. Costas, “A Wholistic Concept of Church Growth,” in *Exploring Church Growth*, Willbert R. Shenk, eds. (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 1983), 96.

¹³ “Church Growth.” A Practical Encyclopedia of Evangelism and Church Growth.

¹⁴ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Willians B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 5.

other words, because the church is the church of God, He determines its growth.¹⁵ Ron Jenson and Jim Stevens, in agreement with George Peters, view church growth "as the balanced increase in quality, quantity, and organizational complexity of a local church"¹⁶ Hunter R. Kent posits that church growth is more than a numerical increase and that the congregation's spiritual aspect must not be overlooked.¹⁷ It is an error, as Kent posits, to view church growth solely in numerical terms, and the researcher agrees with George Peters that God determines a church's growth. Humans are the only instruments that God uses. Julius A. Adeniji believes that, in defining Church growth, two significant factors must be included in the equation. These are: Church growth is measured by the health of the congregants' spiritual and sociological development, in accordance with the dictates of the Bible. Similarly, Church growth can be measured by an increase in the number of members over time.¹⁸ Gary L. McIntosh views Church growth as all that is involved in drawing men and women who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ into fellowship with Him into responsible Church membership.¹⁹ This suggests that Church growth begins with a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, and any other growth follows. David Goodhew opines that any Church growth viewed numerically requires questioning. He said, "Numerical Church growth that is, the numerical growth of local congregations and the multiplication of local congregations can be questioned as being theologically unnecessary, or even theologically suspect."²⁰ For Isaiah Michael Wealth, Church Growth cannot be taken for granted; it is a process that must be painstakingly understood and pursued systematically.²¹ Thom S. Rainer, while examining Donald McGavran's definition of Church growth, affirms the following tenet: first, Church growth is a discipline. Throughout the world, Church growth is accepted as a discipline worthy of recognition. Various classes in the Church growth field are taught in many Seminaries and Bible colleges, with professors of church growth on the rise. Secondly, Church growth is interested in disciple-making. Aside from evangelism, Church growth has as an agenda to see new Christians developed into fruit-bearing disciples of Jesus Christ, and thirdly, Church growth is founded on God's Word. There is a high opinion of Scripture in the literature emanating from church growth writers.²² Many eminent Church leaders are now operating on the revolutionary understanding that a healthy Church grows. They feed on God's Word, worship and obey Christ as the head of the Church, and are deeply concerned about the unbelievers in their community.²³ Donald McGavran posits that three kinds of church growth should be distinguished: biological, transfer, and conversion. Biological growth means those who are born into Christian families. Transfer growth is the increase of a certain congregation at the expense of others. The third kind of growth is conversion: those outside the Church who come to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and are baptized into the Church.

¹⁵ George W. Peters, *A Theology of Church Growth* (Grand Rapid, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 59.

¹⁶ Jenson Ron, and Jim Stevens, *Dynamics of Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Bakers Books, 1981), 10.

¹⁷ Hunter R. Kent, *Foundation for Church Growth* (New Haven: Leaders, 1973), 23.

¹⁸ Julius Ajao Adeniji, ed. *Lead Your Church to Growth* (Lagos: G&M Prints, 2024), 137

¹⁹ Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Bakers Books, 2003), 18.

²⁰ David Goodhew, ed. *Towards A Theology of Church Growth* (New York: Routledge 2016), 5.

²¹ Isaiah, Michael Wealth, *Church Growth Principles*. (New York: GP Publishers, 2018), 14.

²² Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth History, Theology and Principles*. (Nashville Tennessee: B & H Publishers, 1993), 20-21.

²³ Donald McGavran and George G. Hunter, *Church Growth Strategies That Works* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), 23.

This is the only growth that demonstrates the good news of salvation is spread to all societies.²⁴ Thom S. Rainer, in his own approach, classifies Church growth into three distinct forms: internal growth, expansion growth, and extension growth. Internal growth focuses on members' spiritual maturity, as individual members of the body mature through worship, Bible study, and prayer. Expansion growth refers to the growth in the number of a local congregation. In this pattern, believers move out into the world, win people to Christ, bring them into the Church, and train them for full membership. Extension growth, on the other hand, is synonymous with church planting. Here, new converts are gathered into a congregation through evangelism and nurtured to become self-sustaining.²⁵ Transformational Leadership and Church Growth are deeply interconnected. When church leaders embrace transformational leadership, they do more than manage programs; they inspire, empower, and mobilize people to pursue God's mission, resulting in both spiritual and numerical growth. **Leadership** and church growth provide the vision, character, and actions that directly shape the church's health, direction, and expansion. Effective leadership is not just about strategy; it's about spiritual influence, organizational guidance, and missional faithfulness that lead to numerical, spiritual, and missional growth.

Multicultural Environment

Multicultural: First, "multi" means "more than one." Thus, multicultural, multiethnic, multiracial, multilingual, and even multi-congregation mean more than one culture, race, ethnicity, language, and congregation. In discussing churches in terms of cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity, the scholarly literature is unclear as to the extent to which multiracial churches are multiethnic or multicultural. Some scholars have used these terms interchangeably or all three, depending on their work. A common practice among churches with an intentional focus on diversity is to refer to themselves as multiracial, multiethnic, or multicultural.²⁶ Multiculturalism is a framework of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects all diverse groups in an organization or society, values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context that empowers all within the organization or society. Multiculturalism is a "system," a set of interrelated parts, in this case, beliefs and behaviors that make up the whole of how humans experience today's world. It includes what people believe about others and how those beliefs impact and are impacted by behavior.²⁷ Besides, the outcome of this praxis of beliefs/behaviors is an important action. The first is *recognition* of the rich diversity in a given society or organization. For an extensive time, racial/ethnic minorities, the physically incapacitated, and women have not been given the same recognition as others. Multiculturalism also requires acknowledging the validity of the cultural expressions and contributions of various groups. Genuine multiculturalism will also *support* and *enable the contributions* of various groups to society or an organization. The word *enable* here is important, because what lies behind it is the concept of empowerment and the process of enabling people to be self-critical of their own biases so as to strengthen themselves and others to achieve and deploy their maximum potential.²⁸ Multiculturalism enables us to look upon the other, especially the other that the world has taught us to regard with distrust and suspicion, not as a "potential predator", but as a profitable partner.

²⁴ McGavran, 71-72.

²⁵ Rainer, 23.

²⁶ Hunn Choi, A New Form of a Multicultural Church for Today's Multilingual Context, hunn.choi@asburyseminary.edu, 859-312-2433 Accessed 7th May, 2025

²⁷ Caleb Rosado, Multicultural Ministry Vol.23, No.5(April,1994)

²⁸ Caleb Rosado,

“Multiculturalism” within an inclusive cultural context” is most important, because it is here where many people refuse to go along with an inclusive approach to society or to ministry.²⁹ Caleb Rosado posits that Multicultural ministry is the development and implementation of heterogeneous models for communicating the gospel, grounded in beliefs and behaviors that are sensitive to the needs of the culturally diverse population within a church’s field of service. For too long, the Christian church has operated under exclusive, homogeneous models of ministry and worship in a heterogeneous society.³⁰ Multiculturalism is the coexistence of diverse cultures within a single society, in which cultural differences are accepted, respected, and even celebrated. It typically refers to the presence of multiple ethnic, religious, or cultural groups within a country or community, as well as the policies and social norms that support this diversity. Some leaders want extension growth without considering internal growth. This denies expansion growth the deeper base that it needs. Many new people who come into such a church are quickly lost because they are not integrated into the congregation's group life and ministry. Again, many leaders rely on transfers and biological alone, without reaching out to the undisciplined population. This is contrary to the heart of the Great Commission. Also, some leaders turn a deaf ear to Christ's mandate for extension growth and bringing growth, but are interested in expansion growth for their congregation.³¹ Transformational Leadership for Church Growth in a multicultural setting is a leadership approach that seeks to inspire and motivate church members toward spiritual maturity, active participation, and mission-focused development in a diverse cultural setting. This mode is particularly effective in growing healthy, dynamic churches because it focuses on big, meaningful change rather than surface-level growth. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that Inspires vision and long-term purpose, is relevant to every culture, and inculcates and integrates all that is required for the church. Motivates and empowers members for church growth, develops people through mentorship, and Fosters innovation and change aligned with biblical principles. Leaders articulate a clear, Spirit-led vision for the church that compels members to attract and unify around common goals for evangelism, discipleship, and community impact. Transformational Leaders model passion, purpose, and faith, encouraging members to rise above personal limitations. Motivates people to serve, give, and grow, not out of duty but from a deep conviction of the presence of multiple ethnic, religious, or cultural groups within a community, and the policies or social norms that support diversity. Transformational leaders’ mentor, disciple, and care for individual members by building loyalty, spiritual growth, and a strong relational foundation for church unity. Encourages members to think biblically and creatively, challenge traditions when necessary, and find solutions to ministry challenges. Helps avoid stagnation and promotes innovation in outreach and discipleship. The leader’s character is central. Transformational leaders must live out what they preach, building credibility and spiritual authority.

Nexus Between Transformational Leadership and Church Growth

Transformational leadership significantly influences church growth within multicultural contexts. Transformational leadership impacts growth by inspiring and motivating individuals to embrace change, fostering unity, and creating an inclusive environment. This leadership style is characterized by a focus on vision, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation, providing a powerful

²⁹ Caleb Rosado,

³⁰ Caleb Rosado.

³¹ Donald McGavran and George G. Hunter, 44.

framework for navigating the complexities of diverse congregations and leveraging their inherent strengths. Church leaders serve as ethical and spiritual role models; their actions, integrity, and commitment to the faith inspire trust and respect among the congregation. This is where leadership is understood as embodying the faith's values and teachings. Transformational church leaders have a compelling vision for the church's future, often rooted in its mission and doctrinal beliefs. This vision inspires hope, purpose, and enthusiasm, motivating members from different ethnic and social levels to actively participate in the church's life and outreach. The challenge of church growth entails many assumptions and shapes approaches that foster ministry and service, thereby encouraging innovation within the church in a multicultural context. Moreover, they show genuine care and support for followers, nurturing their unique gifts and needs to support each person's spiritual growth, creating strong relationships. Transformational leadership fosters deeper engagement and commitment among members, leading to greater participation in church activities and ministries. It cultivates a strong sense of purpose that aligns their personal faith journeys with the church's collective mission, motivating members and followers to work together toward common goals. Philip says we now come to the question of how people decide among the structural alternatives open to them. The following discussion of decision-making is based upon two assumptions: (1) that more than one alternative is actually available to a person and (2) that most people make reasonable choices given knowledge of available alternatives and their probable consequences.³² Transformational leadership helps leaders become more adaptable and resilient in the face of changing societal challenges and, amid competing decisions, navigate the process of building trust and creating a more cohesive, supportive community that strengthens members.

In a multicultural church context, the leader's ability to model genuine humility and respect for all cultures, demonstrate impartiality, value the contributions of every ethnic or cultural group, build trust and credibility across diverse congregants, and break down potential barriers is essential. A transformational leader in a multicultural church must be broad enough to encompass and celebrate the congregation's diversity. The leader's vision in a multicultural context focuses on shared faith, a common mission, and unity that are tied to the people's cultural norms.

Transformational leaders in a multicultural context pursue an inclusive vision that brings people from all backgrounds together around a common purpose. There is a safe place for dialogue about cultural differences, constructively challenging cultural assumptions, enabling one another's perspectives and traditions, and exploring diverse cultural expressions that can enrich worship, outreach, and community life, leading to culturally relevant ministries and valuing cultural backgrounds, experiences, and needs of individuals in a multicultural setting. Transformational leaders understand diverse cultural perspectives, adapt communication styles, and ensure that pastoral care is sensitive and accessible to everyone, regardless of culture.

Transformational leaders create an environment where people from all cultural backgrounds feel genuinely welcomed, accepted, and included in a diverse group. Transformational leaders help dismantle cultural misunderstandings and prejudice within the congregation, promoting a lack of apathy and mutual respect among different groups. A church that successfully integrates multiple cultures under transformational leadership becomes more authentic, credible, and effective in reaching people from various backgrounds.

³² Philip K. Bock, *Modern Cultural Anthropology: An Introduction* (New York: The Clarendon Press, 1969).200

Challenges of Transformational Leadership for Church Growth

Transformational leadership is a powerful model that aims to inspire, motivate, and develop followers to achieve a shared vision. In the context of church growth, especially in a multicultural environment, this leadership style can be active. Still, it also faces unique challenges due to the diversity of backgrounds, values, and expectations among members. Below are the following challenges;

Cultural difference and misunderstanding: Different cultural backgrounds bring divergent worldviews, worship styles, and communication norms. Leaders may struggle to create unity without alienating precise ethnic or cultural groups. A transformational leader promoting shared leadership and open dialogue may face resistance in high-power-distance contexts, where top-down leadership is the norm. There are two faces to handling cultural differences in a multicultural setting: first, individualistic cultures, which rest on personal autonomy and self-expression, and second, collectivist cultures, which emphasize group harmony and community. Transformational leaders are committed to mitigating cultural differences and misunderstandings to enhance church growth. Transformational leaders may be misunderstood or resisted in cultures where maintaining tradition is compared with spiritual faithfulness, while some cultures are traditionally bound, while others can tolerate change.

Language barrier: A language barrier occurs when people who speak different languages or have varying levels of language proficiency struggle to understand one another. This leads to miscommunication, confusion, and sometimes exclusion. Multilingual congregations pose challenges in preaching, teaching, and interpersonal relationships because Miscommunication can create divisions or cause feelings of exclusion among non-dominant language groups. Transformational leadership relies heavily on clear communication of vision, motivation, and feedback. When leaders and congregants don't share the same level of language fluency, the leader's message can be misunderstood, diluted, or ignored, and Nuances of spiritual and emotional encouragement may be lost in translation, reducing the leader's influence. A leader's inspirational stories, sermons, or encouragement may fail to resonate if the audience struggles with the language. Transformational leadership requires building trust and inspiring others, which is hard without an effective language connection.

Balancing tradition and innovation: Tradition: The established beliefs, practices, rituals, and values passed down through generations in the church and It provides identity, stability, and a sense of continuity. Likewise, Innovation is New ideas, methods, and approaches that challenge the status quo, enabling adaptation, growth, and the meeting of contemporary needs. Tradition and innovation ground the church in biblical truths and spiritual heritage, providing stability and a reliable framework that nurtures faith and community, and shaping the church's unique culture and values that produce identity. Innovations pose a great challenge for transformational leadership aimed at driving church growth in a multicultural setting, since adaptability helps the church respond to changing cultural, social, and technological contexts. Innovation can make the gospel accessible and meaningful to new generations, encourage creativity in worship, outreach, and discipleship, and offer fresh solutions to challenges the church faces.

Resistance to change: transformational leaders seek to challenge the status quo, but members from different backgrounds may have varying thresholds for change. Cultural change within the church can be perceived as a loss of identity and can lead to resistance. Transformational leaders must be able to bridge divides, build relationships, and create a sense of community and belonging among all members of the church. According to Philip, the basis of his leadership authority is that a group of people chose him and

is responsible to them.³³ Transformational leadership that will accelerate growth in a multicultural setting requires empathy, understanding, and the ability to lead with grace and humility. Overall, while there are many challenges that transformational leaders face in driving church growth, with perseverance, dedication, and a strong commitment to their vision, they can overcome these obstacles and lead their churches towards greater growth and impact. Conflict management: Multicultural settings are prone to misunderstandings and interpersonal conflicts rooted in cultural assumptions. Conflict is common because people have diverse worldviews and cultural norms. Different cultures may have contrasting ways of expressing disagreement or resolving issues. Misunderstandings can escalate conflicts. Language and communication styles, as well as cultural backgrounds, also influence how people respond to leadership. According to Serena and Richard, "Extreme ethnic conflict is a product of contemporary economic, political, and social conditions. Ethnic conflict or violence is a result of the manipulation of cultural differences and interethnic violence."³⁴ Effective conflict management in multicultural churches through transformational leadership involves cultural sensitivity, open communication, servant-hearted humility, and a shared focus on vision. By embracing and resolving conflict constructively, leaders can strengthen unity and foster sustainable church growth. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes inspiring and motivating followers to achieve their fullest potential. In the context of church growth, transformational leaders play a crucial role in mobilizing and energizing the congregation to participate actively in the church's mission and vision. However, there are several challenges that transformational leaders face in driving church growth. Isabelle posited that Effective leadership is a close connection between the leader and the followers, which determines the success of the leader's mission and strategy.³⁵ One of the main challenges is resistance to change within the congregation. Change can be unsettling and challenging for many people, and some members of the church may resist the transformational leader's effort to implement new initiatives or strategies for growth. Another challenge that transformational leaders face in driving church growth is securing effective communication and buy-in from the entire congregation.

Impact of transformational leadership for church growth in a multicultural setting

Transformational leadership in multicultural churches drives holistic growth spiritually, numerically, and relationally—by creating a vibrant, inclusive community that reflects the diversity of the Kingdom of God. Transformational leadership for church growth in a multicultural setting should engage Cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence will enhance transformational leaders' ability to promote church growth. Leaders must develop cultural self-awareness and the ability to adapt their leadership style across cultures.³⁶ Cultural Intelligence is a crucial skill for transformational leaders aiming to grow multicultural churches. It empowers leaders to navigate cultural complexities with wisdom and grace, fostering unity, relevance, and spiritual vitality. CQ can help leaders understand differing values, communication norms, and conflict styles. Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is the ability to understand, respect, and adapt effectively to different cultural contexts. It involves more than just knowledge of other cultures; it's about applying that

³³ Philip K. Bock, *Modern Cultural Anthropology: An Introduction* (New York: The Clarendon Press, 1969), 112

³⁴ Serena Nanda & Richard L. Warms *Cultural Anthropology* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2007), 36

³⁵ Isabelle My Hanh Derungs *Trans-Cultural Leadership for Transformation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 44

³⁶ David Livermore *Leading With Cultural Intelligence The Real Secret to Success*, Second Edition (New York: American Management Association, 2015)

knowledge in real-life interactions to build trust, communicate well, and lead effectively across cultural boundaries. cultural intelligence will Enhances Communication: Leaders with high CQ communicate vision and motivation more clearly across cultural boundaries.³⁷ CQ helps build trust, respect, and understanding of cultural differences, fostering deeper relationships and reducing misunderstandings. CQ can Promote Inclusion and unite, helping leaders create an environment where diverse members feel valued and included. CQ Enables Effective Conflict Management: Recognizing cultural influences on conflict styles helps resolve disputes constructively. CQ equips leaders to innovate while honoring traditions, critical for church growth in diverse settings.³⁸ Moreover, to successfully lead a church towards growth in a multicultural setting, a transformational leader must be able to communicate their vision effectively, inspire others to join their mission, and cultivate a sense of unity and purpose within the community. This requires not only strong communication skills but also the ability to build trust and credibility among the congregation. Without support from church members, it can be difficult for a transformational leader to implement changes and drive growth successfully. Incorporate cultural narratives, symbols, and spiritual practices from all represented cultures when casting vision. And emphasize a shared spiritual identity in Christ that transcends ethnic or cultural lines. Furthermore, the impact of Clear language in communication is highly effective in enhancing transformational leadership for church growth. Multilingual communication may be needed; a transformational leader can use translators or interpreters during sermons, meetings, and leadership communication and provide materials (sermons, newsletters, vision statements) in multiple languages. Inspire bilingual leaders or volunteers to bridge gaps. Use visuals, symbols, music, and gestures to reinforce messages. Storytelling and dramatization can transcend language. The importance of contextualized leadership in driving accelerated growth in a multicultural setting cannot be overstated. Contextualized leadership means adapting leadership style and strategies to the cultural realities of the congregation, tailoring its vision, communication, and methods to the cultural values, language, and traditions of diverse groups, making the church's mission more relatable and engaging while encouraging participation and growth. Transformational leaders can use culturally appropriate stories, symbols, and expressions to effectively inspire and motivate church members. Culturally sensitive communication enhances understanding. Through contextualizing their approach, transformational leaders become more effective in multicultural settings, inspiring participation, managing conflict wisely, and balancing tradition with innovation. Contextualized leadership with cultural sensitivity and adaptability is a key driver of sustainable church growth. Transformational leaders often promote change and innovation, but some cultural groups may resist these shifts due to deep-rooted traditions. Adapting leadership or worship methods to respect tradition while still promoting growth can be difficult. Affirm the value of tradition publicly and show how new ideas connect with or enhance biblical and historical foundations. Introduce changes gradually and thoughtfully and pilot new programs alongside traditional ones to evaluate impact. Balancing tradition and innovation is a hallmark of effective transformational leadership in churches. Tradition anchors and shapes identity; innovation propels growth and relevance. When leaders wisely integrate both, the church can grow

³⁷ Yoesoep Edhie Rachmad Cultural Intelligence Theory, Rachmad, Yoesoep Edhie. Logroño Vino Publicaciones Internacionales, Edición Especial 2022. <https://doi.org/10.17605/osf.io/8g4u3> Accessed 21st May, 2025

³⁸ Linn NA Van Dyne & Mei Ling Tan Cultural Intelligence *ResearchGate* (May 2011) 582-602 DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511977244.030 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284774026>. Accessed 11th May, 2025

in faithfulness and impact. Transformational leadership for church growth in a multicultural setting should employ conflict management and resolution. Recognize and respect cultural differences in how conflict is expressed and resolved. Approach conflict with a servant's heart, prioritizing reconciliation and unity, and admit mistakes and show willingness to learn from others. Involve diverse members in developing solutions. David says, "Conflict is the lifeblood of vibrant, progressive, stimulating organizations. It sparks creativity, stimulates innovation, and encourages personal improvement"³⁹ Use mediation or conflict resolution teams that reflect the church's cultural diversity. Discussions should also center around the church's mission and common spiritual goals, helping conflicting parties see beyond differences to the unity in Christ. Transformational leaders must be skilled in cross-cultural conflict resolution and in fostering inclusive dialogue.

Conclusion

Transformational leadership impacts growth by inspiring and motivating individuals to embrace change, fostering unity, and creating an inclusive environment. This paper examines the concept of transformational leadership, provides an overview of church growth and multiculturalism, and addresses the challenges of transformational leadership in a multicultural setting, such as cultural differences and misunderstandings, language barriers, balancing tradition and innovation, Resistance to change, and Conflict management. The paper concludes that the impacts of Transformational leadership on church growth in a multicultural setting should include engaging with Cultural intelligence, communicating effectively, practicing contextualized leadership, promoting change and innovation, and employing conflict management and resolution. Transformational leadership instills confidence in its followers, helping them strive for excellence. It also challenges the status quo, promotes problem-solving, and creates new ideas without fear of criticism, driving collective progress towards organizational goals. Another lasting impact of transformational leaders in driving church growth in a multicultural setting is managing the complexities and dynamics of a diverse, often fragmented congregation. Churches are made up of individuals with different backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives, and navigating these differences can be challenging for a transformational leader in order to drive growth effectively,

³⁹ David W., Kale, *Managing conflict in the church* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2003), 77

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