

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**Exploring leadership development strategies in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South  
Africa in Durban Central Region, KwaZulu-Natal**

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## DECLARATION

I, Nondumiso Nxumalo, declare that:

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined leadership development strategies within the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (AFM of SA), focusing on the Durban Central Region (DCR) in KwaZulu-Natal. It was driven by the need for sustainable church growth and ministerial effectiveness through intentional and contextually relevant leadership formation. Despite the AFM's theological heritage and organizational presence, scholarly exploration of its regional leadership development remains limited. Using a qualitative research approach rooted in Saunders' Research Onion and interpretivist paradigm, the study gathered data via semi-structured interviews with twelve ordained pastors. Thematic analysis, supported by NVivo software, revealed that leadership development in the DCR is largely informal, relational, and spiritually driven—centered on mentoring, pastoral formation, and discerning spiritual callings. Although these methods enhance spiritual depth and relational accountability, they often lack structure, institutional support, and clarity in succession planning. Leadership selection processes were also seen to be vulnerable to internal politics and opportunism. Moreover, current strategies fail to meet modern organizational needs, particularly in administration, diversity, and inclusivity. The research advocates a hybrid leadership development model combining spiritual formation with organized frameworks. It recommends integrating servant leadership principles (Greenleaf, 1970; Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011) and structured feedback systems like 360-degree evaluations (Bracken, Rose & Church, 2016) to enhance accountability and authenticity.

Key recommendations include the establishment of standardised national and regional leadership development frameworks, the embedding of servant leadership principles within leadership curricula and evaluative processes, the implementation of structured feedback mechanisms such as 360-degree evaluations, and the strengthening of inclusive succession planning practices.

The study contributes to both academic discourse and ecclesial practice by proposing a contextually grounded, theologically informed approach to leadership formation within African Pentecostalism. It underscores the need for balancing administrative competency and spiritual authenticity to cultivate effective, transformative church leaders.

Key terms, *Leadership, Servant Leadership, Church Leadership*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b><i>i</i></b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b><i>ii</i></b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES</b> .....	<b><i>vii</i></b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b><i>viii</i></b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the Study.....	2
1.3 The History of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa.....	3
1.3.1 Origins and Early Development (1908–1940s).....	3
1.3.2 Institutionalisation and Growth (1950s–1970s).....	3
1.3.3 Transformation and Reconciliation (1980s–1990s).....	4
1.3.4 Post-Apartheid Growth and Global Presence (2000s–Present).....	4
1.3.5 Continuing Influence.....	4
1.4 The Meaning of Leadership and Church Leadership.....	5
1.4.1 The Meaning of Leadership.....	5
1.4.2 Church Leadership.....	5
1.4.3 Church Leadership in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa.....	6
1.5 Leadership Competencies and Challenges in the AFM of SA.....	6
1.6 Church Leadership Transition and Succession.....	8
1.7 Problem Statement.....	9
1.8 Research Aim and Objectives.....	10
1.9 Research Questions.....	10
1.10 Significance of the Study.....	11
1.10.1 Academic Contribution.....	11
1.10.2 Contextual Relevance.....	11
1.10.3 Practical Application.....	11
1.10.4 Policy and Strategic Development.....	12
1.10.5 Social and Community Impact.....	12
1.11 Research Methodology.....	12
1.11.1 Population and Sampling.....	12
1.11.2 Sample Size and Data Saturation.....	12
1.11.3 Sampling Methodology.....	12
1.11.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.....	13
1.11.5 Ethical Considerations.....	13
1.12 Limitations of the Study.....	13
1.13 Research Structure.....	13
1.13.1 Chapter One: Introduction.....	13
1.13.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review.....	14
1.13.3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology.....	14
1.13.4 Chapter Four: Findings.....	14
1.13.5 Chapter Five: Discussion.....	14
1.13.6 Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations.....	14
1.14 Chapter Summary.....	15

<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	16
2.2 The Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Leadership.....	17
2.3 Understanding Leadership and Management.....	18
2.3.1 Leadership Development .....	21
2.3.2 Distinctions Between Leader and Leadership Development .....	28
2.3.3 Models of Leader and Leadership Development.....	30
2.3.4 Performance Appraisals .....	32
2.3.5 Servant Leadership Theory .....	34
2.3.6 Politicking and Opportunism .....	34
2.4 Strategies and Methods of Leadership Development .....	36
2.4.1 Mentoring .....	36
2.4.2 Coaching.....	39
2.4.3 Networking.....	39
2.4.4 Action Learning.....	41
2.4.5 Job Challenge .....	43
2.4.6 Secondments.....	44
2.4.7 Succession Planning.....	46
2.4.8 Formal Programmes .....	48
2.4.9 Fast Track Cohorts.....	49
2.4.10 Organizational Development.....	50
2.4.11 Partnership Working.....	52
2.5 Evaluation of the Impact of Leadership Development .....	55
2.5.1 The Kirkpatrick Model of Level and Outcomes of Leadership Development .....	56
2.5.2 Leadership Development Effectiveness.....	57
2.5.3 Measures of Leadership Development .....	59
2.6 Previous Studies on Leadership Development in a Church in and Outside South Africa .....	62
2.7 Chapter Summary .....	65
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>66</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	66
3.2 Research Onion Model .....	67
3.2.1 Research Philosophy .....	67
3.2.2 Research Approach .....	68
3.2.3 Research Strategy.....	68
3.2.4 Time Horizon.....	69
3.2.5 Techniques and Procedures.....	69
3.2.6 Summary.....	69
3.3 Research Paradigm.....	70
3.4 Research Design .....	71
3.5 Population and Sampling.....	71
3.6 Data Collection .....	72
3.7 Data Analysis .....	72
3.8 Trustworthiness.....	73
3.9 Ethical Considerations .....	74
3.10 Delimitation of the Study .....	74

3.11 Conclusion .....	75
3.12 Chapter Summary .....	75
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>77</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	77
4.2 Overview Of Participants .....	78
4.3 Thematic Presentation of Findings .....	79
4.3.1 Architecture: Development Pathways and Governance.....	79
4.3.2 Practice: Leadership Philosophy and Day-to-Day Application .....	80
4.3.3 Improvement: Outcomes, Evaluation and Emerging Needs .....	81
4.4 Interpretation Within Themes .....	82
4.4.1 Leadership Development Strategies in the AFM of SA – Durban Central Region .....	82
4.4.2 Challenges in Leadership Transitions and Implementation.....	82
4.4.3 How Leadership Development Can Be Improved .....	83
4.4.4 Linking Back to the Research Questions.....	83
4.5 Interpretation of Findings in Line with Objectives.....	84
4.5.1 Understanding Leadership Development Strategies (Objective 1 / RQ1).....	84
4.5.2 Challenges of Leadership Transitions (Objective 2 / RQ2).....	85
4.5.3 Enhancing Development for Future Church Needs (Objective 3 / RQ3) .....	85
4.6 Conclusion .....	86
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>87</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	87
5.2 Super-Theme 1: Architecture – Development Pathways and Governance .....	87
5.2.1 Inclusivity and Gender Equity.....	88
5.3 Super-Theme 2: Practice – Leadership Philosophy, Daily Application, and Leadership Transitions .....	89
5.4 Super-Theme 3: Improvement – Evaluation, Outcomes, and Modernisation .....	90
5.5 Integrating Theology and Practice .....	91
5.6 Summary of Discussion .....	93
<b>CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>95</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	95
6.2 An Overview of the Main Findings.....	95
6.3 Limitations And Constraints of the Study .....	97
6.4 Delimitations of the Study .....	98
6.5 Conclusion .....	98
6.6 Recommendations .....	99
6.7 Contribution Of The Study.....	101
6.7.1 Theoretical Contribution.....	101
6.7.2 Practical Contribution .....	101
6.7.3 Contribution to Church Governance and Policy .....	102
6.7.4 Contextual and Cultural Contribution .....	102
6.8 Areas For Further Research .....	102

<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Informed Consent Letter .....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Consent to Participate in Research .....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Interview Schedule.....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance .....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Gatekeeper’s Letter .....</b>	<b>124</b>

### **LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES**

Figure 3.1 Research Onion Model.....	70
Figure 5.2: Leadership Development Framework.....	94
Table 2. 1 Leadership vs Management.....	19
Table 2.2 Summary of Leadership Models and Relevance to AFM .....	36
Table 2.3 Comparative Strategies and Methods of Leadership Development.....	55
Table 4.1 Participant Demographics .....	79
Table 5.2 Theory vs Practice Comparison .....	93
Table 6.1 Recommendations Summary .....	101

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
AFM OF SA	Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa
AIPC	African Independent Pentecostal Churches
CCT	Career-Change Teachers
DCR	Durban Central Region
HSSREC	UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
IDP	Innovation Development Process
Industry 4.0	Fourth Industrial Revolution
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LAM	Latin American Mission
LDP	Leadership Development Programme
MIL	Ministry Integrated Learning
NLF	National Leadership Forum
NPPC	New Prophetic Pentecostal Churches
OD	Organizational Development
PALAR	Participatory Action Learning and Action Research
PCD	Pastoral Continuous Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SERV	Situatedness, Empowerment, Roles, and Vulnerability
SLS	Servant Leadership Survey
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TLT	Transformational Learning Theory
U.S	United States
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

## 1.1 Introduction

Strategic planning is an indispensable element of organisational functioning, regardless of whether it is explicitly articulated. In church contexts, strategic leadership plays a vital role in shaping identity, direction, and overall effectiveness (Rivas, Saiz and Ossa, 2022; Chukwudi and Iyoha, 2024). Success for pastors is not measured by vision alone. It also depends on their ability to develop, implement, and evaluate strategies that remain responsive to changing social and generational contexts. The church can be conceptualised theologically as the body of Christ, sociologically as a moral institution, and architecturally as a sacred space that fosters worship and community (Mawikere *et al.*, 2024; Jeniva and Tanyid, 2025). In all these dimensions, effective leadership is indispensable, requiring not only theological depth but also pastoral and organisational competence.

Leadership development within the church entails more than doctrinal training; it involves forming leaders with spiritual maturity, emotional intelligence, and adaptive capacity (Kesumawati and Gultom, 2025). Rapid social and technological changes have redefined how people engage with faith and community (Ugboh, 2023). Consequently, churches must cultivate leaders who can engage emerging generations with authenticity and relevance.

The Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (AFM of SA), one of the country's largest Pentecostal denominations, comprises 41 regions under the National Leadership Forum (NLF). Among these, the Durban Central Region (DCR) represents a vibrant and diverse context encompassing over 58 assemblies and approximately 20,000 congregants. Its leaders face unique challenges shaped by socio-economic inequality, cultural diversity, and evolving ministry expectations (Sibanda and Batisai, 2021; Mahmud and Sakinah, 2024). Pastoral responsibilities in the region extend beyond preaching to encompass mentorship, administrative leadership, and active community engagement. Effective leadership in the AFM of SA necessitates a synthesis of spiritual depth and contextual adaptability (Sibanda, 2023). To sustain growth and remain relevant, churches need to invest intentionally in leadership development through theological education, practical training, and ongoing spiritual formation.

This research examined leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA, focusing specifically on the DCR. It explored existing practices, identified challenges in leadership

transition, and proposed contextually grounded approaches for strengthening leadership development to ensure organisational sustainability and spiritual vitality.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

The AFM of SA remains one of the country's largest and most influential Pentecostal denominations, with a long standing legacy of spiritual leadership and community engagement. Since its establishment, the AFM has grown to include more than 1,200 assemblies across the nation, serving congregations that reflect South Africa's social, cultural, and geographical diversity (AFM of SA, 2022). Although the church has experienced significant expansion, it continues to face persistent challenges in leadership development that influence its sustainability, vitality, and overall organisational effectiveness.

Leadership has long been recognised as a critical factor in church life, as pastors play central roles in governance, discipleship, and community transformation. The AFM's decentralised governance structure, which grants local assemblies considerable autonomy, offers both opportunities and challenges. While decentralisation fosters flexibility and responsiveness to local contexts (Szemző, Mosquera, Polyák and Hayes, 2022), it has also resulted in uneven leadership development, inconsistent succession planning, and varying standards of ministerial formation across regions. The DCR, one of the most dynamic and diverse region within the AFM, exemplifies these complexities. Rapid urbanisation, socio-economic disparities, and cultural diversity demand leaders who are both spiritually grounded and administratively capable (Meyer, Bolsinger, Wehner, Nair, Nwosu and Abdullahi, 2024).

Although substantial scholarship exists on church governance and pastoral training, few studies have focused specifically on leadership development within African Pentecostal contexts (Kesumawati and Gultom, 2025). Existing research (Nel, 2014; Kgatle, 2019) identifies critical gaps in structured training, mentorship, and succession planning within Pentecostal churches, including the AFM. Many pastors have historically entered ministry primarily through spiritual calling rather than through formal leadership preparation, leading to disparities in ministerial competence. This issue is particularly pronounced in the DCR, where leadership practices among assemblies vary widely due to decentralisation.

In light of this, the completed study evaluated existing leadership development strategies, identified prevailing challenges, and proposed practical approaches that integrate theological, pastoral, and organisational dimensions. Findings from this research contribute to a deeper

understanding of sustainable, contextually grounded leadership models within the AFM of SA and other Pentecostal denominations across the African continent.

### **1.3 The History of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa**

With over 1.4 million members, the AFM of SA stands as one of the nation's most prominent Pentecostal denominations, exerting enduring spiritual and socio-cultural influence. Its growth reflects a dynamic history of revivalism, theological maturation, and contextual adaptation to South Africa's evolving landscape.

#### **1.3.1 Origins and Early Development (1908–1940s)**

The AFM traces its roots to the global Pentecostal revival of the early twentieth century, notably the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 in Los Angeles, which emphasised Holy Spirit baptism, divine healing, and dynamic worship (AFM of SA, 2022). Inspired by this movement, American missionaries Thomas Hezmalhalch and John G. Lake arrived in South Africa in 1908, leading to the formal establishment of the AFM on May 25 of that year. Initially characterised by interracial ministry, the church rapidly grew among both Black and White communities receptive to Pentecostal teachings on healing and spiritual renewal. By 1913, the AFM began aligning more closely with Dutch Reformed traditions, resulting in racially segregated daughter churches for Black, Coloured, and Indian congregants (AFM of SA, 2022). Despite these challenges, the church's emphasis on evangelism, healing, and spiritual fervour sustained its expansion across the country.

#### **1.3.2 Institutionalisation and Growth (1950s–1970s)**

Following World War II, the AFM entered a period of institutional consolidation. The establishment of theological colleges, formal leadership structures, and regional administrative systems enhanced organisational cohesion (AFM of SA, 2022). Yet the apartheid era also introduced considerable tensions within the church. Although the AFM experienced rapid growth, especially among Black South Africans, its acceptance of racial segregation created deep internal fractures. One of the most notable outcomes of these tensions was the 1958 separation that resulted in the formation of the Pentecostal Protestant Church. This division reflected the broader social and political pressures of the time and revealed how theological convictions and organisational identity were shaped by the racial

realities of South Africa (AFM of SA, 2022). Nevertheless, the denomination maintained strong momentum through its emphasis on spiritual renewal, evangelism, and community engagement.

### **1.3.3 Transformation and Reconciliation (1980s–1990s)**

The closing decades of apartheid prompted deep introspection within the AFM. Growing recognition of racial injustice and internal pressure for unity led to major reforms. In 1996 the formerly segregated branches of the AFM were brought together under a single multiracial structure, marking a significant milestone in the history of the denomination (AFM of SA, 2022). This moment signalled a renewed commitment to unity, reconciliation, and shared identity after decades of organisational separation shaped by racial policies in South Africa. Dr Isak Burger's public apology for past segregation symbolised the new era of reconciliation. The adoption of the 2000 Constitution further decentralised leadership while promoting inclusivity and shared governance (AFM of SA, 2022).

### **1.3.4 Post-Apartheid Growth and Global Presence (2000s–Present)**

Since 2000, the AFM has continued to expand both locally and internationally, establishing a presence in major South African cities as well as in Africa, Europe, and North America. Its decentralised governance structure grants local assemblies considerable autonomy, enabling them to respond effectively to local realities while maintaining Pentecostal doctrinal unity (AFM of SA, 2022). The church's ministries now encompass spiritual formation, social outreach, and digital engagement, reflecting its adaptation to modern communication and ministry trends.

However, decentralisation has also created challenges related to leadership consistency, succession planning, and the ongoing development of pastoral capacity. These issues emerged clearly in the study and formed an important part of the investigation into how leadership is developed and supported within the AFM.

### **1.3.5 Continuing Influence**

From its revivalist beginnings, the AFM has evolved into a dynamic, multiracial, and globally connected denomination. It continues to play a transformative role in South African society through spiritual formation, education, and social development initiatives. Leadership within the AFM remains central to its mission and is expressed through governance, pastoral care, and discipleship (Packiam, 2022). The findings of this research underscore that effective

leadership development remains vital for sustaining the AFM's mission, ensuring institutional continuity, and maintaining its transformative witness in an ever-changing world.

## **1.4 The Meaning of Leadership and Church Leadership**

### **1.4.1 The Meaning of Leadership**

Leadership is often characterised by the ability to foster purposeful collaboration among individuals and groups toward common objectives. According to Daft (2018), leadership is an influence relationship between leaders and followers directed toward achieving meaningful change. Unlike administrative management, leadership is people-centred and depends on active interaction, mutual trust, and shared purpose. Modern perspectives extend this view, portraying leadership as a dynamic and context-sensitive phenomenon shaped by culture, relationships, and environment (Genza, 2021). Rather than focusing on innate traits, contemporary scholarship places emphasis on ethical awareness, emotional intelligence, and adaptability as essential markers of effective leadership (Hadi and Marpaung, 2023). Schultz (2021) further explains that leadership operates across three interconnected domains, namely self-leadership, people leadership, and organisational leadership, which together illustrate the holistic and relational nature of meaningful influence. Thus, leadership transcends sectors and settings, serving as a foundation for social, institutional, and community coherence.

These general leadership principles provide the conceptual foundation for understanding leadership within a church context, as explored in the following section.

### **1.4.2 Church Leadership**

Church leadership adds a distinct theological and spiritual dimension to leadership theory. It is grounded in service, humility, and discipleship (Tangen, 2023). While secular leadership often prioritises efficiency and performance (Mincu, 2022), church leadership encompasses spiritual guidance, doctrinal fidelity, and communal transformation (Abolade, 2024). Sanou (2021) describes it as relational and developmental, highlighting how mentorship, biblical instruction, and vision collaboratively empower others for ministry, reflecting the core principles of servant leadership.

In the African context, effective church leadership must also address historical injustices and contemporary socio-political realities. Banda (2021) argues that African church leaders are called to engage these complexities while remaining rooted in biblical truth and community empowerment. Central to this task are leadership development, sustainability, and succession (Jenkins, 2022). As congregations evolve, cultivating leaders who embody spiritual depth and

administrative competence becomes vital for institutional resilience. Thus, church leadership combines managerial skill with spiritual integrity, qualities that are essential for guiding faith communities in a constantly evolving world.

Building upon this understanding, the next section examines how these theological and organisational principles manifest within the AFM of SA.

### **1.4.3 Church Leadership in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa**

Within the AFM of SA, leadership embodies a dual commitment to organisational accountability and spiritual authenticity. Rooted in Pentecostal theology, AFM leadership emphasises servant leadership, Spirit-empowered guidance, and the biblical mandate to equip the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11–13). Leadership in this context is relational and Spirit-led, centred on influencing others toward collective spiritual maturity and community cohesion. The AFM views leadership as a divine calling requiring moral integrity, humility, and discernment. Organisationally, leadership ensures institutional continuity and responsiveness to South Africa's diverse social contexts (AFM of SA, 2022). Sanou (2021) highlights the importance of mentorship and contextual awareness, qualities that are crucial in a multi-ethnic, multilingual denomination such as the AFM.

The church's governance model blends democratic participation with spiritual authority. Pastors serve under elected leadership structures that promote collaboration and accountability, balancing charisma with order (AFM of SA, 2022). This structure safeguards against authoritarianism while fostering unity and shared vision. In essence, church leadership in the AFM of SA harmonises spiritual authenticity with organisational efficiency. It remains faithful to Pentecostal roots while adapting to contemporary realities, ensuring that leadership continues to serve both the mission of the church and the wider community.

### **1.5 Leadership Competencies and Challenges in the AFM of SA**

Leadership competencies encompass the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that enable individuals to guide others effectively and advance organisational goals (Kaudela-Baum and Nussbaum, 2022). These include strategic thinking, communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and ethical judgment, qualities that enable leaders to inspire followers and navigate complex environments. Carvajal, Sanchez and Amihan (2023) emphasise that effective leadership in dynamic contexts depends on visionary capacity and the ability to anticipate trends, align resources, and sustain organisational relevance.

Within the AFM of SA, these competencies align closely with the denomination's core values of integrity, accountability, excellence, and relational unity. AFM leaders are expected to demonstrate moral soundness, spiritual discernment, and interpersonal sensitivity essential for effective ministry. The denomination's focus on sustainability and relevance within an evolving socio-religious context mirrors the need for strategic and forward-thinking leadership (AFM of SA, 2022). Generational shifts, social change, and calls for greater inclusivity, particularly regarding the empowerment of women and youth, have introduced new leadership challenges that demand adaptability and a transformative vision.

While secular leadership frameworks highlight innovation and performance, in the AFM these are reframed through a biblical and pastoral lens. Innovation may involve contextualising the gospel for diverse audiences or using digital platforms for ministry. Hence, leadership within the AFM extends beyond administrative competence to encompass spiritual maturity, theological literacy, and servant leadership, qualities that reflect both ethical and emotional intelligence (Carvajal *et al.*, 2023). Despite these strengths, the AFM faces persistent challenges. Gender inequality and hierarchical leadership structures often limit the full expression of inclusive leadership. Women, despite their vital contributions to congregational life, remain underrepresented in formal leadership roles. This disparity highlights a gap between ideal leadership competencies and their practical application within the denomination.

The AFM's decentralised governance structure also presents mixed outcomes. Local assemblies enjoy autonomy and responsiveness to community needs, yet this model complicates leadership development and succession planning. A lack of uniform pastoral training and inconsistent professional development across regions has resulted in disparities in ministerial capacity. Furthermore, popular pastors are sometimes elected into leadership positions without adequate preparation or commitment to continuous learning, reflecting tensions between spiritual calling and organisational politics.

In summary, the AFM of SA embodies many of the leadership competencies identified in contemporary theory but must address structural and cultural barriers that constrain their full implementation. These identified competencies and challenges underscore the need for structured, contextually grounded leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA, a focus that is central to the present study.

## **1.6 Church Leadership Transition and Succession**

Succession planning and leadership transition are critical for the sustainability of faith-based organisations, where leadership embodies both strategic and spiritual dimensions. In church settings, succession involves the intentional preparation of future leaders to assume responsibility when current leaders retire, resign, or become unavailable (Jenkins, 2022). Effective transitions preserve organisational stability and spiritual continuity, enabling faith communities to sustain their mission amidst evolving social, cultural, and generational changes (Asifatu, 2022).

Within the AFM of SA, succession planning represents not merely an administrative concern but a theological and strategic imperative. As a historically rooted Pentecostal denomination, the AFM's leadership continuity depends on both logistical preparedness and the spiritual formation of emerging leaders. In fast-changing urban contexts such as the DCR, the absence of structured transition frameworks has been shown to threaten the church's growth, doctrinal cohesion, and long-term vitality.

Research studies support the link between careful succession planning and organizational stability. Mwangi, Minja and Msabah (2024) found that nearly one-fifth of Pentecostal church sustainability in Nairobi County could be attributed to proactive succession initiatives. Similarly, Karuri (2022) demonstrated that structured transitions enhance leadership continuity and institutional effectiveness. Conversely, Bush (2021) and Cooper (2024) found that unplanned church successions in the United States (U.S.) and the Bahamas often led to internal conflict, reduced trust, and weakened leadership, patterns that mirror recent challenges in the AFM, including the 2024 Eastern Cape leadership crisis, in which a pastor was tragically killed amid transitional conflicts.

Despite widespread recognition of its importance, succession planning within many churches remains constrained by cultural and theological barriers. Divergent interpretations of spiritual calling, gender inequality, generational gaps, and local power dynamics often hinder consistent implementation. Barton's (2019) 5Cs Model, which includes Culture, Champions, Communication, Competency-based Planning, and Continuous Evaluation, provides a useful framework for navigating these complexities. Sanou (2021) further underscores the importance of intentional mentoring and structured discipleship in cultivating future leaders within mission-driven denominations such as the AFM.

The AFM's decentralised governance system compounds these challenges. While local autonomy enables responsiveness to diverse community contexts, it also results in fragmented leadership development and uneven standards of training. Many pastors remain bi-vocational, limiting their participation in ongoing capacity-building initiatives. Moreover, although the AFM constitution stipulates retirement at age 65, localised extensions have often delayed leadership transitions, contributing to an ageing leadership demographic and the underrepresentation of younger pastors in key decision-making roles.

In conclusion, leadership succession within the AFM must be institutionalised as both a theological conviction and a strategic priority. The findings of this study confirmed that without deliberate transition planning, mentoring, and policy enforcement, leadership continuity remains vulnerable to disruption. Adopting structured frameworks such as Barton's 5Cs Model, strengthening mentorship systems, and enforcing consistent transition policies will enhance generational renewal and organisational resilience. In doing so, the AFM can safeguard its spiritual heritage while empowering a new generation of competent and Spirit-led leaders to guide the church into the future.

### **1.7 Problem Statement**

The Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa operates within a decentralised governance structure that promotes contextual responsiveness and local autonomy across its assemblies. While this structure offers flexibility, it has also raised concerns regarding the consistency and coordination of pastoral leadership development practices within regions such as the DCR. Variations in leadership development approaches across assemblies have the potential to weaken succession planning, reduce organisational coherence, and constrain the church's capacity to respond effectively to contemporary challenges, including cultural diversification, generational transitions, and persistent socio-economic pressures.

Existing leadership frameworks within the AFM were found to emphasise theological formation but insufficiently integrate the strategic, emotional, and administrative competencies required for effective ministry in the twenty-first century (Jenkins, 2022). Leadership development initiatives were often inaccessible to bi-vocational pastors, lacked contextual relevance, and provided limited inclusion for women, factors that collectively constrained leadership growth and sustainability. Experiential evidence consistently demonstrates that faith-based organisations thrive when leadership formation aligns theological depth with practical competency (Kesumawati and Gultom, 2025; Elkington, Meekins and Breen, 2015). However, this study found that such integration was largely absent within the AFM's DCR. The gap

between theological preparation and practical leadership capacity contributed to weak mentorship structures, limited readiness for succession, and diminished institutional resilience. As Masamba (2013) asserts, effective leadership is essential not only for maintaining internal unity but also for ensuring the church's relevance and credibility within society.

This study therefore examined leadership development strategies within the AFM in the DCR, identified their challenges and limitations, and recommended contextually grounded, adaptive approaches that integrate theological formation with practical leadership competencies. The findings contribute to strengthening Pentecostal leadership development by providing insights and recommendations aimed at enhancing the AFM's vitality, social relevance, and long-term sustainability.

### **1.8 Research Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this qualitative study was to examine and understand the leadership development strategies employed within the AFM of SA in the DCR, KwaZulu-Natal. The research sought to explore how these strategies were implemented, identify their challenges and limitations, and propose contextually relevant approaches for strengthening leadership development within the denomination.

To achieve this aim, the study pursued the following objectives:

Objective 1: To explore the different leadership development strategies currently implemented by the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in the Durban Central Region.

Objective 2: To investigate the key challenges faced by AFM leaders in the Durban Central Region during leadership transitions and succession planning.

Objective 3: To propose contextually relevant enhancements to existing leadership development strategies based on empirical insights and leadership development theory.

### **1.9 Research Questions**

In response to the objectives of this qualitative study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the investigation:

RQ1: What leadership development strategies are currently employed by the AFM of SA in the Durban Central Region?

RQ2: What challenges do church leaders in the Durban Central Region face during leadership transitions and succession processes?

RQ3: How can leadership development strategies be improved to better prepare future leaders and ensure the sustainability of the AFM in the Durban Central Region?

## **1.10 Significance of the Study**

### **1.10.1 Academic Contribution**

This study addressed a notable gap in the academic literature on Pentecostal pastoral leadership development in South Africa, with specific reference to the AFM of SA. While scholarship on church growth, governance, and theological education is well established, few studies have examined leadership development within regional contexts such as the DCR. By analysing leadership formation practices in this area, the study provided contextually grounded insights that informed the design of more structured and relevant models of pastoral leadership development. As emphasised by Tsekpoe (2021) and Kesumawati and Gultom (2025), such research advances the growing field of African religion and supports the development of context-sensitive leadership paradigms in faith-based organisations.

### **1.10.2 Contextual Relevance**

The DCR, home to one of the largest concentrations of AFM assemblies nationally, presented distinctive leadership challenges within a decentralised ecclesial framework. The study's findings offered insights into these challenges and highlighted the importance of adaptive, culturally resonant leadership development strategies that reflect the lived realities of Pentecostal pastors ministering within South Africa's diverse and dynamic socio-religious environment.

### **1.10.3 Practical Application**

The research generated evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the AFM's leadership pipeline, enhance succession planning mechanisms, and improve mentorship models. These findings provided practical value to AFM leaders, theological institutions, and ministry training organisations seeking to establish inclusive, structured, and contextually responsive pastoral development programmes.

#### **1.10.4 Policy and Strategic Development**

Findings from the study also contributed to potential policy and strategic development within the AFM, particularly through its NLF. The results highlighted the need for standardised leadership training procedures and the integration of theological education with practical leadership competencies. Such measures would enhance institutional sustainability and promote long-term organisational and spiritual vitality across the denomination.

#### **1.10.5 Social and Community Impact**

Competent pastoral leadership was shown to be essential not only for spiritual formation but also for the church's broader social engagement. Within South Africa's evolving socio-economic landscape, churches continue to serve as key agents of moral guidance, community upliftment, and youth mentorship. Strengthening leadership development within the AFM therefore contributes directly to the church's relevance, credibility, and capacity to fulfil its transformative mission in society.

### **1.11 Research Methodology**

This qualitative study was conducted in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, focusing on the AFM of SA within the DCR. The region comprises 58 local assemblies serving approximately 20,000 congregants, offering a rich and diverse context for exploring leadership development strategies within a large Pentecostal organisation.

#### **1.11.1 Population and Sampling**

The study targeted pastors currently serving in leadership roles within the 58 AFM assemblies in the DCR. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants with relevant knowledge and experience of leadership development practices within the AFM context.

#### **1.11.2 Sample Size and Data Saturation**

Drawing on comparable qualitative studies (Tsekpoe, 2021; Kesumawati and Gultom, 2025), twelve (12) pastors were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. This sample size achieved data saturation, ensuring comprehensive thematic representation and depth of insight across participants.

#### **1.11.3 Sampling Methodology**

A non-probability purposive sampling method was used, enabling the inclusion of participants who provided rich, in-depth insights aligned with the study's objectives (Shamsudin, Hassim

and Abd, 2024). This approach ensured that participants were selected based on their direct involvement in leadership development processes within their assemblies.

#### **1.11.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Inclusion: Ordained pastors currently serving in leadership roles within AFM assemblies in the DCR.

Exclusion: Pastors' spouses, governing body members, non-AFM members, and pastors serving outside the DCR.

These criteria ensured that the data collected represented the experiences and perspectives of those directly responsible for leadership development within the AFM's regional context.

#### **1.11.5 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). Participants provided informed consent, and confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were strictly upheld throughout the research process. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty.

### **1.12 Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited to the AFM of SA within the DCR and focused exclusively on ordained pastors. Consequently, the findings may not fully represent the experiences or perspectives of pastors in other AFM regions or within broader Pentecostal contexts in South Africa.

### **1.13 Research Structure**

This dissertation is organised into six chapters, each contributing to a comprehensive understanding of leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA, with particular focus on the DCR in KZN.

#### **1.13.1 Chapter One: Introduction**

This chapter provides the foundation of the study by presenting the background, context, and rationale. It outlines the AFM's historical and theological context, highlighting its growth, organisational structure, and leadership dynamics. Leadership and church leadership are defined from both theological and organisational perspectives, followed by an exploration of the key roles, competencies, and challenges facing pastoral leaders within the AFM.

The chapter also articulates the research problem, aim, objectives, and guiding questions. It discusses the significance, limitations, and methodological overview of the study and concludes with a summary and an outline of the dissertation structure.

### **1.13.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter critically analyses existing scholarship on leadership development within church and faith-based contexts, both locally and internationally. It examines conceptual frameworks and theories relevant to leadership development and distinguishes between leadership and management paradigms. Various formal, informal, and contextual leadership development approaches are explored. The review further evaluates studies that assess the effectiveness of leadership development initiatives, particularly in relation to organisational sustainability, leadership succession, and spiritual growth.

### **1.13.3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

Chapter three details the research design, approach, and procedures employed in the study. It explains the qualitative methodology used for data collection and analysis, the criteria for participant selection, and the study's setting within the DCR. The chapter also discusses the data collection instruments, ethical considerations, and the analytical framework adopted for interpreting the findings.

### **1.13.4 Chapter Four: Findings**

This chapter presents the key findings that emerged from the data collected through semi-structured interviews. The results are organised thematically to provide a descriptive and interpretive account of leadership development practices, challenges, and perceptions within the AFM in the DCR.

### **1.13.5 Chapter Five: Discussion**

The discussion chapter interprets and contextualises the findings in relation to existing literature and theoretical perspectives. It examines how the results confirm, expand upon, or challenge prior research and connects the emerging insights to the study's objectives. The chapter also discusses the implications of the findings for leadership development theory and practice within the AFM.

### **1.13.6 Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations**

The final chapter summarises the overall findings of the study and evaluates the extent to which the research objectives were achieved. It presents conclusions drawn from the analysis

and provides practical, evidence-based recommendations for enhancing leadership development within the AFM. The chapter concludes by identifying potential areas for future research to build upon the insights generated by this study.

### **1.14 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented an overview of the study and established the foundation upon which the research was built. It introduced the context and rationale for examining leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA, with a specific focus on the DCR in KZN. The AFM's historical and theological background was outlined, highlighting the need for structured and contextually relevant leadership development to sustain effective ministry, organisational growth, and institutional continuity.

The chapter clearly articulated the research problem, aim, objectives, and guiding questions, which collectively framed the scope and direction of the study. The significance of the research was discussed across academic, contextual, practical, policy, and social dimensions, demonstrating its potential contribution to both scholarly discourse and church leadership practice. An overview of the qualitative research design was also presented, describing the study population, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis methods, and ethical considerations. The delimitations and limitations of the study were outlined to clarify its scope and focus.

Finally, the chapter provided an outline of the dissertation's overall structure, showing how each subsequent chapter contributes to addressing the research objectives. The next chapter presents a critical review of the relevant literature, engaging with theoretical perspectives and studies on leadership development within church and faith-based contexts.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a critical examination of the existing literature relevant to leadership development strategies, with a particular focus on their application within faith-based organizations such as the AFM of SA. The purpose of this literature review is to explore and analyze foundational concepts, theoretical frameworks, and studies that contribute to the understanding of leadership development, especially in religious, particularly Pentecostal contexts. This review serves to contextualize the current study, identify gaps in the literature, and provide a conceptual base for investigating the leadership development strategies employed within the DCR of the AFM of SA.

The chapter begins by examining the conceptual distinctions between leadership and management, highlighting the unique and overlapping aspects of both disciplines in the context of church leadership. This is followed by a detailed exploration of leadership development, including Conger and Kanungo's (1998) three-pronged framework which focuses on individual skill enhancement, value alignment, and collective vision-building.

Successively, the chapter differentiates between leader development and leadership development, shedding light on both individual and collective dimensions. This section includes an analysis of models proposed by Day and Rogers, which emphasize leadership development as an investment in both human and social capital. It also addresses the mechanisms for identifying leadership potential, such as competency frameworks, performance appraisals, 360-degree feedback, and the influence of organizational politics and opportunism.

The chapter then reviews various strategies and methods for leadership development, including mentoring, coaching, action learning, succession planning, formal programmes, and other organizational development tools. Each method is considered in terms of its applicability to church leadership and its effectiveness in nurturing leadership capabilities.

The review also considers how the impact of leadership development can be evaluated. Particular attention is given to Kirkpatrick's (1960) four-level evaluation model, alongside a discussion on both subjective and objective measures of leadership development effectiveness. Different forms of evidence and metrics are explored to assess how well leadership development initiatives achieve their intended outcomes.

Finally, the chapter examines previous studies on leadership development within church contexts, both in South Africa and internationally. This comparative insight provides a broader perspective on how other faith communities approach leadership development, offering useful lessons and similarities for the AFM of SA.

## **2.2 The Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Leadership**

Church leadership encompasses a broad spectrum of spiritual, administrative, and relational responsibilities that sustain the life and mission of the congregation. Pastors play a pivotal role in providing spiritual oversight, doctrinal guidance, and pastoral care through preaching, teaching, and discipleship (Pairikas, Tari and Luji, 2024). This spiritual dimension forms the foundation of their leadership, ensuring the congregation's continued growth in faith and community life.

Beyond spiritual care, pastors also provide strategic and visionary leadership. Branson and Martinez (2023) note that effective church leaders align the mission and vision of the congregation with practical action through strategic planning and organisational management. Ndlovu (2022) emphasises that this includes cultivating innovation, managing change, and setting long-term objectives to ensure institutional sustainability. Pearse (2011) adds that successful church leaders must balance the roles of visionary, manager, and servant, guiding the church through transformation while preserving its mission integrity. Church leaders are equally responsible for administration and community engagement, which involve fostering relationships within the church and the wider society (Ormond, 2025). Servant leadership provides a guiding framework for this function, placing the needs of the congregation and community above personal interests. This approach builds trust, cohesion, and mutual care within the faith community. Studies confirm that servant leadership enhances followers' well-being and organisational harmony (Ormond, 2025).

Ethical governance is another central responsibility. Ughulu (2024) argues that moral integrity and transparency sustain trust and credibility in church institutions. Pastors are accountable to their congregations and must make decisions consistent with biblical principles and organisational ethics (Nwaobia, Nosike and Nganwuchu, 2024). Participatory governance, where leaders involve members in decision-making, mitigates the risks of autocratic tendencies and promotes collective ownership (Ogbeifun, Tambiyi and Gaiya, 2022).

Overall, church leadership requires a holistic blend of spiritual insight, strategic acumen, moral integrity, and relational sensitivity. Asifatu (2022) stresses that effective leadership integrates

community engagement, ethical guidance, and administrative competence. Furthermore, mentoring and developing emerging leaders is vital for continuity and resilience (Ferreira and Chipenyu, 2021). Through these interconnected responsibilities, including spiritual care, strategic direction, ethical stewardship, and leadership development, pastors contribute to building mission-driven, sustainable, and transformative church communities.

### **2.3 Understanding Leadership and Management**

Recent scholarship has shown increasing interest in leadership development within Pentecostal churches, particularly in South Africa. However, existing literature has often prioritised theological interpretations or structural governance issues over holistic leadership development strategies. Understanding leadership and management within the church context is therefore essential, as these two concepts, though related, are not synonymous (Korkmaz, Van Engen, Knappert and Schalk, 2022). While management enjoys a widely accepted definition and established functional boundaries (Lam, Nguyen, Le and Tran, 2021), leadership remains more fluid and relational. Management typically involves administrative processes aimed at maintaining stability and order, including planning, organising, coordinating, and controlling (Samson, Donnet and Daft, 2020). Leadership, conversely, entails influencing others to pursue shared goals through vision, motivation, and strategic direction (Ananyi and Ololube, 2023). Thus, whereas management focuses on operational efficiency and predictability, leadership seeks to inspire change and foster transformation (Ashley-Osuzoka, 2024). In church environments, these functions intersect in unique ways, spiritual leaders must combine administrative competence with visionary and pastoral guidance to nurture both organisational effectiveness and congregational growth (Kesumawati and Gultom, 2025).

Daft's (2018) conceptual separation of leadership and management remains a valuable analytical framework, defining leadership in terms of vision, change, and relational influence, and management in terms of control, stability, and process. Yet, within African Pentecostal churches, these distinctions become blurred by the interaction of theological imperatives and socio-cultural realities. For instance, Jentile (2021) applies Daft's framework through the notion of sacramental democracy within the Baptist Convention of South Africa, where leadership legitimacy stems from collective discernment and participatory governance, echoing Daft's emphasis on vision and shared values. Similarly, Dweba and Rashe (2021) advocate incorporating Ubuntu principles into leadership practice, grounding leadership in communal ethics and indigenous wisdom. These culturally rooted adaptations affirm Daft's theoretical relevance, yet also reveal practical challenges. While Ubuntu enriches relational

leadership, its institutionalisation within formal church governance remains inconsistent and under-theorised, limiting its measurable impact. Moreover, many African churches continue to replicate hierarchical Western leadership models, which often contradict the participatory ideals they seek to promote. At the same time, Grobler (2022) highlights the growing adoption of secular leadership paradigms, particularly emotional intelligence and managerial competence, within church structures. Although these approaches enhance professionalism and administrative efficiency, they risk diluting the theological and spiritual distinctiveness of Christian leadership. This tension invites a critical reconsideration of whether Daft's relational model adequately accounts for the theological and ritual dimensions that underpin spiritual leadership. Hence, while Daft's distinction between leadership and management provides a useful theoretical starting point, it must be applied in a manner that remains sensitive to cultural diversity and faithful to Christian theological foundations.

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Management</b>
<b>Focus</b>	Vision, change, inspiration	Planning, execution, stability
<b>Approach</b>	Influencing and motivating people	Administering systems and processes
<b>Orientation</b>	Long-term, strategic	Short-term, operational
<b>Power base</b>	Personal influence, charisma, values	Position, authority, role
<b>Goal</b>	Transformation and innovation	Efficiency and order

**Table 2. 1 Leadership vs Management (Source: Kotter, 1990; Northouse, 2023; Zaleznik, 2004)**

### **Strategic Orientation and Organisational Impact**

According to Daft (2018), leadership emphasises the future through innovation and strategic vision, whereas management prioritises operational control and short-term stability. This conceptual contrast offers an important lens for examining how Christian churches balance spiritual mission with organisational sustainability. Yet in practice, particularly within African contexts, the boundaries between leadership and management are frequently blurred.

Research by Muthuku, Oginde and Chiroma (2023) on Kenyan Pentecostal churches affirms Daft's claims by demonstrating a positive correlation between transformational leadership and holistic church growth, encompassing spiritual maturity, numerical expansion, and socio-economic empowerment. However, the authors also note that significant aspects of church health remain unexplained by strategic leadership alone, suggesting that other variables, such as congregational dynamics, cultural context, and socio-economic diversity, play a crucial role.

This implies that vision-driven leadership must be complemented by contextually aware management to achieve sustainable impact. In contrast, research on United States (U.S.) megachurches reveals an overemphasis on managerial efficiency and performance indicators, such as attendance and financial growth (Grobler, 2022). While these institutions exhibit organisational success, they risk reducing pastoral ministry to technical management, thereby marginalising spiritual depth. This critique underscores a major limitation in Daft's (2018) framework, its insufficient engagement with the sacred and symbolic nature of church leadership.

In faith-based settings, leadership involves moral vision, theological conviction, and spiritual discernment, qualities often absent from secular strategic models. Moreover, Daft's (2018) model underplays power dynamics and ethical accountability, both of which are central to church governance. Consequently, strategic vision must be balanced with humility, pastoral care, and ethical integrity to prevent leadership from becoming managerial rather than transformative.

In sum, Daft's (2018) distinction provides a valuable conceptual baseline for understanding leadership and management within Christian contexts, yet its practical application in diverse church environments necessitates theological, cultural, and ethical adaptation. Visionary leadership in the church must therefore be both spiritually grounded and contextually responsive to ensure organisational viability and authentic ministry.

## **Relational Dynamics and Ethical Considerations**

Daft (2018) further distinguishes leadership and management by their relational orientation. Leaders motivate through personal influence and shared values, while managers rely on formal authority and structural control. Within Christian contexts, this distinction gains additional complexity due to the moral, spiritual, and communal dimensions of leadership. Letswalo's (2021) study on ministerial accountability in New Prophetic Pentecostal Churches (NPPCs) identifies three interrelated levels of responsibility, namely personal integrity, communal feedback, and public scrutiny, demonstrating how relational leadership in churches is deeply rooted in theological and cultural norms. While this model supports Daft's view of leadership as influence through relationships, it also exposes structural weaknesses, ethical accountability often depends on informal processes that lack consistency and transparency. Consequently, the normative power of relational leadership may be overstated in contexts where institutional safeguards are weak or fragmented.

Grobler (2022) expands this critique by noting the growing adoption of secular paradigms such as emotional intelligence and ethical professionalism in pastoral training. Although these frameworks contribute valuable interpersonal skills, they risk marginalising theological reflection and moral formation of core elements of Christian pastoral identity. Leadership credibility in churches is not solely derived from relational competence but from sacrificial service, moral witness, and spiritual authority, which resist secular measurement. The danger, particularly in Pentecostal contexts, lies in charismatic authority overshadowing accountability, allowing relational influence to devolve into personality-driven control. Hence, ethical church leadership must integrate relational trust with structured accountability mechanisms that uphold both theological integrity and cultural relevance. Daft's (2018) relational model provides a helpful foundation but requires refinement to capture the unique ethical and spiritual demands of church leadership. Future scholarship should explore frameworks that harmonise personal influence with institutional ethics to promote transparency, humility, and moral consistency in faith-based leadership.

### **2.3.1 Leadership Development**

Leadership development refers to the deliberate and structured process of enhancing an individual's capacity to lead themselves, others, and organisations effectively (Day and Dragoni, 2015). Within faith-based organisations such as Pentecostal churches, leadership development extends beyond managerial competence to include spiritual formation, moral character, and alignment with the church's theological mission (Rojas, 2022). It thus encompasses both personal transformation and institutional investment in future leadership. Scholars frequently differentiate between leader development, which emphasises individual growth, and leadership development, which focuses on strengthening collective capacity within an organisation or community (Day, 2001). Both are critical in church contexts, while cultivating individual leaders is essential, there is also a need for strategic systems that ensure leadership continuity across generations.

In religious contexts, leadership development commonly includes mentorship, coaching, experiential learning, feedback, and formal training. Churches have increasingly adopted these strategies, particularly as they struggle with leadership succession, ethical integrity, and relevance in rapidly changing societies.

#### **2.3.1.1 The Concept of Leadership Development**

In religious settings, leadership development acquires additional theological and spiritual dimensions. It is shaped by pastoral care, scriptural engagement, and the nurturing of spiritual

gifts and callings (Rungsung, 2024). Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020) highlight the importance of spiritual disciplines, mentorship under senior pastors, and active participation in ministry tasks as critical to developing effective church leaders. Within Pentecostal denominations such as the AFM, leadership formation is further influenced by the movement's emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit, charismatic authority, and informal leadership networks. While these features foster spiritual vitality, they can also lead to leadership gaps if not supported by structured development frameworks. Tagwirei (2024) identifies the lack of formal leadership development systems in many Pentecostal churches, where leadership tends to be personality-driven and succession planning is often neglected. Consequently, an effective leadership development model in Pentecostal settings must integrate spiritual formation, leadership competence, and institutional stability.

Gender inclusivity is another vital but underexplored aspect of leadership development. De Jager, Botes, Savhasa and Smit (2022) reveal a persistent under-representation of women in senior leadership positions within the AFM of SA, attributing this disparity to enduring theological interpretations and societal norms that restrict women's participation. While their study exposes the depth of institutionalised gender bias, it stops short of offering practical frameworks for addressing these inequalities through leadership training or mentorship, an area this current study explored. Similarly, Tagwirei's (2024) analysis of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Southern Africa points to a trend towards centralised, personality-driven leadership models, often reflecting patriarchal African traditions such as the five-in-one ministry paradigm, where a single leader assumes multiple roles. Although this model enhances personal authority, it undermines collective leadership and long-term succession. The study, however, lacks factual insight into how such leadership structures affect sustained leadership development or how collaborative models might be applied within Pentecostal contexts such as the AFM.

Ethical leadership development has also emerged as a significant area of scholarly concern. Letswalo and Naidoo (2024) examine ministerial accountability in Pentecostal Prophetic congregations and highlight deficiencies in governance systems, resulting in ethical lapses and leadership abuse. While their findings underscore the need for robust accountability frameworks, they do not explicitly link ethical responsibility to leadership development processes such as mentoring or organisational culture reform. This gap is especially relevant to the AFM, where concerns about ethical conduct, pastoral succession, and accountability persist. Jentile's (2021) case study of the Baptist Convention of South Africa presents a contrasting model of participatory and democratic leadership in what he terms sacramental democracy. Although the Baptist polity differs from that of Pentecostal churches, Jentile's

focus on shared decision-making and spiritual discernment offers valuable lessons for inclusive and contextually responsive leadership. However, such models are yet to be tested in hierarchical Pentecostal systems where charismatic authority remains dominant. In a similar vein, Deo and Shitote (2023) promote transformational leadership in Rwandan Anglican churches, emphasising mentorship, empowerment, and inspirational motivation. Despite the denominational and geographic differences, their findings remain pertinent to Pentecostal churches like the AFM. Nevertheless, their study's limited scope and lack of consideration for challenges such as cultural patriarchy reduce its applicability to broader African Pentecostal settings. Collectively, the reviewed studies highlight several common limitations, most are either descriptive or diagnostic, focusing on challenges such as gender bias, ethical lapses, and governance failures without offering actionable frameworks for leadership development in the Pentecostal context. Few link theological principles directly with practical mechanisms such as mentorship, ethical training, and succession planning. This deficiency underscores the relevance of the present study, which explored how leadership development strategies are conceptualised and implemented within the AFM of SA, particularly in the DCR.

### **Contextualised Leadership Development in Pentecostal Churches**

Contextualisation has emerged as a critical approach to leadership development in African Pentecostal churches, recognising the interplay between theology, culture, and local realities. The AFM of SA, as one of the continent's oldest Pentecostal denominations, provides a particularly compelling context for examining this approach. Contemporary scholars argue that leadership models in African churches must evolve beyond Western frameworks to incorporate indigenous knowledge systems, communal values, and local cultural wisdom (Dweba and Rashe, 2021). Ochieng (2021), for example, demonstrates how Pentecostal churches in Kenya's Turkana region employ culturally grounded strategies such as group mentorship, spiritual direction, and role modelling to cultivate leadership. These practices leverage communal traditions and local wisdom, proving effective in resource-limited settings. However, Ochieng also highlights structural challenges, including inadequate frameworks and limited training resources, which hinder sustainability. This aligns with Grobler's (2022) findings in South Africa, where mentorship is widely recognised as valuable but often remains informal and underdeveloped.

Within the AFM, comparable tensions persist. Although theological ideals emphasise community and participatory ministry, practical leadership patterns often reflect hierarchical or personality-driven tendencies. The literature thus advocates a contextually grounded approach to leadership development, one that integrates spiritual formation with culturally

resonant practices such as Ubuntu, inclusive governance, and structured mentorship. While Daft's (2018) leadership theory remains analytically useful for its focus on relational influence and visionary direction, its application within the AFM must be adapted to the cultural and theological distinctiveness of South African Pentecostalism. Neglecting contextual adaptation risks disconnecting leadership practices from congregational realities, thereby weakening both spiritual authenticity and organisational effectiveness.

## **Social and Responsible Leadership in Pentecostal Churches**

Leadership in Pentecostal contexts involves not only directing ministry but also modelling moral integrity and cultivating authentic relationships that embody communal values. Daft's (2018) relational leadership theory, which emphasises emotional intelligence, trust, and mutual respect, finds resonance in Pentecostal theology when extended to include spiritual accountability. Letswalo and Naidoo (2024) argue that Pentecostal leadership is inseparable from spiritual character, highlighting virtues such as humility, holiness, and servanthood. These qualities distinguish spiritual leadership from secular paradigms and root it in moral conviction. Relational ethics are further reinforced through the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which prioritises interdependence and collective responsibility (Dweba and Rashe, 2021). This communal ethos challenges the individualism prevalent in Western leadership models and aligns with Pentecostal theology's conception of the church as the body of Christ (Jentile, 2021). Yet despite these ideals, practice often diverges from principle. Studies by Letswalo and Naidoo (2024) and Ochieng (2021) reveal that patriarchal power dynamics and authoritarian tendencies continue to undermine ethical leadership, particularly through the marginalisation of women and over-centralisation of authority. Similarly, Grobler (2022) cautions that the growing pressure for organisational performance can shift focus from pastoral authenticity to institutional reputation, a trend that Daft's model does not fully address.

Mentoring and discipleship emerge as vital mechanisms for cultivating ethically grounded leadership. Ochieng (2021) highlights that intentional mentoring relationships, when formalised, can nurture both spiritual maturity and leadership competence. However, in many Pentecostal settings, such initiatives remain informal and inconsistently applied, limiting their transformative potential. Formal mentorship structures could thus promote leadership continuity and moral integrity, aligning Daft's relational emphasis with Pentecostal commitments to spiritual formation.

Ultimately, ethical and relational leadership within Pentecostalism represents a dynamic interaction between high theological ideals and practical realities. While Daft's framework

provides a useful foundation, Pentecostal leadership requires deeper integration of theological reflection, cultural ethics, and institutional accountability. Addressing gender inequity, formalising mentorship, and fostering transparent governance are essential to aligning leadership practice with Pentecostal values. Ethical leadership in this sense should not be seen merely as managerial competence, but as a spiritual vocation that transforms both the leader and the community.

### **Relevance to the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM)**

In the AFM of SA, leadership traditionally centres on spiritual direction, pastoral care, and visionary ministry, while management involves administrative tasks such as resource allocation, coordination, and regulatory compliance. Historically, Pentecostal churches like the AFM have prioritised charismatic and spiritual leadership over structured management (Mtula, Ayiro, Wachira and Oloo, 2025). However, as the AFM continues to expand and diversify, effective management has become increasingly indispensable. Without administrative discipline, visionary leadership can lead to inefficiency or burnout, whereas management devoid of spiritual vision may produce stagnation and loss of vitality (Bell, 2022).

Integrating servant leadership principles into both leadership and management functions offers a balanced approach that upholds the church's spiritual mission while enhancing organisational sustainability (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Such integration resonates with the AFM's dual mandate to nurture spiritual growth and ensure effective stewardship of its ministries and resources.

#### **2.3.1.2 Concepts from the Theory of Contemporary Leadership**

Contemporary leadership studies in East and Central Africa have provided valuable insights for Pentecostal denominations such as the AFM. Mutua, Muhoho and Vundi (2023) explored the relationship between innovative leadership and church performance in Kenyan Pentecostal congregations, concluding that adaptability, creativity, and visionary direction significantly enhance institutional outcomes. Their findings underscore the practical importance of innovation in sustaining church growth. However, the study primarily focuses on leadership outcomes rather than the developmental processes that enable church leaders to cultivate innovative capacities. This omission reveals a key gap in the literature concerning the formation and training of leaders capable of driving innovation within faith-based organisations. Similarly, Henry, Gathogo and Munyao (2025) examined team leadership using the Hill Model to assess its influence on church growth within Pentecostal contexts. Their study affirms that team-based leadership fosters collaboration and reduces overreliance on individual charismatic leaders, a finding highly relevant to the AFM, where leadership remains

largely centralised. Yet, the authors do not explain how such team-oriented leadership is developed or sustained, whether through theological education, mentorship, or experiential learning. This again highlights a deficiency in existing research on the developmental mechanisms that underpin effective team leadership in Pentecostal settings.

The value of transformational leadership in church contexts is widely recognised across the literature. Mutua *et al.* (2023) found that transformational leadership enhances empowerment, trust, and goal alignment within Nairobi's Pentecostal congregations, strengthening both spiritual and organisational outcomes. However, as with other studies, their research remains descriptive, offering little insight into how transformational leaders are intentionally formed within church structures. This limitation restricts the applicability of such findings to denominations like the AFM, which are increasingly seeking formalised leadership development pathways.

Recent research has also begun to consider how leadership development must evolve in response to global crises. Barbe (2024), examining theological education during the Covid-19 pandemic, questions the preparedness of church leaders to respond to emergencies and stresses the importance of integrating digital literacy, emotional resilience, and community-based leadership in ministerial training. Although Barbe's (2014) study is broad and not specific to Pentecostalism, its implications are significant for the AFM, where hybrid (online and in-person) theological education could strengthen future leadership resilience and adaptability.

Overall, while these contemporary studies contribute valuable perspectives on leadership style and performance, they share a common shortcoming in that they pay little attention to how leadership is developed. Few provide comprehensive frameworks for leadership formation that are sensitive to the theological, cultural, and institutional dynamics of African Pentecostalism. The majority prioritise leadership outcomes over developmental processes such as mentorship, theological formation, succession planning, and contextual adaptation. Consequently, a critical gap remains in understanding structured and sustainable leadership development strategies within South African Pentecostal denominations, precisely the focus of this current study within the AFM of SA's DCR.

### **2.3.1.3 Conger and Kanungo's (1998) Three Foci of Leadership Development**

Conger and Kanungo's (1998) framework offers a multidimensional perspective on leadership development, encompassing three interrelated focus: (1) individual skill development, (2)

socialisation of organisational values and vision, and (3) facilitation of dialogue and collective vision implementation. Their model emerged from a growing recognition that leadership is a socially constructed and culturally mediated process rather than merely the product of innate traits or transactional competencies. The strength of this framework lies in its attempt to connect individual capability development with organisational alignment and participative practice.

The first focus, individual skill development, highlights the enhancement of personal competencies such as emotional intelligence, decision-making, and communication. Conger and Kanungo (1998) argue that effective leadership arises through experiential learning, self-reflection, and targeted training. While valuable, this dimension has been criticised for its Western-centric emphasis on individualism and self-actualisation, which may not fully align with the communal and spiritually oriented ethos of African Pentecostal churches. In the AFM, leadership legitimacy often derives from spiritual maturity, divine calling, and charismatic authority rather than formal training alone. Consequently, the model needs to be contextualized to include the spiritual and relational dimensions that are inherent in Pentecostal spirituality.

The second focus, socialisation of organisational values and vision, stresses the internalisation of institutional mission and culture. In church contexts, this corresponds to theological fidelity and doctrinal alignment which is essential aspects of ministerial authenticity. However, Conger and Kanungo's framework presupposes a relatively static, top-down transmission of values. Such an assumption may overlook the complex and negotiated nature of theological interpretation within Pentecostal movements. In the AFM, leadership is shaped by interactions across ethnic, linguistic, and doctrinal lines, making socialisation a dynamic and often contested process that involves contextual negotiation rather than passive assimilation.

The third dimension, promotion of dialogue and collective vision, introduces a participatory element that resonates with communal African leadership traditions. By emphasising collaboration and shared sense-making, it aligns with the communal ethos prevalent in many African religious settings, where collective discernment and spiritual consensus underpin decision-making. However, in Pentecostal contexts, dialogue is frequently mediated through spiritual discernment, prophetic insight, and pastoral authority rather than democratic deliberation alone. As a result, Conger and Kanungo's (1998) approach, based on secular organisational theory, fails to reflect the theological and spiritual difficulties of conversation in spiritually controlled communities.

Although Conger and Kanungo's (1998) framework offers a robust foundation for analysing leadership development, its direct application to Pentecostal contexts such as the AFM requires significant contextual reinterpretation. The model omits the vital element of spiritual formation, which in Pentecostalism is central to leadership identity and legitimacy. Leadership is not only a matter of skill acquisition or cultural alignment but also of spiritual empowerment, mentorship, and moral character formation. Moreover, the framework does not account for South Africa's broader socio-cultural realities, including the church's role in post-apartheid identity formation, social cohesion, and community transformation. The model's assumption of organisational uniformity also contrasts with the decentralised, charismatic leadership typical of Pentecostal churches, where authority often flows through informal networks, mentorship, and prophetic validation rather than structured leadership pipelines. Consequently, while Conger and Kanungo's (1998) model provides a useful theoretical lens for understanding the multifaceted nature of leadership development, it must be critically re-evaluated and indigenised to reflect the lived realities of South African Pentecostal churches. The present study builds on this critique, seeking to explore leadership development within the AFM of SA through a contextually grounded framework that integrates spiritual, cultural, and organisational dimensions.

### **2.3.2 Distinctions Between Leader and Leadership Development**

Leadership development within Pentecostal church settings, particularly in African contexts, has gained growing scholarly attention. However, a persistent conceptual and practical tension remains between leader development, which focuses on the formation of individual leaders, and leadership development, which seeks to build collective leadership capacity within the organisation. Orogun (2023) critiques African Neo-Pentecostal leadership for being excessively personalised, often merging traditional power systems with charismatic authority. While such hybridisation reflects cultural authenticity, it tends to foster centralised, personality-driven leadership with limited structural accountability. This poses significant challenges for denominations such as the AFM, where administration, succession, and shared governance are essential for long-term stability. Orogun's (2023) analysis effectively identifies the dominance of leader-centric paradigms but falls short of examining structured leadership development programmes aligned with Pentecostal spirituality.

Similar limitations are evident in the Kenyan study by Henry, Gathogo and Munyao (2025), which highlights the positive correlation between innovative leadership and church performance. Their findings suggest that adaptability, creativity, and change-oriented thinking

are vital drivers of congregational growth in Pentecostal settings. Nevertheless, the study focuses primarily on leadership outcomes rather than the formative processes that nurture these attributes within faith communities. This omission underscores the need for empirical inquiry into how innovation is cultivated and sustained through deliberate leadership development structures, particularly in contexts such as the AFM, where theological fidelity must coexist with institutional innovation and pastoral accountability.

The literature also emphasises the spiritual and moral dimensions of leadership formation. Kretzschmar (2020) argues that spiritually mature leaders are better equipped to confront ethical temptations such as greed and pride, issues that frequently undermine church integrity. Drawing on both African and Western Christian traditions, Kretzschmar stresses the necessity of spiritual disciplines and moral formation as integral components of leader development. This perspective resonates with the Pentecostal emphasis on holiness and spiritual vitality. However, the study remains largely theological, offering limited practical guidance on embedding these spiritual ideals within structured leadership development frameworks. The challenge for denominations such as the AFM lies in translating theological principles into actionable developmental strategies that integrate spiritual, ethical, and managerial growth.

Similarly, Muthoni (2021) proposes a Mosaic leadership paradigm rooted in biblical models of humility, compassion, and vision. While this approach provides a valuable theological lens for understanding pastoral leadership, it remains descriptive rather than operational. It offers little factual evidence of its effectiveness within institutional contexts such as the AFM, where leadership occurs within complex organisational and cultural environments rather than purely missionary or local church settings. Moreover, Muthoni's framework does not sufficiently engage with contemporary leadership theories or address practical issues such as organisational dynamics, conflict resolution, or leadership succession, all of which are critical aspects of sustainable church leadership.

The transformational leadership model also features prominently in recent literature. Muthuku, Oginde and Chiroma (2023) examined its impact on church health in Nairobi and found that vision-driven, empowering leadership correlates with both spiritual vitality and institutional growth. Yet, despite its strengths, transformational leadership theory is seldom contextualised within Pentecostal ministry, which often resists formal institutionalisation. The study provides limited insight into the processes through which transformational leaders are identified, trained, and supported over time, a gap that is particularly salient for the AFM as it seeks to balance spiritual authenticity with organisational effectiveness. Dweba and Rashe (2021) make an important contribution by examining indigenous African leadership ideals,

particularly Ubuntu, as an ethical and relational corrective to autocratic and individualistic leadership tendencies. Their findings suggest that communal ethics and relational accountability could assist Pentecostal congregations in transitioning from personality-driven leadership models towards shared, participatory cultures. However, while Ubuntu offers a valuable moral foundation, its integration into formal leadership development frameworks within Pentecostal institutions remains underexplored. The challenge, therefore, lies in reconciling such indigenous cultural values with the doctrinal and structural realities of Pentecostal governance.

When combined, these studies provide valuable insights into the nature and practice of leadership in African Pentecostal contexts. However, they tend to fall into two broad categories: those that describe leadership traits and outcomes (for instance, moral integrity or church growth), and those that propose conceptual models without providing practical implementation frameworks. There remains a clear gap in the literature concerning systematic, contextually relevant, and theologically coherent leadership development strategies for Pentecostal denominations.

For the AFM of SA, which operates at the intersection of charismatic spirituality, post-apartheid transformation, and institutional consolidation, this gap is especially critical. The denomination requires leadership development approaches that integrate spiritual formation, contextual relevance, succession planning, and organisational health. Such approaches must also manage the dual challenge of preserving Pentecostal vitality while fostering leadership continuity and structural resilience. Addressing this gap forms a central motivation for the present study, which explored leadership development strategies within the AFM's DCR and to propose practical frameworks suited to its theological and cultural context.

### **2.3.3 Models of Leader and Leadership Development**

Building on the distinctions between leader and leadership development, it becomes evident that addressing individual competencies alone is insufficient for sustaining effective leadership within Pentecostal congregations such as the AFM. While prior studies have highlighted the importance of spiritual maturity, moral integrity, and relational accountability, they often fell short of providing actionable frameworks for cultivating these qualities in structured and contextually appropriate ways. Consequently, the focus shifts naturally toward exploring comprehensive models that integrate both human and social capital, as well as theological and relational dimensions, to support long-term leadership growth. The following section examines such models, drawing on contemporary frameworks from behavioural, innovative,

and relational leadership perspectives, and considers their applicability and adaptation to the unique cultural, spiritual, and organizational realities of African Pentecostal churches.

### **2.3.3.1 A Framework of Leadership Development**

Leadership development in faith-based organizations, such as the AFM, requires an approach that is both contextually grounded and theoretically informed. Rogers' (2020) multifaceted leadership development framework provides a valuable perspective for examining behavioral leadership and innovation-based capacity building in church settings. His framework is organized around four interdependent entry points: setup, encouragement/correction, consequences, and relationship repair/rebuilding. Originally designed for educational contexts, it is highly applicable to pastoral leadership, particularly in relationally intensive and community-based settings like the AFM. Rogers' model emphasizes mutual respect, accountability, and relational repair, reflecting core principles of Christian leadership theology. Leaders in the AFM are expected to demonstrate Christ-like behavior while fostering cooperative and spiritually nurturing environments rather than merely exercising authority. By translating Rogers' paradigm into the spiritual leadership context, it becomes evident that leadership development must prioritize relationship-centered approaches, clear behavioral expectations, reciprocal accountability, and opportunities for restoration. This results in a spiritually integrated leadership development model that promotes both organizational stability and communal healing.

Beausoleil (2018) expands on Rogers' Innovation-Development Process (IDP), adding a strategic dimension to leadership development. She emphasizes that effective leaders must be capable of handling ambiguity, encouraging creativity, and acting as change agents, skills that are critical in organizations that are historically traditional or resistant to change. In the AFM, integrating innovation competencies is both a challenge and an opportunity. Emerging leaders must balance theological and pastoral knowledge with the ability to creatively adapt, reconciling tradition with modern leadership demands. Beausoleil's methodology thus fosters a transformative leadership development approach, equipping leaders to navigate generational transitions, cultural diversity, and institutional evolution while maintaining doctrinal fidelity.

Day (2000) provides a complementary perspective by distinguishing between leader development (human capital) and leadership development (social capital). He refers human capital to individual talents such as decisiveness, strategic thinking, and emotional intelligence, while social capital involves relational and organizational capability. Day (2000)

emphasizes that long-term leadership success depends not only on individual attributes but also on nurturing leadership as a relational and organizational capacity. Overreliance on human capital can reinforce conventional leadership assumptions and limit opportunities for individuals with less typical but equally effective leadership styles.

By engaging with and adapting these theoretical models to the AFM context, this research demonstrates their applicability beyond secular and corporate environments. It extends their relevance to faith-based leadership by emphasising spiritual capital, a dimension that encompasses divine calling, spiritual authority, and congregational discernment. These elements are essential within Pentecostal churches, where leadership legitimacy is understood not only in terms of managerial competence but also spiritual anointing and moral credibility. This approach illuminates the unique ways leadership emerges in African Pentecostal contexts, shaped by cultural, theological, and relational dynamics, and challenges the implicit Western-centric assumptions of conventional leadership theory. Consequently, this study contributes to contextualized leadership research while providing a foundation for inclusive, culturally responsive, and spiritually authentic leadership development frameworks.

### **2.3.4 Performance Appraisals**

#### **2.3.4.1 Leadership Development Through 360-Degree Feedback**

The use of 360-degree feedback has gained prominence as a developmental tool for providing comprehensive insights into leadership effectiveness. Bracken, Rose, and Church (2016) define it as a multi-source feedback process that integrates evaluations from peers, subordinates, and supervisors to minimise bias and promote balanced professional growth. Qureishi (2020) further notes that 360-degree assessments enhance motivation, self-awareness, and leadership competence, attributes that are particularly relevant in Christian organisations such as the AFM, where relational integrity and spiritual maturity are central to leadership effectiveness. However, Bracken *et al.* (2016) caution against superficial implementations, such as the desk-drop approach, which provides feedback without structured development plans. They advocate embedding 360-degree systems within broader organisational development strategies to ensure sustained behavioural change. Tambunan, Ginting, Sirojuzilam, and Absah (2021) support this perspective, demonstrating that well-contextualised 360-degree feedback strengthens accountability and self-awareness among civil servants, insights that can be applied to faith-based contexts where accountability is often informal and mediated through relationships. Further evidence of the model's efficacy emerges from other sectors. Rafiq, Kahdim, and Afzal (2023) found that 360-degree performance reviews improved leadership practices and organisational outcomes in university settings, despite challenges such as resistance from traditional leadership structures.

Similarly, Emam, Fakhry, and Abdrabou (2024) demonstrated that structured feedback mechanisms in nursing leadership catalysed reflective practice and personal growth when integrated with broader leadership development initiatives. These findings suggest that multi-source feedback mechanisms can also be valuable in non-profit and ministry-based contexts, provided they are aligned with spiritual and organisational objectives.

Within African Pentecostal settings, Ndetto, Cheluget, and Jirma (2024) observe that leadership development is often hindered by informality, a lack of structured feedback systems, and inconsistent accountability mechanisms. They argue that formal assessment tools such as 360-degree feedback could enhance both effectiveness and sustainability in Pentecostal leadership structures. This observation is particularly relevant to the AFM, where leadership evaluation remains largely informal and personality-driven.

From a theological standpoint, Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) offer an important complement through their Servant Leadership Survey (SLS), which measures dimensions such as humility, empowerment, authenticity, stewardship, forgiveness, and accountability. These dimensions align closely with biblical leadership ideals and Pentecostal values of service, compassion, and community building. Integrating servant leadership principles into 360-degree feedback processes could provide a spiritually grounded and culturally appropriate framework for leadership evaluation within the AFM. This synthesis of feedback-driven assessment and servant leadership ethos creates an opportunity for holistic development that values both organisational effectiveness and spiritual authenticity. Despite these insights, current literature reveals a gap; few studies have integrated 360-degree feedback mechanisms with servant leadership principles in African Pentecostal contexts. Most applications remain secular or Western-centric, overlooking contextual realities such as communal authority, spiritual discernment, and relational accountability. Addressing this gap, the present study examined whether such integration can be effectively contextualised within the AFM of SA to support sustainable leadership development that is both theologically informed and operationally effective.

In summary, effective leadership development in faith-based organisations, particularly African Pentecostal denominations such as the AFM, demands the combination of relational-spiritual values with structured developmental systems. The complementary use of 360-degree feedback and servant leadership principles offers a promising model for nurturing leaders who embody both spiritual authenticity and administrative competence.

### **2.3.5 Servant Leadership Theory**

Servant leadership remains one of the most ethically grounded and spiritually aligned leadership models for faith-based organisations, particularly within Pentecostal settings such as AFM of SA. Servant leadership, as articulated by Greenleaf (1970), prioritises service, humility, and the empowerment of others. In church settings, this model aligns with biblical principles of discipleship and pastoral care. This emphasis on humility, compassion, and stewardship aligns closely with Christian values and renders the model especially relevant to church leadership. Daft (2022) defines servant leadership as the practice of transcending self-interest to empower and uplift others, thereby reframing leadership as moral service rather than authority or control. In his recent edition of *The Leadership Experience*, Daft situates servant leadership alongside other transformative models such as authentic and Level 5 leadership, all of which stress ethical integrity and relational influence.

Within the AFM, integrating servant leadership principles into leadership development programmes offers an opportunity to embed service, accountability, and stewardship into pastoral formation. It can also strengthen mentoring systems, succession planning, and inclusive governance. However, Grobler (2022) cautions that servant leadership requires structural and cultural reform to ensure meaningful participation from historically marginalised groups, particularly women and youth. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) operationalize the concept through the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS), highlighting core dimensions such as humility, empowerment, stewardship, and forgiveness, which closely align with Pentecostal pastoral values. Incorporating servant leadership within the AFM's leadership development framework could therefore align leadership practice with biblical principles while improving organizational effectiveness, trust, and resilience in a rapidly changing socio-religious landscape.

### **2.3.6 Politicking and Opportunism**

A review of current literature on leadership, opportunism, and organisational politics reveals notable theoretical and contextual gaps, particularly in relation to faith-based institutions such as the AFM of SA. While several studies provide valuable insights into governance and leadership dynamics (Higuera-Molina *et al.*, 2022; Ng and Van Duinkerken, 2021; Muiruri, 2023; Frolova *et al.*, 2020), most are situated within public or corporate contexts. Consequently, they overlook the distinctive dynamics of church-based or Pentecostal settings, where constructs such as spiritual legitimacy, divine calling, and congregational affirmation play central roles in shaping leadership emergence and succession. Moreover, little attention is given to African Pentecostal traditions, where leadership negotiation occurs within socio-

cultural environments characterised by communalism, tribal affiliation, and charismatic authority. These features challenge the applicability of Western-centric leadership models, which often fail to engage the theological, relational, and cultural realities of African church organisations.

A further limitation in existing research was the insufficient exploration of how political behaviour and opportunism influence leadership development outcomes. Although studies such as Ng and Van Duinkerken (2021) and Muiruri (2023) discussed leadership legitimacy and organisational politics, few connected these dynamics to the processes of leader identification, preparation, and deployment in faith-based settings.

Finally, the review revealed a lack of integrative theoretical frameworks that address the interplay between spiritual, social, and organisational capital in leadership development. Existing models tended to conceptualise leadership either as a functional skill set or as a behavioural trait, often neglecting its moral and spiritual dimensions. This study addressed this gap within the AFM by employing Day’s (2001) human and social capital theory alongside Rogers’s (2020) framework of prescribed and emergent leadership development as analytical lenses. In doing so, it constructed a more holistic and contextually responsive approach to leadership formation, aligning spiritual purpose with institutional growth and sustainability.

<b>Model</b>	<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Relevance to AFM</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Daft’s Model (Daft, 2018)</b>	Vision vs Control; Leadership vs Management	Useful but too secular; needs spiritual integration	Too generic; neglects theological and cultural nuances
<b>Conger and Kanungo (1998)</b>	Skill development, value socialization, collaborative vision	Good baseline but lacks spiritual and cultural sensitivity	Overlooks spiritual formation; assumes structured orgs
<b>Day’s Human vs Social Capital (Day’s (2001)</b>	Leader vs Leadership development (individual vs relational)	Very relevant for structuring leadership pipeline and relational focus	Theoretical gap in pastoral-specific application
<b>Rogers’ Behavior Framework (Rogers’s, 2020)</b>	Behavioral leadership through mutual respect and accountability	Aligns with church’s relational ethics, requires contextualization	Designed for education; lacks theological language
<b>360-Degree Feedback (Rafiq, Kahdim, and Afzal, 2023)</b>	Multi-source performance feedback	Offers holistic evaluation, fits well if integrated with church culture	Resistance to formal feedback in Pentecostal settings
<b>Servant Leadership (Daft, 2022)</b>	Service, humility, follower empowerment.	Aligns with Christian and Pentecostal values	May be adopted rhetorically without real reform.

		of humility, stewardship, and service. Encourages ethical leadership, mentorship, and inclusive leadership development.	Vulnerable to opportunism and resistance from hierarchical leadership models.
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**Table 2.2 Summary of Leadership Models and Relevance to AFM**

## 2.4 Strategies and Methods of Leadership Development

The literature describes formal leadership development strategies as structured training programs, educational efforts, and appraisal systems. Wathituni, Onjure and Mwamba (2021) suggest that combining leaders' retreats, core values training, and team building, together with change and conflict management, can improve church growth. Similarly, Toh (2024) describe Bible College training and formal mentoring as important methods for developing leadership competencies, while de Jager *et al.* (2022) report that structured workshops and policy updates empower women in the AFM context. Informal methods, on the other hand, involve mentorship, experiential learning, and community-based approaches. Rivombo (2024) demonstrates that on-the-job training and focus group discussions enhance practical skills for elders and deacons, whereas Tagwirei (2024) stresses biblical discipleship and personal mentoring for contextualized leadership development. These studies show that formal techniques (via structured curricula and educational frameworks) and informal ways (by relational, experiential opportunities) provide complimentary options for developing successful church leadership.

### 2.4.1 Mentoring

Mentoring has long been recognised as a critical component of leadership development across diverse organisational contexts. However, Stoeger, Balestrini and Ziegler (2021) identify a mentoring paradox, where the anticipated benefits of mentoring are often unrealised due to weak implementation. They highlight seven key areas requiring attention, such as alignment with programme goals, focus on mentoring dynamics, and ongoing evaluation, to enhance outcomes. Their findings underscore the importance of professionalising mentoring systems to bridge the gap between theoretical promise and practical impact. Within the AFM, this implies that mentoring initiatives should be intentionally designed to align with the church's spiritual ethos, leadership structures, and strategic objectives, supported by regular assessment mechanisms to ensure their effectiveness.

Akoto's (2024) study on leadership succession in Ghanaian churches further reinforces the need for structured, culturally grounded mentoring practices. He notes that the absence of clear, biblically informed succession frameworks often leads to leadership vacuums. His work advocates for preparation, character development, vision alignment, and community involvement through mentoring and defined leadership pipelines. Applied to the AFM, these insights suggest that leadership succession should be deliberate and context-sensitive, integrating mentorship, transparent succession planning, and communal participation to enhance legitimacy and continuity.

Research by Coers, Stedman, Roberts, Wysocki and Carter (2021) on leadership development within non-governmental organisations highlights mentoring as a mediating factor that enhances leadership self-efficacy. Participants valued trusted peer networks and self-directed learning, pointing to the power of reciprocal development. For the AFM, cultivating a culture of peer mentoring and support networks could foster collaboration, confidence, and competence among leaders, strengthening collective leadership capacity. Similarly, Murrell, Blake-Beard and Porter (2021) demonstrate that peer mentorship provides a safe context for identity work, particularly for minority leaders. Their findings reveal that shared cultural and social identities between mentors and mentees enhance trust, validation, and personal growth. Translating these insights into the AFM context underscores the value of creating mentoring spaces that affirm identity, spirituality, and belonging, contributing to more holistic leader formation.

Collectively, these studies emphasise that mentoring in faith-based organisations must be intentional, contextually relevant, and culturally responsive. In the AFM, embedding these principles within structured mentoring and succession programmes can enhance leadership effectiveness, promote inclusivity, and ensure the sustainability of pastoral leadership for future generations.

#### **2.4.1.1 Development Strategies**

Mentoring remains a cornerstone of leadership development, yet its implementation across faith-based contexts requires contextual and theological adaptation. Daft (2018) argues that the development of effective leadership depends on fostering emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and adaptability, skills that are typically cultivated through intentional mentoring. However, while theoretically robust, such secular models presuppose institutional stability and developmental resources that are not always available in African Pentecostal contexts.

Ochieng's (2021) study on mentoring in Kenya's Turkana region highlights community-based approaches that emphasise group mentoring, spiritual direction, and role modelling. These practices align with Daft's developmental vision but expand it by integrating leadership growth within relational and spiritual processes rather than individualistic or corporate paradigms. Ochieng also identifies barriers such as limited resources, geographical isolation, and a lack of formal structures, challenges that mirror those in the AFM. Similarly, Grobler (2022) observes that South African Pentecostal churches often recognise the value of mentoring but lack the institutional systems to sustain it. Mentorship frequently depends on charismatic leaders, resulting in inconsistent and uneven leadership development. Both scholars argue that mentoring within the church must prioritise spiritual discernment, theological integrity, and character formation alongside emotional competence, lest leadership development risk becoming secularised and detached from its spiritual mission.

A further overlooked dimension is the intergenerational nature of mentorship. Akano (2022) demonstrates through the example of Benson Idahosa that effective mentoring in African Pentecostal traditions involves the transfer of wisdom, doctrinal integrity, and cultural continuity between generations. This approach affirms mentorship as both a sacred duty and a means of ensuring theological and institutional succession. Complementing this, Gahamanyi and Shitote (2023) highlight mentorship, delegation, and communication as central to empowering church leaders in Rwanda, values that are consistent with Pentecostal emphases on relational and spiritual accountability. However, their study falls short of providing a structured framework for relational leadership development. Orogun (2023) adds another dimension through his analysis of hybrid leadership in African Neo-Pentecostalism, showing how traditional authority systems intersect and sometimes conflict with imported Western paradigms. For the AFM, this hybrid reality presents challenges for younger pastors who must reconcile inherited leadership forms with contemporary expectations.

Collectively, these studies suggest that mentoring and development strategies in African Pentecostal contexts must be both spiritually grounded and structurally organised. For the AFM, institutionalising mentorship as a deliberate, intergenerational, and theologically informed process can promote leadership continuity, ethical maturity, and cultural relevance. By integrating relational mentorship with strategic development frameworks, the AFM can strengthen its leadership pipeline and ensure the sustainability of its spiritual and organisational mission.

## **2.4.2 Coaching**

The integration of coaching interventions into leadership development has gained increasing attention across various organisational contexts. Cauley (2020) demonstrates that systematic coaching can revitalise declining churches by enhancing pastors' leadership competencies, irrespective of personality differences. Similarly, Peláez Zuberbuhler, Salanova, and Martínez (2020) found that coaching interventions improved emotional well-being, engagement, and performance among leaders in a Spanish automotive firm. Both studies underscore the transformative potential of coaching in strengthening leadership effectiveness and organisational renewal. Expanding on this, Braks (2020) introduces the notion of vertical leadership development, highlighting how transformative coaching facilitates deeper cognitive and behavioural shifts in leaders. Jones, Chesley, and Egan (2020) affirm that incorporating vertical development into leadership programmes enables leaders to manage complexity and ambiguity more effectively. These findings suggest that leadership development initiatives should move beyond mere skill acquisition (horizontal development) to fostering personal growth and adaptive thinking (vertical development).

In the context of the AFM, these insights point to the value of integrating coaching approaches that support both horizontal and vertical leadership development. Such a dual focus could enable pastors to lead more effectively within culturally diverse and dynamically changing environments. Incorporating personality assessments, as proposed by Cauley (2020), may further personalise these interventions, enhancing their relevance and impact. However, contextual limitations, such as cultural variance and small sample sizes, must be acknowledged. Future research should therefore examine the applicability and effectiveness of coaching-based leadership development within African Pentecostal contexts to ensure theological and cultural alignment.

## **2.4.3 Networking**

The concepts of networking, mentorship, and cooperative involvement are becoming more and more prevalent in the understanding of leadership development in nonprofit and faith-based organisations. Strategic relationship-building and interpersonal connectedness are not merely useful tools but essential mechanisms for cultivating sustainable leadership models in values-driven contexts.

### **2.4.3.1 Mentoring and Networking as Catalysts for Leadership Growth**

Mentorship and networking are recognised as critical organisational interventions that empower emerging leaders, particularly women, by enhancing their competence, self-efficacy,

and access to leadership roles (Mousa *et al.*, 2021; Wilensky and Hansen, 2001). In faith-based organisations, often characterised by hierarchical and male-dominated structures, these interventions signify a cultural and strategic shift towards inclusivity and capability development. When rooted in supportive institutional cultures, formal mentorship and networking programmes have been shown to improve leadership preparedness, skill acquisition, and participation in communities of practice (Mousa *et al.*, 2021). This emphasis is especially pertinent in faith-based settings such as the AFM, where gender representation and succession planning remain both theological and organisational challenges. Effective mentoring and networking can therefore serve as catalysts for broadening participation and fostering a new generation of spiritually grounded and organisationally competent leaders.

#### **2.4.3.2 Collaboration and Shared Leadership in Faith-Based Contexts**

Collaboration and shared leadership also play a vital role in sustaining leadership within faith-based organisations. Webb (2023) emphasizes that collective leadership and cooperative engagement are fundamental to the success of community-based initiatives, enabling faith institutions, due to their moral authority and community presence, to serve as effective channels for social influence. Miao and Nduneseokwu (2025) similarly note that nonprofit leaders advance their missions through strategic alliances and partnerships with other organisations, including NGOs and private-sector entities, which can enhance both operational performance and leadership impact.

#### **2.4.3.3 Contextual Gaps and Implications for the AFM of SA**

Despite these valuable insights, several gaps emerge when applying the broader literature to the AFM of SA. Firstly, most studies lack theological or religious grounding. Scholars such as Mousa *et al.* (2021) and Aitken and Von Treuer (2021) offer robust analyses of leadership and organisational behaviour, yet their frameworks are primarily secular or non-denominational. They overlook critical Pentecostal constructs such as spiritual authority, divine calling, and Spirit-led leadership, which are central to leadership development within the AFM.

Secondly, the reviewed literature shows limited engagement with African or South African church contexts. Predominantly Western perspectives neglect the socio-cultural complexities of post-apartheid South Africa, where issues of race, class, and language continue to shape church leadership and governance. The intersection of indigenous leadership traditions, postcolonial identity, and Pentecostal theology remains underexplored, creating a significant contextual gap.

Gender dynamics also remain insufficiently addressed. While Mousa *et al.* (2021) recognise the role of mentoring in empowering women leaders, their research does not consider the theological and cultural barriers faced by women in Pentecostal ministries. In the AFM, gender roles are influenced not only by policy but also by doctrinal interpretations and traditional expectations, emphasising the need for a more thorough investigation of female leadership that is grounded in theology.

Finally, the literature lacks denomination-specific approaches to leadership succession. Although succession planning is widely acknowledged as a leadership priority, most models ignore the spiritual discernment, charismatic authority, and prophetic validation processes unique to Pentecostal denominations. Given the AFM's structured leadership tiers, spanning the NLF, regional chairpersons, and local assemblies, succession processes demand an integrated administrative and theological perspective that current models fail to provide.

All of the reviewed studies provided a fundamental understanding of how networking, mentoring, and collaborative structures can develop leaders. However, these models required adjustment to align with the organisational, cultural, and theological realities of the AFM.

#### **2.4.4 Action Learning**

Action learning has emerged as one of the most effective leadership development approaches across sectors, fostering reflective practice, collaborative problem-solving, and contextual responsiveness. It is particularly valuable in complex, community-oriented contexts such as the AFM, where leadership extends beyond administration to encompass pastoral and spiritual responsibilities. Within this setting, action learning offers a transformative means of equipping leaders to navigate organisational challenges while cultivating inclusive and servant-oriented leadership styles. Rangana, Geduld and Sathorar (2023) explore the application of Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) in African community schools, yielding insights applicable to faith-based institutions. Their study identifies linguistic sensitivity, cultural intelligence, and collaborative cohesion as central to PALAR's success. The SERV framework (Situatedness, Empowerment, Roles, and Vulnerability) offers a structured guide for implementing PALAR effectively within African contexts. While this model aligns with the objectives of faith-based leadership, its reliance on Western epistemologies raises concerns about contextual authenticity and sustainability in indigenous or Pentecostal environments.

The healthcare sector provides another example of action learning's potential. Masango-Muzindutsi, Haskins, Wilford and Horwood (2018) found that action learning interventions enhanced leadership capacity among neonatal unit managers in KwaZulu-Natal, producing greater empowerment, trust, problem-solving ability, and peer support. These competencies are equally vital for AFM pastors, who often balance administrative responsibilities, community engagement, and spiritual formation. However, the intervention's dependence on external facilitators and limited resource availability raises questions of sustainability which is an issue highly relevant to faith-based organisations that frequently operate under financial constraints. From an educational standpoint, active learning frameworks related to action learning have also demonstrated effectiveness in reducing leadership and performance disparities. Theobald, Hill, Tran, Agrawal, Arroyo, Behling, Chambwe, Cintrón, Cooper, Dunster and Grummer (2020), in a large-scale meta-analysis, found that high-intensity active learning significantly reduced achievement gaps among underrepresented students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Their heads-and-hearts approach, combining intellectual engagement with emotional inclusivity, presents an adaptable model for leadership development within diverse congregations. For the AFM, applying similar methods could enhance inclusivity and strengthen intergenerational leadership cohesion. Nonetheless, the study's focus on academic institutions limits its immediate applicability to non-Western, faith-based contexts.

Raelin (2021) extends the concept of action learning by linking it to collective leadership development. He argues that embedding action learning into organisational culture promotes democratic engagement, reflective dialogue, and shared accountability, principles that resonate with the AFM's decentralised governance structure. Furthermore, Raelin's emphasis on compassionate leadership aligns closely with Pentecostal ministry. Yet, the success of such approaches depends on institutional openness to critical reflection and the willingness of facilitators to challenge entrenched hierarchies and patriarchal traditions, factors that may inhibit full implementation in some AFM contexts.

A clear pattern emerges from these studies, action learning and its variants are valuable for leadership development but are profoundly shaped by context, resources, and organisational culture. For the AFM, action learning holds promise for nurturing spiritually grounded, culturally informed, and administratively capable leaders. Its successful application, however, depends on careful adaptation to local realities, balancing theological integrity with practical responsiveness. This includes investment in facilitator training, sustainable resource planning, and the contextualisation of Western-derived models to fit African Pentecostal leadership paradigms.

### **2.4.5 Job Challenge**

Job-related challenges present significant barriers to effective leadership development, particularly within resource-constrained and multifaceted environments such as faith-based organisations. In contexts like the AFM, these challenges are intensified by the dual demands of administrative leadership and spiritual oversight.

Studies by Bristol-Alagbariya, Ayanponle and Ogedengb (2024) and Amankwa (2023) identify financial constraints, limited access to leadership development resources, and inadequate digital infrastructure as major obstacles to leadership growth and innovation. These issues, both logistical and strategic, undermine an organisation's ability to attract, develop, and retain capable leaders. Within the AFM, especially in rural or historically disadvantaged areas, financial insecurity restricts training opportunities, technological adoption, and broader capacity building. Furthermore, organisational rigidity, frequently incorporated into hierarchical church structures, impedes adaptive and participative leadership models (Amankwa, 2023). Centralised authority can limit career mobility, obscure succession planning, and stifle innovation. This rigidity undermines the church's long-term leadership potential by discouraging up-and-coming leaders and exacerbating pastoral fatigue and displacement.

Pastors, particularly those in mid- to senior-level positions, frequently bear multiple responsibilities beyond preaching. Amankwa (2023) notes that pastors often face high expectations in spiritual guidance, administrative management, and community outreach, yet receive limited institutional support. The resulting lack of work–life balance and inadequate peer support negatively affects both wellbeing and leadership development. Chimoga (2019) further observes that leadership challenges differ by church size, larger congregations face complex ethical and pastoral issues, such as those relating to sexuality and marriage, whereas smaller churches often contend with limited programming capacity and difficulty engaging younger members. These dynamics are highly relevant to the AFM, which comprises congregations of diverse sizes and demographic profiles. Recognising such contextual variations is essential for developing realistic and responsive leadership strategies.

The ongoing digital transformation, often termed the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0), adds another dimension to these challenges. Mukhuty, Upadhyay and Rothwell (2022) highlight digital skill gaps and organisational resistance to innovation as key barriers to leadership preparedness. Within the AFM, uneven levels of digital literacy across regions and leadership tiers may hinder effective communication, outreach, and administration. To remain relevant and resilient, the AFM must adopt deliberate strategies to build digital competence

and foster technological adaptability among emerging leaders. As Mukhuty *et al.* (2022) suggest, this requires human resource management approaches that prioritise creativity, inclusion, and resilience through structured mentoring, knowledge exchange, and a culture supportive of change.

In conclusion, job challenges in leadership development are multifaceted, encompassing financial, structural, pastoral, and technological dimensions. Addressing these issues demands more than operational adjustments; it calls for a holistic approach that integrates theological identity, socioeconomic realities, and organisational agility. For the AFM, such an integrated understanding is vital for designing sustainable and context-sensitive leadership development strategies that align with its mission and values.

#### **2.4.6 Secondments**

Secondment, defined as the temporary transfer of an individual to another role, department, or organisation for a specific period (O'Donnell, 2025), is increasingly recognised as a dynamic and effective approach to leadership development across professional sectors. The literature highlights its potential to foster experiential learning, professional identity transformation, cross-organisational collaboration, and enhanced leadership capacity. Within faith-based and Pentecostal contexts, secondment offers an underexplored opportunity to cultivate holistic, contextually grounded leaders who are equipped to navigate both spiritual and administrative responsibilities.

In a United Kingdom scoping review, Hare, Grieve, Valentine and Menzies (2024) identified secondments as significant contributors to the personal and professional growth of nurses, midwives, and allied health professionals. Reported benefits included higher morale, improved retention, and enhanced service quality, demonstrating the wider organisational value of secondment-based leadership pathways. However, the study also identified methodological limitations, such as inconsistent reporting, limited longitudinal data, and the underrepresentation of managerial perspectives. These gaps underscore the importance of robust evaluation frameworks, an imperative equally relevant to the AFM, where secondment practices, if informal or undocumented, risk losing developmental value and institutional accountability.

In the education sector, O'Donnell (2025) and Ham, Ritchie and Menzie-Ballantyne (2025) examined teacher secondments to educational support services, noting profound transformative learning outcomes. Participants often returned to their original roles with

enhanced confidence, leadership competencies, and a systemic understanding of education. Yet, challenges emerged when home institutions failed to recognize or integrate these newly acquired skills. Underutilization of expertise, identity destabilization, and insufficient reintegration support were found to hinder sustained leadership development. These findings suggest that successful secondment requires not only opportunities for exposure but also structured reintegration processes and organizational cultures that value innovation, a principle that faith-based institutions like the AFM must intentionally apply.

Uneke, Okedo-Alex, Akamike, Uneke, Eze, Chukwu, Otubo and Urochukwu, (2023) present an innovative example through their two-way secondment model between a Nigerian university and the Ministry of Health. The arrangement facilitated bidirectional learning, strengthened evidence-based policymaking, and enhanced institutional collaboration. Such cross-sectoral initiatives illustrate secondment's capacity to dismantle knowledge silos and promote systemic leadership growth. For the AFM, secondment need not be confined within denominational boundaries; partnerships with universities, NGOs, or civic organisations could provide valuable exposure to diverse governance and development models, enriching the leadership formation process.

Ham, Ritchie and Menzie-Ballantyne (2025) further highlight the importance of agency and reflection during and after secondment, noting that developmental benefits often emerge gradually as participants internalize their new perspectives. This delayed transformation suggests the necessity for continued mentoring, reflective practice, and institutional support following secondment placements. For faith-based organizations like the AFM, where leadership is often hierarchical and spiritually guided, this implies a deliberate need to create conditions that nurture ongoing reflection and integration of learning experiences.

Collectively, these studies affirm the potential of secondment as a vehicle for leadership renewal, experiential learning, and systemic insight. However, recurring challenges such as weak post-secondment frameworks, limited experiential evaluation, and institutional rigidity, can inhibit long-term impact. For the AFM, implementing structured secondment schemes could serve as an effective leadership incubator. Initiatives might include rotating pastors into national offices, youth departments, or ecumenical mission settings. To ensure success, such programmes would require formalized policies, pastoral support throughout the placement, and comprehensive reintegration processes that align with the denomination's spiritual, cultural, and organizational ethos.

### **2.4.7 Succession Planning**

Succession planning is a vital component of leadership development, ensuring organizational continuity, stability, and the preservation of institutional wisdom (Siambi, 2022). The notion is well-established in business and higher education settings, but a more refined, theologically and culturally informed approach is needed when applying it in faith-based settings like the AFM. In these situations, good succession planning must protect spiritual integrity while producing leaders who can handle challenging social and administrative situations (Siambi, 2022).

In higher education, structured succession frameworks such as Rothwell's (2010) seven-point model emphasize internal talent development through performance assessments, personality profiling, and strategic alignment (Ahmad, Ming and Sapry, 2020). The model has proven effective in retaining institutional memory and fostering leadership continuity; however, its limitations, including a narrow methodological focus and weak data integration across management levels, suggest the need for more holistic approaches. For the AFM, where leadership transitions are often guided by spiritual discernment rather than formal evaluation, a hybrid model that integrates organizational rigour with theological principles would be more contextually appropriate.

Corporate research reinforces the link between succession planning, staff retention, and organisational loyalty. Tetteh and Asumeng (2020) demonstrate that clear career development pathways encourage commitment and reduce turnover. Translated into the AFM context, embedding ministerial development within succession planning could enhance pastoral retention and mitigate burnout. Yet, as Tetteh and Asumeng (2020) note, much of this research is cross-sectional, often overlooking the complex, relational, and Spirit-led nature of leadership development which is an important reminder that pastoral succession must be conceived as an ongoing formative process rather than a singular administrative event.

Challenges surrounding succession are particularly acute in African Independent Pentecostal Churches (AIPCs). Matshobane and Masango (2020) identify founder dependency, weak governance structures, and resistance to power transfer as recurrent barriers that frequently lead to conflict and institutional decline. They advocate for integrating indigenous practices, such as communal decision-making and the wisdom of elders, into succession frameworks. For the AFM, such an approach could harmonize biblical values with African communal ethics, ensuring that leadership transitions remain both spiritually authentic and socially grounded.

A comparative perspective from faith-based organisations in the U.S. also offers valuable insights. Drammeh (2022), drawing on Hershey and Blanchard's situational leadership model, identifies key themes for effective succession planning: contextual awareness, stakeholder alignment, and adaptability. Although geographically distant, these principles resonate with denominational contexts like the AFM, where leadership changes must balance spiritual authority with institutional transparency. Similarly, Raharijaona's (2025) Pass It On model combines transformational, servant, and future-oriented leadership concepts to promote ethical and committee-led appointments, while cautioning against the dangers of personality-driven leadership and political interference, issues historically relevant to many Pentecostal movements, including the AFM.

Biblical and historical precedents also provide a theological foundation for succession planning. Osei (2024) highlights scriptural examples such as Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and Paul and Timothy to underscore the centrality of mentorship, preparation, and divine calling in leadership transitions. This resonates with Pentecostal understandings of Spirit-led leadership but also exposes a weakness in many churches, overreliance on spiritual discernment at the expense of structured succession mechanisms. Osei's (2024) recommendation for formal mentorship networks, transparent processes, and leadership pipelines is therefore especially pertinent to the AFM's evolving, multi-generational landscape. Across sectors, a recurring weakness is the fragmented treatment of succession planning—often addressing individual leader development or organizational continuity, but seldom integrating both. This gap presents the AFM with an opportunity to design a contextually grounded, Spirit-led framework that unites theological discernment with participatory governance and structured mentorship. Existing models provide valuable insights but are limited by their short-term focus, lack of longitudinal evidence, and minimal attention to cultural or theological dimensions. Future research, particularly within African Pentecostal contexts, should therefore examine succession outcomes over time to assess both organizational resilience and spiritual vitality.

When approached strategically and contextually, succession planning can become a transformative leadership development tool for the AFM. A hybrid model anchored in prayerful discernment, transparent governance, and intentional leadership pipelines would ensure continuity while nurturing ethical, resilient, and culturally attuned leaders. Such an approach would not only safeguard institutional stability but also sustain the Pentecostal ethos that underpins the AFM's mission and identity.

#### **2.4.8 Formal Programmes**

Formal leadership development programs (LDPs) have evolved as critical strategic tools across industries for improving leadership capability, organisational performance, and succession readiness. Within healthcare, for example, structured LDPs have been demonstrated to considerably improve leaders' abilities, build self-confidence, improve communication skills, and increase job satisfaction among hospital managers (Flaig, Alam, Huynh, Reid-Hector and Heuer, 2020). These advantages apply to institutional outcomes such as better teamwork and service delivery. However, a continuing problem is the lack of standardized methodologies to program evaluation and an underdeveloped scientific base, which impedes generalizability and long-term impact assessment (Flaig *et al.*, 2020).

Zulfqar, Valcke, Quraishi and Devos (2021), examined a six-week intervention in higher education based on transformational leadership concepts, finding greater leadership self-awareness and application of core behaviours. While this demonstrates the efficacy of time-bound, structured learning in developing leadership identity, the study's dependence on a small sample and limited institutional breadth undermines external validity. Nonetheless, such models provide useful insights for faith-based organizations like the AFM, particularly when developing programmes that incorporate both theological and transformational leadership components. Murrell, Blake-Beard, and Porter (2021) broaden this discussion by emphasizing the importance of peer mentorship in formal development projects, particularly for minority leaders. Their findings indicate that peer support structures inside LDPs can provide important identity affirmation and psychosocial safety, particularly for those navigating leadership in culturally or institutionally exclusionary situations. However, peer mentors from outside the organization may lack the institutional understanding required to manage internal dynamics, a constraint that is particularly relevant in the AFM, where denominational governance, tradition, and spiritual authority overlap.

Geerts (2024) proposes the Optimizing System framework to address issues such as limited application of learnt skills and poor organizational alignment. This evidence-based model outlines five interconnected elements, namely programme design, participant engagement, effective delivery, thorough assessment, and organizational infrastructure, which are critical for maximizing the return on investment in LDPs. Importantly, Geerts (2024) argues that leadership development should go beyond material delivery to include cultural alignment and post-programme reinforcement measures. However, this framework is still heavily influenced by Western, English-speaking environments, which may limit its direct relevance to South African Pentecostal settings unless culturally adapted.

In the context of the AFM, these research suggest that formal leadership development must be both spiritually and structurally sound. Pentecostal traditions such as Spirit-led discernment, mentorship by experienced elders, and a communal leadership ethos can be combined with formal program components such as competency-based training, reflective practice, and rigorous evaluation. The AFM would benefit from establishing LDPs that combine biblical leadership paradigms with contemporary development theory, ensuring that leadership pipelines are both theologically legitimate and strategically viable. However, this necessitates careful adaptation of worldwide models to the AFM's church structure, doctrinal distinctions, and socio-cultural realities in a post-apartheid South African setting. Finally, while formal leadership development programs have a high potential for equipping current and future AFM leaders, their effectiveness will be determined by the church's ability to tailor program content, delivery, and evaluation to its theological framework, congregational diversity, and organizational goals.

#### **2.4.9 Fast Track Cohorts**

Fast-track, cohort-based leadership development programmes are becoming a popular strategic answer to rapid capacity-building demands across sectors. These programs share common design principles in that they bring geographically or demographically defined groups together in intensive, peer-supported learning environments that emphasize experiential learning, identity formation, and leadership readiness, all of which are highly relevant to the AFM's need for spiritually grounded but organizationally effective pastors.

White, Bourke, Mills, Mills, van Leent, Wood and Readette (2025) discuss the usage of fast-track programs in Australia to address teacher shortages by speeding the training of career-change teachers (CCTs). These programs make use of CCTs' professional maturity and drive, but they are criticized for having short durations that may impede long-term retention and adequate integration of earlier learning (White *et al.*, 2025). Such findings serve as a warning to the AFM in that while accelerated pastoral training may expedite leadership deployment, it risks jeopardizing depth, sustainability, and contextual preparedness if not well planned and supported. Evidence from the health and research industries backs up this broad view. The Adaptive Leadership Academy, a cohort-based leadership programme for public health executives, found that structured, peer-focused learning improved knowledge, skills, and vulnerability-supportive environments, but only when combined with blended delivery and reflective interactions (Nguyen, 2024; Kingsley-Smith, Short, Kotze and Lyons, 2022). Similarly, a pilot program for postdoctoral academics found almost universal increases in

leadership confidence, negotiation skills, and identity development in small-group, trust-based cohort settings (Umble, Powis, Coffey, Margolis, Mullenix, Fatima, Orton, Fleming, Lich and Cilenti, 2022). Both findings support the notion that cohort dynamics and reflective community are key for identity reconstruction and confidence, elements that are critical for pastors emerging in Pentecostal environments who must reconcile spiritual leadership with administrative obligations. Nevertheless, these programs recognize practical restrictions. Intensive delivery approaches can exhaust participant capacity, particularly when participants have employment and family obligations, emphasizing the significance of flexible pacing, contextual flexibility, and structured post-program integration (White *et al.*, 2025; Zarif *et al.*, 2024; Umble *et al.*, 2022). In the AFM, every fast-track pastoral program should include structured mentorship, congregational implementation, and supportive re-entry pathways to promote effective skill transfer and retention.

Finally, cohort-based fast-track programs show potential for advancing pastoral leadership in the AFM, but only when combined with spiritual disciplines, theological formation, and organizational responsiveness. Designing a Pentecostal fast-track model will need balancing curricular intensity with worship, prayer, mentorship, and contextual ministry to ensure that accelerated learning leads to lasting and Spirit-empowered leadership impact.

#### **2.4.10 Organizational Development**

Organizational Development (OD), according to Chinoperekweyi, Ojung'a and Tonodzai (2022), has become as a vital technique for leadership development, particularly in situations where institutional resilience, adaptation, and sustainability are required. It promotes transformative learning, leadership pipeline development, and systemic change by deliberately aligning organizational structures, culture, and behaviours (Chinoperekweyi *et al.*, 2022). Concerning AFM, negotiating spiritual, cultural, and operational issues, OD provides both a theoretical and practical framework for developing strong, culturally grounded leadership.

Increasing scope of literature supports the claim that OD treatments have a direct impact on leadership effectiveness and organizational performance. Bashiru and Enock (2021) present practical evidence from a Ghanaian non-profit environment in which OD strategies such as organizational structure refinement, improved communication systems, coaching, and appreciative leadership were used to solve institutional deficiencies. The study found robust relationships between key OD factors and improved organizational outcomes, emphasizing the strategic importance of leadership coaching and knowledge management in change-driven situations. These findings have obvious implications for the AFM, indicating that

organized interventions that incorporate mentorship and strategic communication into organizational life can help to strengthen spiritual leadership development. Basically, OD interventions appear not always successful as they are often hindered by ineffective implementation and resistance to change. In their research of South African public sector institutions, Melaletsa, Bussin, and Barkhuizen (2023) identified various impediments to effective OD, including insufficient consultation, a lack of communication, and poor role clarity. Employees expressed dissatisfaction with the top-down character of change procedures, noting low participation and ineffective change management techniques. This is a cautionary tale for faith-based organizations such as the AFM, where spiritual authority and congregational buy-in are inseparable. Leadership development in such circumstances must strike a balance between organizational structure and participative approaches that value communal discernment and spiritual validity.

Khattak, Irfan, and Karim (2023) provide more insights into the behavioural components of OD by investigating the impact of coaching, reward systems, training, and career development planning in Pakistani corporate companies. Their findings revealed that these OD interventions had a statistically significant influence on organizational performance, as measured by staff development indicators such as knowledge, skills, and capacities. The message is clear, leadership development efforts that are not accompanied by systematic investment in employee growth are unlikely to deliver long-term dividends. In relation to the AFM, this reinforces the need for structured leadership pipelines where ministerial training is linked with strategic organizational planning, formal mentorship programs, and capacity-building activities that go beyond theological education.

Aside from structural and behavioral components, leadership development takes into account varied levels of complexity. According to Kjellström, Stålné, and Törnblom's (2020) phenomenographic research, leadership growth can be viewed in various ways, ranging from individual role satisfaction to collective, human-centered development. Their findings highlight the significance of developing complexity-sensitive OD solutions that may meet leaders where they are spiritually, emotionally, and professionally. This multifaceted perspective is important in the AFM situation, where leadership extends from local pastoral care to national church control. As a result, OD projects should represent this diversity via varied yet integrated tactics.

The studied literature illustrates both the potential and limitations of OD as a tool for leadership development. When implemented properly, OD can result in considerable increases in performance, engagement, and leadership capacity. However, success is strongly reliant on inclusive practices, effective communication, and alignment of organizational culture and

development goals. For the AFM, this suggests that leadership development cannot be achieved merely by theological training or charismatic succession. Instead, a comprehensive OD strategy is required, one that is theologically informed, structurally sound, participatory in nature, and capable of developing leaders who are spiritually mature, administratively competent, and organizationally agile.

#### **2.4.11 Partnership Working**

Partnership working emerges as a powerful technique for leadership development in faith-based contexts, promoting relationship integrity, resource sharing, and community participation. Kruger, Teijema, Van der Borgh, van Elsland and Tutu van Furth (2025) show that collaborations between church leaders and healthcare providers in South Africa can help to reduce HIV stigma and enhance treatment adherence. Their qualitative study in Cape Town discovered both facilitators like faith leaders' authoritative role and shared community status and substantial constraints, such as a lack of clarity on collaboration processes and tension between spiritual and clinical healing approaches. For the AFM, these findings demonstrate the transformative potential of faith-health partnerships, which is dependent on formalised frameworks and clear roles. Similarly, Richardson and Patton (2021) demonstrate a long-term, collaborative evaluation relationship in the global food security sector. Leadership in a multi-stakeholder alliance was reinforced and held responsible through co-creative governance and reflective practice (Richardson and Patton, 2021). This example demonstrates how purposeful partnership working may integrate leadership development within common goals and reciprocal learning, with implications for regional partnerships or project-based leadership cohorts within the AFM.

Celesi and du Toit (2019) highlight the importance of trust, equality, and mutual respect in collaborations between South African congregations and Christian development agencies. They suggest that such collaborations increase capacity for holistic community engagement while also strengthening communal leadership identity. These concepts have a significant resonance in Pentecostal churches, implying that the AFM can institutionalize partnerships that honour shared values and foster collaborative projects, thereby developing leaders skilled in relational partnership and missional collaboration.

Aunger, Millar, and Greenhalgh (2021) undertook analysis across several health system partnerships to expand on collaboration's structural dynamics. They created a complex theory that explains how context-mechanism-outcome configurations, such as trust, confidence, and risk management, influence collaborative success. The study's complexity-aware approach is useful for the AFM because it emphasizes the necessity of contextual knowledge and

continual reflection when creating partnership frameworks that promote leadership adaptation and organizational learning.

Finally, Nanthambwe (2024) investigated collaborations among churches, governments, and businesses in South African community development. The study emphasizes the church's moral authority and relationship capital, arguing that these collaborations require clarity on separate contributions and collaborative resource leveraging. This has clear ramifications for the AFM's leadership development pipeline; collaborative projects must be supported by structured governance, shared accountability systems, and theological reflection in order to protect spiritual identity while pursuing social impact.

These studies show that partnership working offers great promise as a leadership development technique for the AFM, allowing leaders to act effectively in intersectoral contexts. Clear role description, goal co-creation, trust-building, reflective learning, and formal governance mechanisms are all critical for success. By combining theological purity and strategic collaboration, the AFM can cultivate leaders who are spiritually disciplined, relationally competent, and institutionally adaptive.

<b>Method</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Limitations</b>	<b>Relevance to AFM</b>
<b>Mentoring</b>	A developmental relationship where an experienced leader guides a less experienced one.	Builds spiritual maturity, trust, and continuity. Encourages personal growth.	Can be informal and inconsistent without structure. Quality depends on the mentor.	Highly relevant to AFM. Reflects biblical discipleship. Needs formalization and monitoring.
<b>Coaching</b>	One-on-one process aimed at improving performance and unlocking potential. Often short-term and goal-focused.	Helps with skill enhancement, self-awareness, and leadership focus.	May be underutilized in churches. Requires trained coaches. Less effective without follow-up.	Growing relevance. Can support performance and growth in emerging AFM leaders.
<b>Networking</b>	Developing relationships for mutual learning, collaboration, and influence.	Encourages idea exchange, peer support, and innovation.	Can lack depth. Risk of cliques or exclusivity. Not all leaders are	Valuable in connecting pastors/leaders across AFM regions. Needs

			naturally networkers.	structure to avoid fragmentation.
<b>Action Learning</b>	Learning by solving real-life problems in groups while reflecting on the process.	Promotes problem-solving, collaboration, and real-time learning.	Time-consuming. Needs facilitation and support.	Useful in AFM leadership teams addressing congregational or community challenges.
<b>Job Challenge</b>	Assigning demanding tasks to stretch leaders' abilities and experience.	Enhances resilience, decision-making, and readiness for senior roles.	Can overwhelm unprepared leaders. Risk of burnout.	Suitable in AFM where leaders take on diverse pastoral and administrative roles.
<b>Secondments</b>	Temporary assignment to another role or department to gain broader experience.	Encourages adaptability and broader organizational insight.	May create role confusion. Needs planning and debriefing.	Underutilized in churches, but valuable for preparing leaders for regional/national roles.
<b>Succession Planning</b>	Identifying and developing future leaders to fill key positions.	Ensures continuity and minimizes leadership gaps.	May be resisted if seen as political or biased. Requires foresight and transparency.	Crucial for AFM sustainability. Needs to be inclusive and values-based.
<b>Formal Programmes</b>	Structured training through workshops, courses, or theological colleges.	Standardized knowledge, transferable skills, accreditation.	May lack contextual application. Risk of passive learning.	AFM Bible Colleges already use this; effectiveness depends on integration with real ministry.
<b>Fast-Track Cohorts</b>	Special programmes to accelerate development of high-potential leaders.	Targets future leaders, builds confidence, and addresses gaps quickly.	Can appear elitist. Risk of favouritism. May ignore late bloomers.	Useful for youth and emerging leaders in AFM. Needs transparency and clear criteria.
<b>Organizational Development (OD)</b>	Planned, systemic change to improve an organization's effectiveness and health.	Aligns culture, systems, and leadership. Enhances mission impact.	Requires time, resources, and leadership buy-in. Change resistance common.	Underexplored in AFM but crucial for long-term vision, especially in diverse contexts.
<b>Partnership Working</b>	Collaborating with external bodies (NGOs, other churches, schools, etc.) for shared	Brings new perspectives, shares resources, fosters innovation.	Misaligned values or expectations can derail efforts.	Important for community engagement and public witness. AFM can partner

	leadership development goals.			with seminars, civic leaders.
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*Table 2.3 Comparative Strategies and Methods of Leadership Development*

## 2.5 Evaluation of the Impact of Leadership Development

Leadership development remains a strategic priority across multiple sectors and continues to raise concern regarding the limited use of comprehensive evaluation frameworks. Joseph-Richard and McCray (2023) observe that many existing evaluation processes focus mainly on individual outcomes such as improved self-awareness or personal behavioural change. While these indicators are useful, they often fail to account for wider organisational impact and long-term transformation. The authors advocate for the inclusion of qualitative and participatory methodologies that can more accurately capture complex, context-specific outcomes, especially in rapidly changing post-pandemic environments where leadership demands are evolving.

Similar challenges are reported in public sector research. Osuagwu (2022), examining leadership development in Nigerian government institutions, highlights the absence of systematic approaches to evaluating leadership performance and the limited transformative capacity developed among leaders. His findings emphasise the importance of evaluation systems that do more than measure outcomes; they must also generate feedback that shapes the design and improvement of leadership programmes in response to practical organisational needs.

Further evidence of this requirement is provided by Bond, Stacey, Westwood and Long (2024), who applied Transformational Learning Theory (TLT) to examine the influence of leadership development programmes in healthcare contexts. Their study demonstrates that structured development initiatives can increase leaders' confidence, self-awareness and personal influence, suggesting potential for broader institutional improvement. However, the authors point out that in order to understand the full value of leadership development, research must adopt longitudinal and realist evaluation approaches capable of tracing how individual transformation leads to sustained organisational change.

When these insights are considered collectively, it becomes clear that effective leadership development in the AFM of SA also requires evaluation approaches that capture impact at multiple levels. Within the AFM context, leadership growth is not only personal but also spiritual, relational and organisational, affecting congregational health, ministry effectiveness

and the sustainability of pastoral systems. Therefore, the development of evaluation frameworks that draw on both qualitative and quantitative evidence would assist the AFM in determining whether leadership initiatives are producing lasting transformation. Such frameworks could provide meaningful feedback for strengthening programme design, ensuring that leadership development within the denomination results in tangible, long-term benefits for pastors, congregations and the broader organisational mission.

### **2.5.1 The Kirkpatrick Model of Level and Outcomes of Leadership Development**

The Kirkpatrick Model, established by Donald Kirkpatrick in 1959-1960, is one of the most commonly utilized models for assessing the effectiveness of leadership development and other training programmes. It defines four hierarchical levels of evaluation, each assessing a distinct aspect of outcomes, ranging from rapid reactions to long-term organizational influence. It is still used as a core tool for evaluating both academic and practical leadership development programs.

The evaluation of leadership development efforts is critical for ensuring that training produces significant and long-term results. Ambu-Saidi, Fung, Turner and Lim's (2024) scoping review emphasizes the limitations of relying on single models such as Kirkpatrick's four levels, arguing for hybrid and adaptive evaluation approaches. Their findings highlight the need of combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, particularly sequential explanatory designs, for capturing unexpected outcomes, contextual impacts, and longitudinal learning transfer. This approach challenges one-size-fits-all paradigms and promotes innovation in evaluation strategies (Ambu-Saidi, Fung, Turner and Lim, 2024). Despite its popularity, the Kirkpatrick Model is still criticized for its linear progression and limited applicability in complex situations like higher education. Cahapay (2021) cites three major drawbacks in academic settings, an overemphasis on reaction-level data, rigidity that ignores critical variables, and insufficient attention to causal linkages between learning levels. Cahapay suggests increasing the model's scope with contextual inputs and mixed-method designs to improve its explanatory power, along with Ambu-Saidi *et al.*'s proposal for hybrid evaluation models.

Sopandi (2020) used Kirkpatrick's model in a mixed-methods study at Indonesia's national police training center, demonstrating that Level 1 through 4 evaluations can produce both positive quantitative results and rich qualitative insights, such as programmatic weaknesses and follow-up gaps. While participants evaluated their experience positively, qualitative data highlighted systemic issues with goal achievement and evaluation sustainability. This contrast

demonstrates why AFM should embrace evaluative complexity while examining its own leadership programs.

Alsalamah and Callinan (2021) demonstrate a context-sensitive adaption of the Kirkpatrick Model. Working with Saudi head teachers, the researchers improved the framework with actual measures and tools tailored to each level. Their approach enables a thorough evaluation of leadership training outcomes using both trainee and supervisor feedback. This personalized version goes beyond general evaluation to provide clear instruments for practice-based measurement, which is adaptable to AFM's ministerial contexts. Miranda, Santos, Kristman, and Mininel (2025) confirm Kirkpatrick's framework's global significance in nursing education. Their integrative study focusses on selecting valid instruments at each level, emphasizing that, while Levels 1-3 are commonly and statistically analyzed, Level 4 outcomes frequently necessitate qualitative interpretation. This assumption emphasizes the necessity of developing assessment techniques that balance instruments and methodologies appropriate for both behavioural change and organizational outcomes.

Collectively, these studies provide a complete evaluation picture for the AFM's leadership development initiatives. AFM may better assess and improve its leadership training by implementing mixed evaluation methodologies that combine quantifiable outcomes with rich contextual insights. The use of specialized tools, as demonstrated by Alsalamah and Callinan (2021), can help to root the evaluation process in both theological and organizational dimensions. Furthermore, incorporating qualitative and longitudinal data, as indicated by Sopandi (2020) and Miranda *et al.* (2025), allows the AFM to track long-term leadership impact across congregations. By doing so, AFM can go beyond simple training satisfaction scores and assess spiritual growth, community influence, and organizational vitality.

### **2.5.2 Leadership Development Effectiveness**

Measuring the efficiency of leadership development necessitates a multifaceted approach that includes individual, team, organizational, and system levels. Using quantitative tools or satisfaction surveys alone is insufficient to capture complicated and long-term consequences (Ambu-Saidi *et al.*, 2024). Instead, integrated quantitative-qualitative evaluation frameworks, such as Kirkpatrick's model augmented with mixed-method tools, are required to comprehensively measure knowledge acquisition, behavioural change, and organizational impact (Alsalamah and Callinan, 2021; Miranda *et al.*, 2025).

Individual leader-level quantitative methods such as pre/post-session assessments, 360-degree feedback, and self-efficacy surveys can successfully assess improvements in knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and confidence (Bond *et al.*, 2024). These measurements reflect how participants perceive themselves and how others see their leadership development. However, qualitative instruments such as interviews, reflective diaries, and focus groups must be used in conjunction with these methodologies to gain a deeper understanding of identity development and contextual learning. Without this, evaluations run the risk of misinterpreting confidence fluctuations as actual leadership capabilities.

At the team level, the performance of a leadership program can be measured by collaborative outcomes, project accomplishments, and peer perception surveys that assess trust, communication, and coherence. Qualitative feedback from team members is crucial for understanding how new leadership behaviours develop in real-world contexts (Joseph-Richard and McCray, 2023). This is especially important in faith-based leadership organizations like the AFM, where effective leadership is as much about relational influence and spiritual nurture as it is about administrative expertise.

At the organizational level, evaluative metrics should include measurable outcomes like employee retention, organizational performance indicators (e.g., church growth, community participation), and culture-change surveys that demonstrate alignment with the church's goal and vision. Additionally, longitudinal data is critical, tracking career growth, congregational health, and leadership continuity over time aids in determining genuine developmental impact (Sopandi, 2020; Miranda *et al.*, 2025). Achieving sustainable or spiritual leadership outcomes within the AFM necessitates recursive review that involves various stakeholders—congregants, leaders, and community partners.

Lastly, system-level evidence highlights the larger impact of leadership development on ecosystems. This comprises networks, collaborations, and community activities spearheaded by trained leaders (Bond *et al.*, 2024). To determine if trained pastors have favourably influenced broader communal and spiritual frameworks, evaluations at this level may include qualitative testimonials, case studies, and social effect measurements.

In summary, assessing the success of leadership development within the AFM requires a thorough and detailed approach. This entails using multilevel measuring tools to track outcomes at the individual, team, organizational, and system levels. It also necessitates the use of mixed-methods data collecting, which combines standardized quantitative instruments with qualitative techniques such as narrative inquiry to provide a more comprehensive

understanding of developmental impact. Furthermore, longitudinal tracking is required to measure the sustainability and long-term impact of leadership initiatives across time. Significantly, any evaluation framework must be contextually and theologically orientated to ensure that spiritual, administrative, and social components are adequately handled. By adopting this comprehensive evaluative approach, the AFM can ensure its leadership programmes are not only theoretically sound and utilized for pastors compliance statuses, but also spiritually authentic, culturally resonant, and capable of effecting genuine organizational transformation.

### **2.5.3 Measures of Leadership Development**

Literature reveals that Subjective and Objective Measures of Leadership Development refer to the two main categories of evidence used to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of leadership development endeavours. Each category offers unique insights and serves a particular evaluation goal.

#### **2.5.3.1 Subjective Measures of Leadership Development**

According to Joseph-Richard and McCray (2023), subjective measures are important for measuring leadership development because they provide insight into personal, psychological, and interpersonal aspects of leadership that are difficult to capture using numerical or performance-based data. They believe that these metrics are frequently qualitative in character, relying on individual perceptions, reflective self-assessments, and participant stories. Their power rests in their ability to highlight the internal changes and experiential learning that leaders go through during and after development programs. Self-reported surveys and reflections are common methods in this category, with participants asked to assess their own progress in key leadership characteristics such as emotional intelligence, decision-making, and interpersonal communication (Cahapay, 2021). To assess perceived changes in leadership capacity, these tools can be built with established psychometric instruments or program-specific rubrics (Cahapay, 2021). While this introspective method encourages participant engagement and self-awareness, it also raises the likelihood of response bias, such as overestimation or a preference for providing socially desirable answers (Cahapay, 2021).

Another popular subjective method is 360-degree feedback, which collects structured feedback from supervisors, colleagues, subordinates, and, in some cases, clients. This method gives a multidimensional assessment of the participant's leadership effectiveness and interpersonal influence. 360-degree feedback is particularly useful for identifying blind spots

and confirming areas of strength because it incorporates many perspectives. Nonetheless, the tool's reliability is dependent on respondents' honesty and critical participation, which might be influenced by company culture, fear of repercussions, or favouritism (Alsalamah and Callinan, 2021).

Kruger *et al.*, (2025) states that qualitative interviews and focus groups expand the breadth of subjective evaluation. These methodologies allow for a more in-depth investigation of behavioral change, contextual leadership issues, and knowledge transfer into practice. After finishing a leadership training, participants may explain how they handled conflict more constructively or led with greater empathy. In the context of faith-based organizations, such as AFM, such narratives can also illustrate how spiritual growth intersects with leadership development, providing valuable insight into theological alignment and moral leadership.

According to Bond *et al.*, (2024), narrative inquiry and journaling are also effective subjective methods for collecting personal views of leadership development. Leaders use narrative and writing reflection to express not only what they learnt, but also how they applied it in their own cultural, spiritual, or organizational contexts. This is especially important in organizations like the AFM, whose leadership is highly spiritual and communal. Narrative data can be used to track internal transformations in identity, purpose, and calling, elements that are critical to religious leadership but are sometimes overlooked in traditional evaluation systems.

Nevertheless, while subjective assessments are rich in detail and context, they have limitations. Ambu-Saidi *et al.*, (2024) argues that personal bias, memory distortion, and a lack of critical self-awareness can all undermine the reliability of self-reports and interviews. Furthermore, participants may be reluctant to report unfavourable experiences, especially in hierarchical or close-knit groups. To present a comprehensive picture of leadership development outcomes, subjective evaluations must be combined with objective metrics (Ambu-Saidi *et al.*, 2024).

In strengthening leadership development within the AFM, subjective evaluation methods are vital for understanding pastoral leadership development because they encompass personal growth, spiritual maturity, and relational competency that cannot be measured quantitatively. According to Joseph-Richard and McCray (2023), reflective self-assessments, narrative accounts, and participant surveys can help reveal internal changes in areas such as emotional intelligence and ministry decision making, but such tools are still susceptible to social desirability and self-report bias. Multi-source approaches, like as 360-degree feedback, provide a more comprehensive view of leadership effectiveness, but they are dependent on

organisational trust and honesty (Alsalamah and Callinan, 2021). Qualitative interviews, focus groups, and reflective journaling help to strengthen evaluation by demonstrating how learning is used in practice and how identity and calling change in spiritual leadership settings (Kruger et al., 2025; Bond *et al.*, 2024). However, Ambu-Saidi et al. (2024) warn that subjective measurements should be coupled with objective indicators to provide a more complete picture of growth. Within the AFM, such an integrated methodology would help assess pastoral growth in a way that respects spiritual formation while providing responsibility and demonstrable organisational change.

### **2.5.3.2 Objective Measures of Leadership Development**

Objective measures provide tangible, independently verifiable evidence of the effectiveness and impact of leadership development activities. These indicators are critical for proving the actual organizational and behavioural changes that occur from such interventions, and they are frequently preferred by decision-makers because of their clarity, comparability, and perceived reliability (Ambu-Saidi *et al.*, 2024). Unlike subjective evaluations, which are based on personal perceptions and experiences, objective metrics strive to capture the external manifestations of leadership learning as they show in performance data, organizational outcomes, and observed behaviours.

Performance metrics are one of the most widely used objective indicators, and they can include increases in departmental productivity, service delivery efficiency, or decreases in absenteeism and staff turnover after leadership training. These indicators show a clear, outcome-based relationship between leadership qualities and workplace effectiveness. For example, a department led by a programme graduate may show improved operational cohesiveness or a measurable increase in key performance metrics, indicating that leadership development has a positive impact on organizational function (Osugwu, 2022).

Another reliable objective metric is the rate of career advancement and promotion among participants in leadership development. Tracking individuals' upward mobility within the business can reveal how leadership training improve employability and preparation for higher responsibility. If alumni of leadership programs frequently achieve higher-level jobs, this may indicate both the program's internal validity and its acknowledgement within organizational hierarchies. However, such statistics should be evaluated with caution because promotions can also be impacted by external variables like internal politics or structural vacancies (Alsalamah and Callinan, 2021). Behavioural observations, which are systematically documented using validated methods or structured rubrics, are also useful in evaluating the

implementation of leadership competencies. Trained observers can evaluate how leaders perform in real-time scenarios such as conflict resolution, decision-making under pressure, and team facilitation, providing objective evidence of behavioural transfer from the training setting to the workplace (Miranda *et al.*, 2025). These assessments have the advantage of removing self-report bias, especially when the observers are unbiased third parties.

Additionally, organizational-level variables can be linked to leadership development outcomes. Climate surveys, for example, that measure staff engagement, psychological safety, or perceptions of leadership effectiveness before and after interventions might identify shifts caused by leadership capacity development. Similarly, audit findings, compliance scores, and client satisfaction ratings may represent the indirect impact of improved leadership inside units or teams (Bond *et al.*, 2024). In the case of the AFM of SA, such criteria could include increased congregational membership, enhanced governance standards, or more effective ministry outreach activities following leadership interventions.

However, Ambu-Saidi *et al.*, (2024) and Cahapay (2021) observes that while objective indicators give crucial proof of success and can help demonstrate return on investment (ROI), they have limitations. These measures may fail to capture the finer, deeper alterations that leadership development frequently seeks to instill, such as moral reasoning, self-awareness, or theological maturity, particularly in faith-based or values-driven organizations like the AFM. Furthermore, they may not fully account for contextual complexity, such as cultural dynamics or spiritual components of leadership, which are difficult to quantify yet critical to leadership performance in religious contexts.

In conclusion, while objective measurements are critical for confirming program impact and promoting accountability, they function best when combined with subjective approaches in a mixed-methods evaluation framework. This integrated approach provides a more comprehensive and context-sensitive knowledge of leadership development results, balancing each methodology's strengths while compensating for its flaws.

## **2.6 Previous Studies on Leadership Development in a Church in and Outside South Africa**

Leadership development settings present unique problems in unpredictable circumstances and cross-cultural church planting. Davis (2023) cites the example of a Latin American Mission agency (LAM) in which missionaries with biblical training lacked systematic leadership development. A Delphi study with LAM missionaries found resilient practices, including a

healthy organizational climate, vertical leadership development (i.e., mentality and capacity growth), trusting developer-developer connections, and coaching. These components were critical for mission leaders to effectively train new church leaders in an unpredictable world. This is an important example for the AFM of SA, indicating that leadership programs must include strategic attitude development and continual coaching to prepare leaders for contextual uncertainty.

Experiential learning has emerged as an important component in the formation of senior leaders within established denominational systems, bridging the gap between academic preparation and the practical needs of ministry. Morrison's (2024) multicase study looked at the experiences and perspectives of Southern Baptist Convention pastors who earned undergraduate degrees from denominational higher education institutions. The study focused on pastors with 3-10 years of ministry experience who had not yet attended seminary, with the goal of identifying potential gaps in their academic background and the realities of local church leadership. Two key findings emerged: first, mentoring relationships with professors and peers played an important role in shaping ministerial competence and providing guidance for real-life ministry challenges; and second, participants expressed a strong desire for more hands-on learning through experiential opportunities such as internships and practical ministry participation. Based on these findings, the AFM can strengthen its leadership development framework by including experiential and reflective learning methods that are contextually relevant to local church service. This method would not only increase practical leadership development, but it would also assist rising leaders in balancing the dual demands of missional work and organisational governance inside the church.

In developing a leadership culture within congregations, Charron's (2020) PhD research provides an applied methodology, utilizing a leadership development process to engage more than 30% of a congregation in small group ministry. This intervention boosted participants' programmatic capacity as well as their self-reported leadership effectiveness. Charron's work exemplifies a scalable, grassroots leadership development model that promotes organic growth within the church body. This study demonstrates how churches may create a dynamic leadership culture to effectively serve and govern at scale by utilizing internal resources and feedback mechanisms.

Theological and spiritual development as leadership foundations reveal different studies arguing that leadership development in churches must be thoroughly founded in theological and spiritual formation frameworks. Knoetze (2022) contends that religious ideas about God impact theological education and spiritual formation, and so substantially influence leadership

development in African contexts. This implies that leadership programmes cannot be separated from theological identity. Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020) complement this focus by discussing servant leadership as a spiritual formation instrument for theology students. Drawing on biblical examples like Moses and Paul, they suggest a paradigm that combines character development, service, and leadership skills. AFM and Pentecostal frameworks should emphasize the interconnectedness of theology, spirituality, and leadership capacity.

Mentorship is a central component of effective youth leadership development and leadership succession within African church contexts. Many established denominations emphasize experiential learning as an essential approach to developing capable and spiritually mature leaders. In this regard, Olata (2025) investigated how Nigerian Pentecostal churches could ensure their future stability by intentionally preparing young leaders for greater responsibilities. Drawing on survey data from both youths and older adults in Lagos and Ogun States, the study revealed that although mentorship and discipleship were widely valued, there were lingering concerns regarding the readiness and maturity of emerging leaders. Nevertheless, both generations expressed a genuine willingness to learn from one another, highlighting the potential for intergenerational collaboration. Olata (2025) concluded that sustainable leadership succession depends on building trust, strengthening discipleship, and investing deliberately in youth development. Building on these insights, the AFM could enhance its leadership development strategy by incorporating similar mentorship-based approaches. Early involvement of young people in leadership roles would not only promote intergenerational trust but also nurture spiritual growth and ensure the church's long-term vitality. Consequently, the establishment of robust mentorship structures within the AFM is essential for guiding younger generations into competent and spiritually grounded leadership.

The implications of the AFM in these studies show that effective church leadership development is diversified, contextually sensitive, and spiritually grounded. Key success factors in cross-cultural settings, denominational hierarchies, and grassroots ministry include experiential learning, theological anchoring, mentorship frameworks, and spiritual character formation. For the AFM, this entails developing leadership development tools that go beyond doctrinal training, including as coaching for unpredictable environments, reflective ministry practice, small-group involvement, servant leadership formation, and generational mentoring. Such an integrated methodology is consistent with the AFM's ethos and provides long-term leadership pipelines cultivated through both spiritual depth and organizational competence.

## **2.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to leadership and leadership development, particularly within the context of faith-based organizations such as the AFM of SA. The discussion began by distinguishing between the concepts of leadership and management, noting their unique yet overlapping functions in religious settings. The concept of leadership development was then explored in depth, drawing on the foundational framework of Conger and Kanungo (1998), which highlights individual skills, value alignment, and collective vision as critical areas of focus.

A clear distinction was made between leader development and leadership development, supported by Day's (2001) emphasis on human and social capital. Various models and frameworks were examined to provide a theoretical basis for understanding how leadership potential is identified and nurtured within organizations. This included an analysis of competency frameworks, performance appraisals, 360-degree feedback mechanisms, and the challenges posed by politicking and opportunism.

The chapter further examined a wide array of leadership development strategies, both formal and informal, such as mentoring, coaching, action learning, job challenges, succession planning, and organizational partnerships. Each method was considered in terms of its relevance and applicability to church contexts. The evaluation of leadership development initiatives was also addressed through Kirkpatrick's four-level model and an overview of objective and subjective measures of effectiveness.

Finally, existing studies on leadership development within and outside of South Africa were reviewed to provide a comparative perspective. These studies highlight both best practices and contextual challenges that influence leadership development efforts in the AFM and similar Pentecostal denominations.

Overall, this literature review identified significant gaps that must be explored in the understanding and implementation of context-specific leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA, particularly in the DCR. These gaps formed the basis for this study and justified the adoption of a qualitative research design to explore how leadership development is approached within this unique ministry context.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology used to investigate leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA in the DCR. The study adopted a qualitative research design to gain an in-depth understanding of how leadership was nurtured, developed, and sustained within a faith-based organisational context.

The chapter describes the conceptual and methodological principles that shaped the research process. It is structured around Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill's (2023) Research Onion framework, which provides a systematic basis for discussing the research philosophy, approach, strategy, data collection methods, and analytical methodologies used.

The discussion begins by examining the philosophical underpinnings of the study, including paradigms such as positivism, realism, pragmatism, and interpretivism, before establishing the interpretivist stance that best aligns with the study's exploratory and context-sensitive nature. The chapter then elaborates on the research approach and strategy, justifying the choice of a qualitative design and the use of semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method.

Subsequent sections detail the study setting, target population, and sampling procedures, clarifying how participants were selected to ensure rich, diverse, and contextually relevant insights. The chapter also discusses the data collection tools and processes, including ethical clearance, recruitment, informed consent, and data management protocols. In addition, the data analysis framework, guided by thematic analysis, is presented, outlining how themes and sub-themes were generated and validated. The chapter concludes by addressing key issues of research quality, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, followed by a discussion of ethical considerations such as confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Overall, this chapter establishes the methodological integrity of the research, demonstrating how the selected design, methods, and procedures align with the study's objectives and philosophical orientation, and laying the foundation for the presentation of findings in Chapter Four.

## **3.2 Research Onion Model**

The research design of this study was guided by Saunders *et al.*'s (2023) Research Onion, which provides a structured framework for ensuring methodological coherence. Each layer of the Onion, including philosophy, approach, strategy, methodological choice, time horizon, and data collection techniques, was applied to ensure that decisions made at each stage aligned with the study's purpose and context.

### **3.2.1 Research Philosophy**

The research philosophy establishes the worldview that guided the study's understanding of reality, knowledge, and research design. Since this study examined leadership development within a faith-based context, it required an approach that could interpret socially and spiritually constructed meanings rather than measure observable variables.

While positivism and realism recognise objective elements of social reality, they are unable to fully examine the complex, morally motivated experiences that characterise leadership in religious institutions. Pragmatism, though flexible, tends to prioritise practical outcomes over contextual meaning. In contrast, interpretivism aligns closely with the objectives of this study, as it recognises that reality is socially and contextually constructed through human experience (Saunders *et al.*, 2023).

This study was grounded in an interpretivist philosophy, which assumes that social reality is constructed through human experience and interaction. This philosophical stance was most appropriate for this research because it sought to understand how pastors within the AFM of SA within the DCR, interpret and experience leadership development in their ministry contexts. Interpretivism enabled the researcher to engage deeply with participants' perspectives and meanings rather than seeking objective measurement or causal explanation. This was essential for uncovering how leadership development is understood, practiced, and sustained within a faith-based environment shaped by theological, cultural, and emotional dynamics. This orientation allowed the researcher to explore leadership development within the AFM of SA, DCR, through the lived experiences of pastors and church leaders. The interpretivist stance supported the use of qualitative methods, particularly semi-structured interviews, to uncover participants' perceptions, motivations, and interpretations of leadership growth.

The philosophy also influenced how data were handled and analysed. Rather than seeking objective measurement or statistical generalisation, the study focused on understanding the meanings and insights expressed by participants. The researcher acknowledged that

knowledge is co-constructed through interaction and reflection. Thus, interpretivism provided the foundation for exploring the spiritual, relational, and organisational dimensions of leadership development in a manner faithful to the participants' realities.

### **3.2.2 Research Approach**

An inductive approach was adopted. The study did not begin with a predefined theory but instead developed insights and possible conceptual understanding from the data collected. The inductive process involved gathering rich qualitative data through interviews, identifying recurring patterns and themes, and then relating these findings to existing leadership theories. This approach was particularly suited to exploring a relatively under-researched phenomenon, namely leadership development within Pentecostal contexts, allowing theory to emerge from practice rather than being imposed upon it.

### **3.2.3 Research Strategy**

This study used a qualitative, exploratory case study approach to look into leadership development at the AFM of SA in the DCR. The case study approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth and contextually grounded examination of a modern organisational phenomenon in its real-life environment (Annamalah, 2024). The case study design enabled the researcher to capture the complexity and contextual specificity of leadership processes within a single organisational and theological framework. This technique, which is consistent with the study's interpretivist paradigm (Dewi, 2021), enabled a comprehensive knowledge of how leadership is nurtured, developed, and sustained within a complex faith-based setting impacted by religious beliefs, cultural norms, and organisational dynamics. This strategy provided a holistic understanding of the interaction between institutional programmes such as Ministry Integrated Learning (MIL) and Pastoral Continuous Development (PCD), individual leadership experiences, and contextual influences unique to the DCR. The use of the case study approach aligns with Grenier's (2023) and Annamalah's (2024) views that it is most effective when investigating contemporary, contextually embedded phenomena.

Semi-structured interviews were used as the main data gathering approach, allowing pastors to communicate their experiences and viewpoints while assuring agreement with the study's goals. Purposive sampling ensured that participants were directly involved in the AFM's leadership development activities. NVivo software offered thematic analysis, which gave a systematic technique to coding and understanding the data. Overall, the case study technique provided the necessary depth and flexibility to create nuanced insights and propose contextually relevant improvements to the DCR's existing leadership development practices.

### **3.2.4 Time Horizon**

The research adopted a cross-sectional time horizon, focusing on leadership development practices as they existed during the data collection period during 2025. Given time and resource constraints, data were collected at a single point rather than longitudinally. While a longitudinal study could have provided insights into changes over time, the cross-sectional design was sufficient to capture prevailing practices, perceptions, and challenges within the AFM DCR context.

### **3.2.5 Techniques and Procedures**

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 purposively selected pastors from different assemblies within the DCR. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and was conducted virtually via secure digital platforms, depending on participant availability.

The interviews were recorded (with consent), transcribed verbatim, and analysed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework:

1. Familiarisation with the data
2. Generation of initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the final report

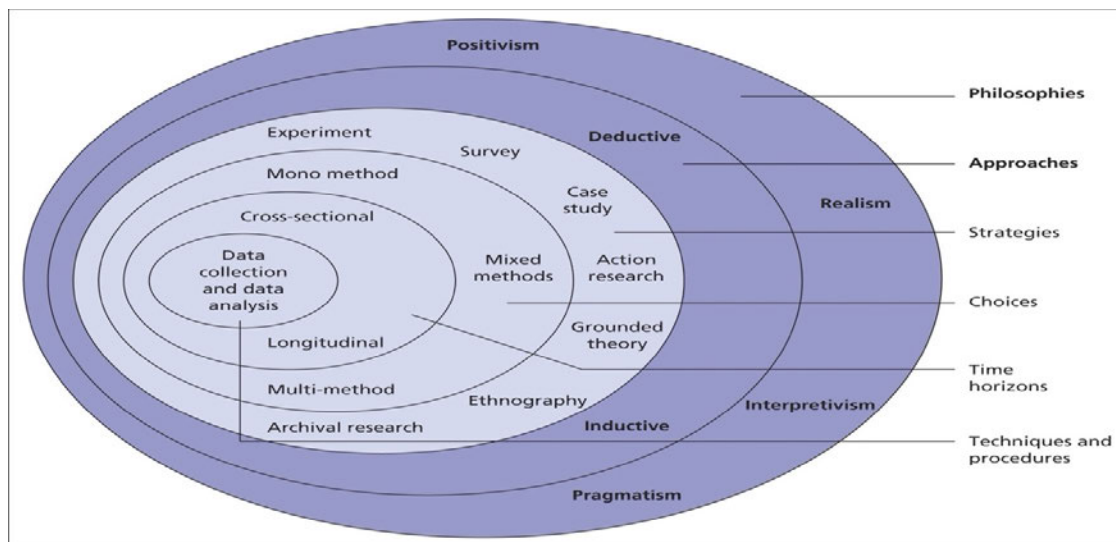
This analytical process enabled systematic identification of patterns and relationships between leadership development experiences and institutional practices. NVivo software was used to assist in coding and organising themes, ensuring analytical rigour and transparency.

Ethical principles were strictly adhered to throughout the research process. Participants were provided with informed consent forms detailing the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any stage. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by assigning pseudonyms and omitting any identifiable information.

### **3.2.6 Summary**

In summary, Saunders' Research Onion model served as a guiding framework for the study's methodological decisions. The combination of an interpretivist philosophy, inductive approach,

and qualitative case study strategy enabled the researcher to explore leadership development holistically and contextually within the AFM DCR. This design ensured methodological consistency and provided the depth required to understand leadership as both a theological and organisational construct.



**Figure 3.1 Research Onion Model** Source: Saunders et al., 2007

### 3.3 Research Paradigm

This section only acknowledges the paradigm and its suitability for examining leadership development in the AFM DCR. Detailed discussion of philosophical alignment, research approach, and rationale is provided in Section 3.2 (Research Onion).

Practically, this paradigm influenced all stages of the research process. It guided:

The use of qualitative, semi-structured interviews as the main data collection tool;

The inductive reasoning applied in thematic analysis; and

The researcher’s reflexive stance, acknowledging their own role and bias as part of the meaning-making process.

By grounding the study in an interpretivist paradigm, the research achieved philosophical coherence and methodological integrity. The paradigm ensured that data collection, analysis, and interpretation were consistent with the goal of uncovering deep, context-sensitive insights into leadership development in the AFM’s DCR.

### **3.4 Research Design**

Aligned with the interpretivist paradigm, a qualitative case study design was used. This allowed exploration of lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings that pastors attach to leadership development. The design integrates participants' experiences with institutional contexts to produce rich narrative data. For full rationale and strategy details, see Sections 3.2.2–3.2.3.

Qualitative research allowed for in-depth exploration of complex social and spiritual realities that cannot be quantified (Creswell and Poth, 2018). In this study, it facilitated a holistic understanding of how leadership is formed, practiced, and sustained within a Pentecostal faith-based setting. The focus was on how leadership development occurs and why certain approaches are perceived as effective or limited in context. Although alternative designs were considered, quantitative or mixed-methods approaches were deemed unsuitable. Quantitative methods would have limited the researcher's ability to capture the relational, theological, and emotional dimensions of leadership formation, while mixed methods would have extended beyond the available timeframe and resources. Thus, a qualitative case study design was selected to enable deep contextual analysis within a single bounded setting within the AFM of SA in the DCR.

This design enabled the integration of participants' experiences and institutional contexts, producing rich narrative data. The research process involved semi-structured interviews with selected pastors, supported by document review of leadership training materials such as the MIL and PCD frameworks. The data were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns and themes that reflected the realities of leadership development in the region.

In summary, the qualitative case study design was appropriate for achieving the study's purpose, offering flexibility and depth while remaining consistent with the interpretivist paradigm. It allowed for the construction of meaning from participants' experiences rather than the testing of pre-existing theories, resulting in findings that are contextually relevant to leadership development in faith-based environments.

### **3.5 Population and Sampling**

The study population comprised 58 ordained pastors serving within the AFM DCR. These pastors were directly involved in pastoral leadership and represented a diverse range of congregations across the region. Given the study's qualitative nature, it was not feasible or necessary to engage all members of this population. Instead, a purposive sampling

strategy was adopted to identify information-rich participants who could provide meaningful insights into leadership development practices within the AFM.

Purposive sampling was suitable because it allowed for the deliberate selection of participants based on their relevance to the research objectives (Akkaş and Meydan, 2024). Participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

1. Active involvement in pastoral leadership or mentorship roles;
2. Direct experience with the AFM's leadership development programmes (MIL and PCD); and
3. Willingness and availability to participate in in-depth interviews.

From the total population, 15 pastors were selected to participate in semi-structured interviews. Data saturation was reached during the twelfth (12) interview, at which point no new themes or insights were emerging from subsequent participants (Guest, Namey and Chen, 2020). The sample included both senior and emerging leaders to ensure diversity in perspectives regarding leadership development and succession within the church.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted virtually, lasting 45–60 minutes each. Participants were provided with information sheets and consent forms. Ethical considerations were strictly observed. For detailed discussion of techniques and procedures, see Section 3.2.5.

The purposive sampling approach ensured that the data collected were both contextually grounded and theologically informed, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of leadership development practices within the AFM of SA in the DCR.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Data were analysed using thematic analysis following Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. NVivo facilitated coding and organisation. Patterns were compared with existing literature on Pentecostal leadership development. For a detailed discussion of methodology and procedural steps, see Section 3.2.5.

Additionally, thematic patterns were compared with existing literature on Pentecostal leadership development to situate the findings within broader theoretical and contextual frameworks. The final stage of analysis involved the interpretation of the identified themes in relation to the research objectives and conceptual framework. This process sought to capture

the deeper theological, relational, and experiential dimensions of leadership development as experienced by AFM pastors, while maintaining fidelity to their voices and contexts.

### **3.8 Trustworthiness**

To ensure methodological rigour, the study applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These measures established the trustworthiness of the research findings and reinforced their validity within a qualitative paradigm.

Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement with the research context and participants, allowing the researcher to build rapport and ensure the authenticity of responses. Semi-structured interviews enabled participants to express their experiences freely, while member checking was conducted with selected pastors, who reviewed thematic summaries to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. This process helped ensure that the results genuinely reflected participants' perspectives.

Transferability was enhanced by providing rich, detailed descriptions of the research setting, participants, and denominational context. The study outlined the AFM's organizational structure, theological orientation, and leadership development processes in the DCR, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the findings to other church contexts.

Dependability was maintained through consistent documentation of the research process, including data collection, coding, and theme development. An audit trail was created to record methodological decisions, revisions, and reflective notes, enabling external scrutiny of the research process.

Confirmability was ensured by emphasizing transparency and reflexivity throughout the study. The researcher maintained a reflexive journal to monitor personal assumptions and potential biases. The themes emerged from the data rather than from the researcher's preconceptions.

Through these combined strategies, the study ensured that its findings were credible, contextually grounded, and free from undue bias, thereby contributing reliable insights into Pentecostal leadership development practices.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical integrity was central to the research process, given the sensitivity of studying leadership experiences within a faith-based community. The study adhered to the ethical guidelines of the university's research ethics committee and broader principles of informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity. All participants received an information sheet outlining the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Written informed consent was obtained before interviews commenced, and participants were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This ensured that participation was entirely voluntary and free from coercion.

Given the hierarchical nature of the AFM and the close-knit pastoral community, anonymity and confidentiality were carefully safeguarded. Participants were assigned pseudonyms, and identifying information was removed from all transcripts and reports. Data were securely stored on password-protected devices and will be retained for a specified period before being destroyed in accordance with institutional policy.

The researcher approached all participants with respect for their theological convictions, pastoral responsibilities, and cultural contexts. Interviews were conducted sensitively, allowing participants to express personal and spiritual reflections without judgment or interruption. Finally, all ethical procedures ensured that the research upheld the dignity, privacy, and spiritual well-being of participants while contributing to a deeper understanding of leadership development in the AFM context.

### **3.10 Delimitation of the Study**

Delimitations refer to the boundaries intentionally established by the researcher to define the scope and focus of the study (Akanle, Ademuson and Shittu, 2020). These parameters were necessary to ensure that the research remained contextually relevant, methodologically coherent, and manageable within the available resources and timeframe.

This study was delimited to the AFM of SA, DCR, which served as the primary geographical focus. The region was selected for its accessibility to the researcher and its representation as a dynamic, urban religious hub that encompasses diverse pastoral experiences. While the findings may offer insights applicable to other AFM regions or Pentecostal contexts, generalization beyond this setting was not intended. The target population was confined to ordained pastors within the DCR. These individuals were selected because of their direct involvement in leadership formation and ministerial oversight. Other categories of church

leadership, such as assembly leaders, departmental heads, elders, and general members, were not included. This focus allowed for an in-depth exploration of leadership development from those formally responsible for implementing and sustaining such initiatives.

In terms of conceptual scope, the study concentrated specifically on leadership development strategies within the AFM context. Broader themes such as general church growth, theological education curricula, or congregational management practices were outside the purview of this research. This thematic narrowing ensured analytical depth and alignment with the central research objectives.

Methodologically, the study was delimited to a qualitative approach, relying primarily on semi-structured interviews as the main data collection instrument. This choice emphasized depth of understanding and contextual insight rather than statistical generalization. Consequently, quantitative methods such as surveys or experimental designs were deliberately excluded.

By defining these boundaries, the study ensured clarity, depth, and contextual relevance in addressing its research objectives. However, these delimitations also imply that the results should be interpreted within the specific geographical, denominational, and methodological context of the AFM of SA, DCR.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

This chapter established the methodological foundation upon which the study was conducted. It discussed the philosophical and paradigmatic orientation that shaped the research, explaining how interpretivism provided a suitable lens for exploring the lived experiences of AFM pastors regarding leadership development. The qualitative approach, supported by an inductive reasoning process and case study strategy, enabled the study to generate in-depth insights grounded in participants' perspectives. Furthermore, the chapter clarified the population and sampling framework, data collection and analysis procedures, and measures undertaken to ensure ethical integrity and methodological rigor. The choices made were guided by the need to align the research design with the study's central aim, to explore and understand leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA, DCR.

By defining the study's boundaries and applying strategies for trustworthiness, this chapter ensured that the methodological process was coherent, credible, and contextually appropriate for a faith-based leadership inquiry.

### **3.12 Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided a comprehensive account of the research design and methods used in this study. Grounded in an interpretivist paradigm and qualitative framework, the study sought

to capture the subjective meanings and contextual realities shaping leadership development within the AFM of SA, DCR.

Using purposive sampling, a select group of ordained pastors participated in semi-structured interviews, providing rich, narrative data that were analyzed thematically with the support of NVivo software. The study maintained rigor through the application of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria, while ethical procedures ensured participant welfare, confidentiality, and respect for cultural and theological sensitivities.

The delimitations of the study, focusing on the DCR, ordained pastors, and qualitative methods, ensured analytical depth and contextual precision. Collectively, the methodological choices described in this chapter offered a solid foundation for answering the study questions.

The next chapter presents the findings and analysis of the data, outlining the key themes that emerged from pastors' narratives on leadership development practices within the AFM of SA.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the findings derived from semi-structured interviews conducted with pastors in the AFM of SA within DCR.

For qualitative research to be reliable, saturation is essential (Buckley, 2022). According to Ahmed (2025), one of the key concepts of qualitative research is data saturation, which states that data gathering should stop when no new themes, insights, or patterns appear. In order to achieve scientific accuracy, this idea is essential since saturation increases the validity and comprehensiveness of study findings (Ahmed, 2025). Guided by the principles of qualitative research, which emphasises depth over breadth, the suggested sample size for this study was 10–15 people. The study engaged twelve (12) ordained pastors from different assemblies within the DCR, ensuring a representative sample of leadership perspectives. The twelfth interview marked saturation, which is the point at which no new themes or insights were revealed by more data. At this point, the answers were the same, and more interviews were not expected to yield any new information. As a result, the sample was judged adequate to answer the research questions of the study and facilitate a strong theme analysis.

Using information from twelve semi-structured interviews with pastors who serve in the DCR, the study aimed to understand the leadership development strategies used in the AFM of SA, DCR. In order to find common themes and interpretations in participant narratives, the data was analysed using Braun and Clarke thematic analysis after a systematic coding procedure, as recommended by Qaissi (2024); Chaturvedi and Bansal (2022). The results were grouped into major thematic categories that represent the formal architecture of leadership development (e.g., the Pastoral Continuous Development and Ministry Integrated Learning programs), the leadership models in use, the results that have been observed, and the areas that require improvement, such as contextual relevance and succession planning.

The themes were provided using direct quotes from participants, guaranteeing the authenticity of their viewpoints while adhering to the study's research aims and questions. The results were synthesised into three overarching super-themes, which are, Architecture, Practice, and Improvement. These themes offered an organised framework for interpreting the data. The chapter ends with a brief overview and useful implications, and it connects the findings back to the initial study objectives.

## 4.2 Overview Of Participants

Twelve pastors of the AFM of SA in the DCR participated in this study. Every participant was an ordained pastor currently functioning in the local church's organisational structure. A representative of leadership voices from various assemblies and sub-departments were represented by the participants, who were selected from a total of 58 pastors in the region. The participants' years of ministerial experience, leadership position, and age varied. They included senior leaders with over 25 years of experience as well as more junior pastors with less than five years of full-time ministry experience. This variance made it possible for the study to include both new and established viewpoints on succession planning, leadership development, and the real-world difficulties of ministry in the AFM. The AFM's DCR is a vibrant and varied ministry setting that includes both peri-urban and urban assemblies. The number of assemblies in the region expanded from 45 to 58 by 2022, indicating a significant growth in need for monitoring and leadership development mechanisms. The area is administratively separated into smaller groups and mentors, where senior pastors are assigned to each group to provide pastoral support and leadership development at the local level.

Participants in the study served in a range of church contexts, from large, multi-departmental congregations in urban areas to smaller, community-based assemblies. This variety of situations offered a broad perspective for analysing the application of leadership development techniques in various circumstances. Each participant was given a unique code (such as PSA 1 to PSK 11 and PSE 12) to preserve their privacy during the interview process. This code is utilised throughout the chapter to attribute quotes and insights.

Participant ID	Years in Ministry	Current Role	Church Context
PSA 1	5	Youth Pastor	Urban
PSB 2	15	Senior Pastor	Peri-Urban
PSC 3	10	Associate Pastor	Urban
PSD 4	7	Lead Pastor	Urban
PSE 5	25	Overseer	Urban
PSF 6	20	Senior Pastor	Urban
PSG 7	12	Mentor	Urban
PSH 8	8	Church Planter	Peri-Urban
PSI 9	6	Trainer	Urban
PSJ 10	30	Overseer	Urban

PSK 11	3	Associate Pastor	Urban
PSE 12	18	Counsellor	Urban

*Table 4.1 Participant Demographics*

### **4.3 Thematic Presentation of Findings**

Three main topics emerged from the study of semi-structured interviews with twelve pastors from the DCR of AFM of SA: Architecture, Practice, and Improvement. These themes reflect the region's leadership development process's framework and actual experiences. Each subject is backed up with sub-themes and direct quotes from participants, offering genuine insight into the development, application, and assessment of leadership in this setting.

#### **4.3.1 Architecture: Development Pathways and Governance**

The AFM's structured development architecture for training and assisting its pastoral leaders is the first key theme. This include structured programs like PCD and MIL, as well as succession planning techniques and mentorship frameworks.

##### **Structured Development Pathways (MIL/PCD)**

The structured nature of leadership development was frequently mentioned by participants. It is required of pastors to earn PCD points by participating in workshops and book reviews.

"We've got Ministry Integrated Learning (MIL)... each pastor... must accumulate 200 points in a four-year period... PCD... book reviews... 10 points each... after 4 years... a PCD certificate." (PSB 2).

##### **Delivery Modes and Mentorship**

These programs are offered via a variety of platforms, including internal mentorship, regional workshops, and national conferences.

"We have the PCD workshops... national conferences... and the MIL training program." (PSI 9). "We do have internal workshops... and mentorship where a senior pastor mentors the young pastor." (PSB 2).

##### **Accountability and Evaluation**

While PCD sheets and certifications are used to track accountability, some participants voiced concerns that compliance is being given more weight than value.

"PCD sheets... submitted each year... to track consistent attendance." (PSG7). "Pastors sometimes attend to comply, not because they get the most value." (PSI 9).

## **Succession and Transitions**

Although it is acknowledged as essential, succession planning varies from assembly to assembly. A number of pastors underlined how sensitive organisational and emotional changes are during leadership transitions. They also voiced concerns regarding the absence of transparent and structured succession planning mechanisms

“Identify your successor early... gives the opportunity to mould, mentor, guide.” (PSE 12). “It is a very tender one... council support for outgoing and incoming pastors.” (PSE 12)”.

### **4.3.2 Practice: Leadership Philosophy and Day-to-Day Application**

The way that leadership models are not only taught but also practiced in day-to-day ministry is encapsulated in the second theme. The most prevalent framework among the interviews was servant leadership, which is frequently combined with transformational, strategic, and shepherd leadership philosophies.

## **Servant Leadership as Foundational Philosophy**

A leadership stance based on relationship-building, service, and humility was discussed by several participants.

“AFM has a hybrid... servant leadership... leaders are viewed... as servants rather than superiority...” (PSJ 10). “Servant leadership... ‘to give you their hands, you have to touch their hearts.’” (PSE 5).

## **Application through Service and Relationship**

According to pastors, a relational, hands-on ministry approach is seen in their emphasis on developing a personal connection with members.

“You are there to serve rather than to be served... check the welfare of your congregants... spiritually, emotionally and otherwise.” (PSJ 10). “Applied... by building relationships... ‘instruction without relationship... breeds rebellion’... connect one-on-one... over coffee... a meal.” (PSE 5).

## **Outreach and Ministry Integration**

Daily ministry rhythms included community outreach, mentorship cycles, and structured retreats.

“Another model... pastor’s hands on duty... community services... cell groups... outreach.” (PSB 2). “Each year we have a year calendar... leadership empowerment sessions, couple’s retreats, leadership breakfasts... normally quarterly.” (PSG7).

### **4.3.3 Improvement: Outcomes, Evaluation and Emerging Needs**

The third theme reflects on the results of current leadership development strategies, as well as areas identified for enhancement, including evaluation, relevance, and support systems.

#### **Reported Outcomes**

Growth in assemblies, pastoral ordinations, and revitalised pastors were all reported as positive outcomes.

“Assemblies grew from 45 in 2022 to 58... more pastors becoming competent... ordained.” (PSG7). “Leadership trainings give the Pastor energy to move on... when you are trained, you train your leaders... helps positively in church growth.” (PSD 4).

#### **Evaluation Gaps and Feedback Needs**

While structured evaluation exists through point systems, participants voiced a desire for more qualitative and routine feedback mechanisms.

“I’m not sure what the feedback process is... maybe... a questionnaire every 6 months.” (PSE 12).

#### **Modern Pressures and Capacity Gaps**

The region has been urged to modify its development tactics to address modern issues including artificial intelligence, digital literacy, and mental health.

“Equip pastors with digital ministry skills, mental health training, and cultural competence.” (PSK 11). “Make our pastors aware of changes... even AI... our benchmark is God’s word, not man’s opinion.” (PSE 12).

#### **Isolation and Support Systems**

Some pastors raised concerns about emotional and operational isolation in ministry and highlighted the need for stronger pastoral support structures.

“Support systems... many a time, the pastor feels like they stand alone.” (PSE 12).

#### **Summary of Key Findings**

Across the interviews, a consistent picture emerged of a leadership development framework that is structured yet relational, formally governed yet contextually applied, and fruitful yet facing modernisation challenges. Participants consistently affirmed the value of MIL and PCD as frameworks, the importance of servant leadership in shaping pastoral identity, and the need for ongoing innovation in support, evaluation, and training content.

#### **4.4 Interpretation Within Themes**

This section interprets the themes presented in 4.3 by linking them to the research objectives, research questions, and relevant literature. Since this is a qualitative study, the goal is to highlight patterns, meanings, and implications, rather than statistical generalisation.

##### **4.4.1 Leadership Development Strategies in the AFM of SA – Durban Central Region**

The first research objective sought to understand the types of leadership development strategies used in the region. The findings confirm that the AFM in DCR utilises a structured dual-system of:

- **Ministry Integrated Learning (MIL)** – A formalised mentorship and training approach;
- **Pastoral Continuous Development (PCD)** – A points-based, evidence-driven system for ongoing learning.

These strategies are in line with literature suggesting that effective pastoral leadership development should include mentorship, theological formation, and ongoing reflective practice (Du Plessis and Nkambule, (2020); Tagwirei (2024)). The MIL programme especially reflects this, offering mentored exposure and structured development over time. Workshops, retreats, and peer mentorships further demonstrate that leadership formation in AFM is not solely academic, but experiential and relational, consistent with on the job training demonstrated by Rivombo (2024), which emphasises practical, problem-centred learning for adults. However, participants also highlighted uneven implementation across assemblies and a need for greater visibility and accessibility of these programmes, especially among newer or secluded pastors. This signals a gap between design and delivery, requiring more proactive communication and tracking mechanisms.

##### **4.4.2 Challenges in Leadership Transitions and Implementation**

In line with Research Objective 2, several pastors described leadership transitions as emotionally complex and often under-supported. This reflects concerns in existing church leadership literature, where succession planning is often seen as reactive, informal, or avoided altogether (Akoto, 2024).

Participants requested for:

- Earlier identification of successors,
- Structured mentorship for emerging leaders,
- Council support for both outgoing and incoming pastors.

These findings align with transformational leadership, which improves both spiritual and organizational outcomes by prioritising vision continuity and intentional empowerment (Mutua, Muhoho, and Vundi, 2023). They claim that this type of leadership promotes empowerment, trust, and goal alignment, all of which are necessary for managing complex congregational demands. Participants viewed successful transitions not just as administrative tasks, but as relational and spiritual responsibilities, requiring care, transparency, and long-term planning.

Additionally, digital literacy, mental health competency, and cultural sensitivity emerged as pressing needs, pointing to shifting expectations of pastoral leadership in a rapidly changing world. This reflects what Barbe (2024) emphasizes as the urgent need for contextually relevant training that includes digital literacy, emotional resilience, and community leadership.

#### 4.4.3 How Leadership Development Can Be Improved

In response to Research Objective 3, participants offered clear, context-driven suggestions for enhancing leadership development, such as:

- Tailoring workshops to address real-life issues like finances, unemployment, and mental health;
- Strengthening mentorship networks and accountability systems;
- Integrating modern challenges (e.g. artificial intelligence) within a theological framework;
- Ensuring support systems are in place to reduce pastoral isolation.

These insights echo literature calling for a holistic approach to pastor development, one that integrates personal formation, community support, and cultural intelligence (Day 2000).

Participants' desire for routine feedback and impact measurement, also suggests a shift from passive compliance (e.g., collecting points) to active reflection and applied learning, a hallmark of sustainable leadership growth.

#### 4.4.4 Linking Back to the Research Questions

The findings and interpretation show strong alignment with the study's three central research questions:

Research Question	Response from Findings
1. What are the different types of leadership development strategies used by the AFM of SA in Durban Central Region?	MIL and PCD form the backbone, supported by workshops, mentorship, and retreats.

2. What are the challenges of leadership transitions experienced by pastors?	Emotional and financial strain, lack of structured planning, inconsistent support, and context-specific variability.
3. How can leadership development be enhanced to serve the needs of future leaders and the church?	Suggestions included more relevant training, succession planning, stronger evaluation, and adapting to modern challenges like digital ministry and AI.

## Summary

The analysis of the data shows that although the church is making investments in organised leadership development, there is an increasing need for training that is holistic, contextually relevant, and transitional. One of its main advantages is the focus on servant leadership as a theological and practical basis; nonetheless, it needs to be complemented by frameworks that encourage sustainability and flexibility.

### 4.5 Interpretation of Findings in Line with Objectives

This section builds on the thematic findings presented above by offering a contextual interpretation of the results, linked lightly to research questions, study objectives, and relevant literature.

The findings of this study, derived from semi-structured interviews with 12 pastors in the AFM of SA, DCR, revealed a structured yet evolving leadership development landscape. This section interprets the key insights within the context of the region's pastoral realities, and connects them to the study's original objectives and relevant leadership literature.

#### 4.5.1 Understanding Leadership Development Strategies (Objective 1 / RQ1)

The leadership development strategies of the AFM in the DCR are primarily structured through two formal programmes: MIL and PCD. These form a clearly defined architecture supported by point-based systems, mentorship, and regional workshops. As highlighted in both the themes and participant voices, these strategies create a pathway from entry into ministry to continued leadership growth. This aligns with leadership development frameworks described in the literature. For instance, Day (2000), emphasise intentional developmental systems, where structured learning is reinforced by real-world application. The MIL and PCD models reflect this through their mentorship cycles and service-based outcomes. However, concerns about the perceived insufficiency or compliance-driven participation suggest a need to rethink not only the structure but the engagement strategies.

#### **4.5.2 Challenges of Leadership Transitions (Objective 2 / RQ2)**

Leadership transition emerged as both a sensitive and underdeveloped area in many assemblies. While some pastors advocated for early succession planning, others noted the absence of formalised handover processes or support mechanisms during leadership changeovers. This reflects findings in broader church leadership studies, where emotionally-laden transitions often disrupt continuity if not managed transparently (Akoto, 2024). The data revealed a growing awareness that communication, mentoring, and structured handovers are key to smooth transitions. Yet, the region currently lacks a standardised transition framework, with some pastors expressing uncertainty about council involvement, emotional support, or planning timelines. This confirms a key gap identified by Osei (2024), that many churches prioritize spiritual criteria above operational methods for leadership pipelines, leaving transitions exposed to misunderstanding and conflict.

#### **4.5.3 Enhancing Development for Future Church Needs (Objective 3 / RQ3)**

Participants voiced strong recommendations for improving leadership development, particularly in response to modern ministry pressures such as digitalisation, mental health demands, and cultural diversity. This desire reflects a shift in expectations for pastoral competencies, aligning with research that points to the need for adaptive, emotionally intelligent, and tech-literate church leaders (Grigore and Cobzeanu, 2025). Furthermore, the recurring emphasis on servant leadership, blended with strategic and transformational elements, reinforces the theological and relational foundation of the AFM's pastoral identity. This is supported in a study by Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020) on servant leadership which suggests a paradigm that combines character development, service, and leadership skills.

Finally, the requests for stronger support systems, more contextualised training, and better feedback loops highlight the need for a shift from compliance-focused models to capability-based development. This matches the thinking of Geerts (2024), who proposes the Optimizing System framework to address issues such as limited application of learnt skills and poor organizational alignment.

The results, when interpreted in the context of the AFM DCR, show a well-organised but unequally experienced system for developing leaders. Although MIL, PCD, and servant leadership still have solid foundations, transition, contextual relevance, and future-readiness issues point to areas that need strategic attention.

## 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented and interpreted the findings of a qualitative study that explored leadership development strategies among pastors in the AFM of SA within the DCR. Through thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with twelve pastors, three overarching themes emerged: Architecture, Practice, and Improvement.

The study revealed that the AFM in this region has a structured and intentional leadership development framework, primarily built on the MIL and PCD programmes. These are designed to provide ongoing pastoral training, mentorship, and skill development. While the formal structures were acknowledged as beneficial, participants highlighted inconsistencies in implementation, limited engagement among newer pastors, and a perception that compliance often outweighs true capacity-building.

Leadership practice in the region is deeply grounded in servant leadership, complemented by strategic and transformational elements. Pastors expressed that effective leadership was relational, humble, and rooted in service, a model that aligns well with the AFM's theological foundations. Daily applications included outreach, mentorship, and intentional relationship-building, which further reinforced the emphasis on pastoral presence and emotional intelligence. However, the study also identified key areas for improvement. Leadership transitions were found to be emotionally, financially and structurally challenging, often lacking clear frameworks or support systems. Additionally, participants called for the development of contextually relevant training that addresses modern ministry challenges, such as digital literacy, mental health awareness, and cultural sensitivity. The desire for stronger support systems, more relevant content, and routine evaluation mechanisms points to a growing need to evolve beyond point-based systems towards models that foster sustainability, capability, and long-term impact.

In summary, while the leadership development strategies in the AFM DCR are clearly defined and supported by a strong theological foundation, the findings highlight a disconnect between policy and practice, as well as a need to adapt to the emerging realities of ministry in a changing world. This chapter has provided the factual and interpretive basis upon which the final chapter will build, offering a synthesis of findings, practical recommendations, and implications for leadership development in similar church contexts.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a critical discussion of the findings of the study on leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA in the DCR. The discussion integrates the empirical results presented in Chapter Four with relevant theoretical and empirical literature, thereby situating the findings within broader scholarly discourse. The analysis is structured around the three primary research objectives: (1) To understand the different types of leadership development strategies used by the AFM of SA in the DCR; (2) To examine the challenges of leadership transitions experienced by leaders of the AFM of SA in the DCR; and (3) To recommend how leadership development can be enhanced to serve the needs of future leaders and the church.

The discussion is organised around three overarching super-themes that emerged from the findings, namely, Architecture, Practice, and Improvement, which collectively illustrate the structural, behavioural, and developmental dynamics of leadership within the AFM. The analysis draws on key theoretical frameworks including Conger and Kanungo's (1998) skill–value–vision model, Day's (2001) holistic leadership development approach, and Kirkpatrick's (1994) evaluation model, to interpret how leadership development is conceptualised, implemented, and experienced within the AFM of SA.

### **5.2 Super-Theme 1: Architecture – Development Pathways and Governance**

The study revealed that leadership development within the AFM of SA in the DCR is predominantly structured around two formal programmes: Ministry Integrated Learning (MIL) and Pastoral Continuous Development (PCD). These programs, supported by credit-based systems, mentorship, regional workshops, and national conferences, provide clear and organised pathways for ministerial growth. Ministry Integrated Learning primarily focuses on competency building through a credit accumulation system, while PCD ensures ongoing pastoral learning, with pastors required to accumulate points over a specified period to obtain certification. This structured approach aligns with established leadership development theories, including Conger and Kanungo's (1998) emphasis on formal training as foundational, as well as Day's (2000) concept of deliberate leadership development systems integrating practice, education, and reflective learning.

Despite this formal framework, findings indicate a gap between program design and implementation realities. Several participants reported limited awareness or engagement,

particularly at the regional level, with some describing involvement as driven more by compliance than intrinsic motivation. This suggests challenges in communication, accessibility, and the operationalisation of leadership strategies within a decentralised religious organisation, consistent with observations by Olabode and Joseph (2024).

Succession planning emerged as a critical governance concern. Although participants acknowledged the importance of early identification and mentoring of successors to facilitate smooth leadership transitions, the process often remains informal and inconsistently applied. Some participants noted the value of early successor identification as an opportunity for mentoring and guidance, echoing literature that stresses the necessity of structured succession frameworks for sustainable leadership development (Jenkins, 2022). In the absence of such frameworks, leadership transitions can become emotionally challenging, financially strained, and organisationally subject to instability. This concern was strongly expressed in the reflections of participants. This is consistent with Barton's 5Cs Model (2019), which highlights Clarity, Consecration, Competence, Community, and Continuity as critical criteria for successful pastoral transitions. According to Barton, when these components are not consciously integrated into a succession framework, churches are more likely to encounter conflict, uncertainty, and instability during leadership transitions. The outcomes of this study highlight the significance of implementing organised, theologically informed succession processes to ensure organisational continuity and congregational well-being in the AFM's DCR.

Furthermore, participants described a hybrid leadership model combining servant leadership with transformational, strategic, and shepherd leadership paradigms. This combination reflects both the doctrinal diversity and practical needs within the AFM, aligning with Schroeder (2024) assertion that effective church leadership requires integrating spiritual authority with emotional intelligence, vision, and strategic thinking. The emphasis on servant leadership resonates with findings from Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020), which highlight the importance of relational depth, humility, and service in Pentecostal leadership contexts. Consequently, the AFM's leadership philosophy is coherent with both contemporary leadership theory and biblical principles, reinforcing the integrated nature of leadership practice within the church.

### **5.2.1 Inclusivity and Gender Equity**

The study revealed a clear underrepresentation of women in leadership roles despite their sustained involvement in ministry. This pattern highlights the need for leadership development policies that are intentionally inclusive and responsive to gender dynamics. From a theological

perspective, Banda (2021) notes that many African Pentecostal traditions continue to rely on patriarchal interpretations of scripture that emphasise male headship while overlooking broader biblical themes of shared calling and spiritual gifting. These inherited assumptions restrict women's leadership participation and can be reproduced in leadership development processes if they are not critically examined.

A complementary sociological view is offered by Jenkins (2022), who shows that African churches often mirror broader societal norms in which women contribute substantial pastoral and community labour yet remain excluded from formal leadership pathways. This structural imbalance limits their access to decision making roles and reinforces existing gender hierarchies. Jenkins argues that intentional interventions, such as equitable training opportunities and mentorship, are necessary to disrupt these patterns.

Together, these perspectives demonstrate that women's underrepresentation is rooted in intertwined theological, cultural, and organisational factors rather than individual shortcomings. Addressing this challenge within the AFM requires leadership development frameworks that affirm women's spiritual gifts, expand their access to training and mentoring, and remove structural barriers to leadership participation. Such efforts would enhance organisational inclusivity and align leadership practice with biblical principles of justice, dignity, and shared ministry.

### **5.3 Super-Theme 2: Practice – Leadership Philosophy, Daily Application, and Leadership Transitions**

The study found that servant leadership serves as the dominant leadership philosophy within the AFM, frequently integrated with strategic, transformational, and shepherding approaches. This hybrid model is formally endorsed in AFM policy and clearly reflected in pastoral practices, where leaders are perceived primarily as servants rather than figures of superiority. Pastoral care, relational outreach, and practical service are central to this philosophy, with leaders actively attending to the spiritual, emotional, and overall welfare of their congregants. These practices align with Day's (2001) claim that effective leadership in faith-based contexts necessitates the integration of human and social capital, combining relational intelligence with theological conviction.

Despite these strengths, the study identified a need for more systematised developmental rhythms, such as mentorship cycles, annual planning calendars, and retreat opportunities, to sustain leadership continuity and mitigate burnout. Additionally, hands-on ministry and

community outreach emerged as vital expressions of leadership philosophy, highlighting a strong alignment between theological ideals and daily practice, as Lee-Phenix (2024) advocates for such balancing. However, the variability in implementation across different assemblies suggests an absence of standardised models, potentially undermining broader consistency in leadership practice.

Leadership transitions, though, remain a vulnerable and underdeveloped area within the AFM of SA. Participants repeatedly described succession as a delicate subject, often lacking formal processes despite recognition of the benefits of early planning, mentoring, and transparent communication. One participant noted the insufficiency of council support for outgoing and incoming pastors, underscoring the emotional sensitivity and structural weaknesses associated with leadership handovers. This finding echoes Akoto's (2024) observations that leadership succession in African Pentecostal congregations frequently suffers from emotional tension and inadequate governance structures, which can lead to conflicts, leadership vacuums, or financial mismanagement.

Furthermore, the informality of succession practices, driven by contextual discernment and local flexibility, was frequently emphasized. While this adaptive approach allows for responsiveness to unique congregational contexts, it raises concerns regarding the preservation of institutional memory and procedural consistency. This supports Osei's (2024) caution that excessive reliance on unofficial or spiritually intuitive succession methods may compromise the effectiveness and stability of church governance.

#### **5.4 Super-Theme 3: Improvement – Evaluation, Outcomes, and Modernisation**

The study identified evidence of positive outcomes from leadership development initiatives within the AFM of SA, including growth in assemblies and increased numbers of competent, ordained pastors. One participant noted, "Assemblies grew from 45 (2022) to 58... more pastors becoming competent... ordained" (PSG7). However, despite these achievements, a significant gap remains in structured evaluation processes. Participants expressed a desire for more frequent and systematic feedback mechanisms, such as biannual questionnaires, to enable performance reflection and continuous improvement. This suggests that while the initial levels of Kirkpatrick's evaluation model, which are reaction and learning, may be informally addressed, the subsequent levels of application and results are not consistently measured, thereby limiting strategic refinement of leadership programmes.

Concerns were also raised regarding compliance-driven participation, with some pastors attending training primarily to meet requirements rather than for intrinsic developmental value. This reflects broader critiques in the literature about compliance-based models risking the loss of transformational intent (Kesumawati and Gultom, 2025). To maintain relevance, leadership development must balance structured programming with adaptability, especially considering digital advancements and generational changes. Participants further emphasized the need to enhance support systems for pastors, particularly those who experience isolation or overwhelm in their ministry roles. As one participant remarked, “Support systems... many a time, the pastor feels like they stand alone” (PSE 12). This aligns with pastoral leadership literature highlighting the emotional and psychological demands of ministry (Marambi, 2022), particularly in complex urban contexts like Durban Central.

Furthermore, the need for contextual relevance and programmatic flexibility was a recurrent theme. Pastors highlighted that current development initiatives insufficiently address contemporary challenges such as digitisation, mental health, and multicultural ministry settings. One participant advocated for equipping pastors with “digital ministry skills, mental health training, and cultural competence” (PSK 11), echoing calls in recent literature for church leaders to be adaptive and technologically literate (Grigore and Cobzeanu, 2025). This underscores the necessity for the AFM to transition from a primarily compliance-focused paradigm to one centred on capability development, as advocated by Geerts (2024).

Finally, the absence of formalised feedback and evaluation mechanisms contradicts best practices in adult learning and leadership development, which emphasize continuous assessment and reflective application (Tagwirei, 2024). Incorporating practice-oriented indicators, such as impact narratives and evidence of local application, alongside regular review cycles would significantly enhance the legitimacy, responsiveness, and effectiveness of leadership development programmes within the region.

## **5.5 Integrating Theology and Practice**

The findings of this study confirm that the leadership development strategy of the AFM of SA in the DCR is anchored by clear frameworks, notably the MIL and PCD programs, and is guided by a servant-oriented leadership ethos. However, operational consistency, particularly in succession planning and evaluation mechanisms, remains insufficient and requires further strengthening. While theoretical models observed as part of this study, such as Conger and Kanungo’s (1998) skill-value-vision triad and Kirkpatrick’s (1994) evaluation levels, are highly relevant, their practical application within the AFM’s leadership system appears limited.

Contextually responsive leadership development emerges as essential in faith based environments where administrative, relational, and spiritual responsibilities are closely intertwined.

The findings of this study reveal a substantial gap in administrative and strategic competencies among pastors, which underscores the need for leadership development that intentionally integrates spiritual formation with managerial capability. This observation aligns with the work of Carvajal, Sanchez and Amihan (2023), who emphasise that faith based leaders require structured administrative training in order to manage organisational systems effectively and sustain long term ministry outcomes. Their research demonstrates that when pastors lack administrative proficiency, churches face operational inefficiencies, weakened governance structures, and limited capacity to respond to evolving organisational demands. Integrating administrative training into pastoral development is therefore not merely beneficial but necessary for cultivating effective and resilient church leadership. In addition to administrative competence, contemporary challenges such as digital fluency, mental health awareness, and cross cultural sensitivity also need to be embedded in leadership development pathways to ensure that future leaders are adequately equipped for an increasingly complex ministry landscape.

A strong theological foundation underpins the AFM's leadership approach, particularly its emphasis on servant leadership. However, a tension persists between these theological ideals and practical realities, as evidenced by deficits in succession planning, feedback processes, and contextually relevant training. Rivombo (2024) argues that theological education must be flexible and dynamic to remain effective in rapidly changing ministry environments. With intentional mentoring, context-sensitive programming, and systematic evaluation, the AFM's leadership development system holds significant potential for enhancement, enabling it to better integrate theology and practice within a coherent, adaptive model.

<b>Framework / Theory</b>	<b>Key Elements</b>	<b>Observed in Practice</b>
<b>Conger and Kanungo (1998)</b>	Skill-Value-Vision Model	Yes - MIL and PCD reflect skill and vision aspects
<b>Day (2001)</b>	Human and Social Capital	Yes - Mentorship and networking align

<b>Kirkpatrick Model (1994)</b>	4 Evaluation Levels	Partial - Only reaction and learning used
<b>Servant Leadership</b>	Relational, Humble, Service	Strongly observed in all leadership behaviours
<b>Transformational Leadership</b>	Empowerment, Vision, Innovation	Moderately seen in strategic and vision elements

*Table 5.2 Theory vs Practice Comparison*

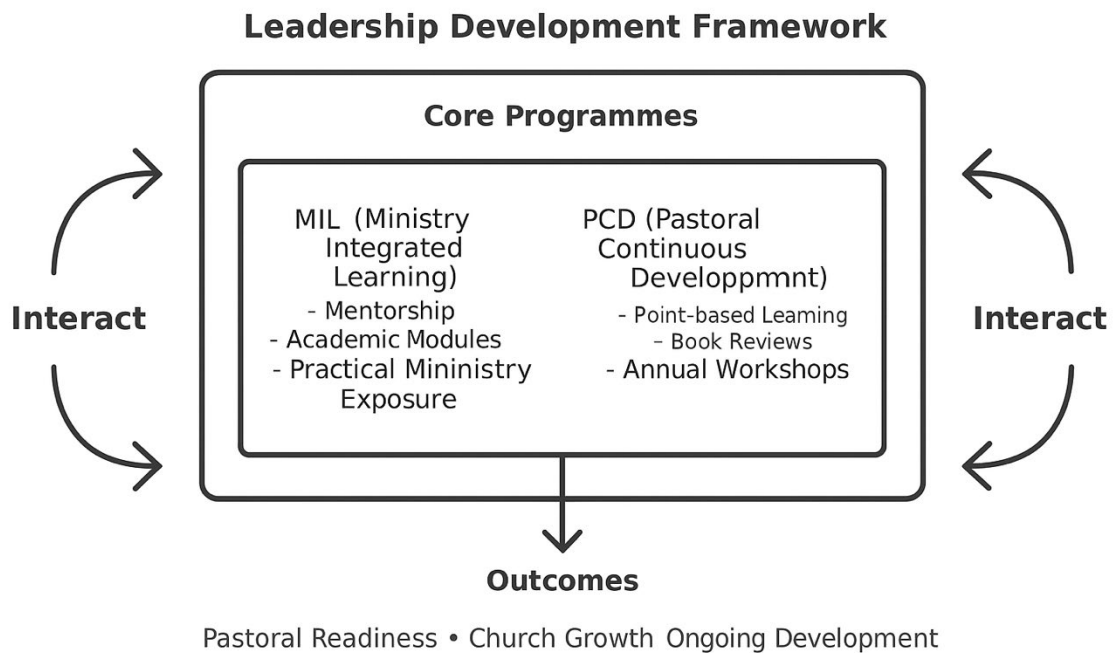
## 5.6 Summary of Discussion

The analysis reveals a dual reality within the AFM in the DCR, while the church has developed a systematic and theologically based framework for leadership formation, its actual implementation is hindered by a number of structural and contextual constraints. The current architecture, embodied in formal mechanisms such as the MIL and PCD programs, reflects a cohesive theological vision for developing effective and spiritually grounded leaders. However, the study identifies persistent implementation flaws that impair the framework's effectiveness. These include unreliable mentorship procedures, weak assessment processes, and poorly executed leadership transitions.

Addressing these problems necessitates a paradigm shift from a compliance-driven technique to one focused on actual capability development. This includes contextualising training content to the lived circumstances of congregations in the DCR, as well as developing succession planning and feedback procedures to assure continuity, accountability, and relevance. In essence, while the AFM in the DCR has a well-defined leadership development strategy, its long-term viability and transformative influence are dependent on bridging the gap between theological aim and practical execution.

The study also demonstrates that while servant leadership remains a foundational philosophy, its translation into practice requires more systematic and measurable approaches. The findings underscore a need for contextual modernisation, incorporating digital competence, mental health literacy, and intercultural understanding into leadership development. The transition from compliance-based to capability-based systems, anchored by reflective evaluation and continuous mentorship, will be crucial for ensuring the sustainability and relevance of pastoral leadership within the AFM.

In conclusion, the AFM’s leadership development model represents a strong intersection of theology and organisational practice, yet demands structural refinement to meet the evolving needs of the 21st-century church.



**Figure 5.2: Leadership Development Framework**

The next chapter presents specific recommendations and implications derived from these findings for policy, practice, and future research.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter concludes the study by providing a comprehensive summary of the key findings, outlining the study's limitations and delimitations, and presenting the conclusions derived from the data. It offers both practical and strategic recommendations, and reflects critically on the study's overall contribution to academic literature and church leadership practice. Furthermore, it identifies potential areas for future research. Grounded in the aim of exploring leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA in the DCR, the chapter reviews how the study responded to its primary objectives and research questions.

The study has revealed that while the AFM of SA has invested in formal leadership development programmes, which are, MIL and PCD, challenges persist in areas such as implementation consistency, succession planning, gender inclusivity, evaluation mechanisms, and contextual responsiveness. These challenges are particularly pronounced within the DCR, a culturally diverse and socio-economically dynamic context that demands adaptive and holistic leadership models.

### **6.2 An Overview of the Main Findings**

This research sought to explore leadership development strategies within the AFM of SA in DCR. The investigation was guided by three key research objectives and framed through three overarching super-themes: Architecture (development pathways and governance), Practice (leadership philosophy and implementation), and Improvement (evaluation, outcomes, and modernisation). The conclusions drawn from this research provide insightful perspective of both the strengths and limitations of leadership development within this region.

#### **Objective 1: Types of Leadership Development Strategies Used**

The study found that the AFM of SA in DCR has established formal leadership development programmes such as MIL and PCD. These initiatives are complemented by mentoring relationships, regional workshops, and national or regional conferences. Collectively, they aim to equip pastors with theological knowledge, leadership skills, and practical ministry experience.

However, participation in these programmes was often compliance-driven with institutional requirements rather than by intrinsic motivation for growth. Access to development resources was inconsistent, and communication around programme objectives was not always clear.

Furthermore, issues of accessibility, communication, and engagement surfaced, revealing gaps between policy design and actual practice. The church's leadership model was found to be hybrid in nature, integrating servant, strategic, transformational, and shepherding elements. This blend aligns with both biblical values and contemporary leadership demands, suggesting a theologically sound yet practically complex leadership framework.

These findings confirm Day's (2001) assertion that sustainable leadership development depends not only on structured learning systems but also on intrinsic motivation and reflective practice. The AFM's current approach, while systematic, thus reflects a partial rather than holistic application of developmental principles.

### **Objective 2: Challenges of Leadership Transitions**

Leadership transition was identified as a critical area of vulnerability in the AFM's current leadership development framework. Although participants recognised the importance of succession planning, mentoring, and early identification of future leaders, the process remains largely informal, emotionally and financial sensitive, and dependent on individual discretion rather than institutional policy. The absence of structured, transparent, and regionally consistent succession planning introduces risks to governance stability and pastoral continuity. The emotionally sensitive nature of leadership handovers, coupled with a lack of clear structures and support mechanisms, often results in instability, miscommunication, and, in some cases, division within congregations. These challenges are compounded by limited institutional memory, inadequate preparation for leadership transitions, and the potential for conflict when expectations are not clearly managed. These findings point to an urgent need for the development of structured, transparent, and context-sensitive succession frameworks that can foster continuity, unity, and institutional resilience. This suggests that leadership succession within the AFM is shaped more by relational and spiritual discernment than by institutional design, echoing Akoto's (2024) observation that African Pentecostal governance often privileges charisma and calling over procedural continuity.

### **Objective 3: Enhancing Leadership Development for Future Needs**

The study also found that while positive outcomes are evident, such as increased numbers of ordained pastors and growing assemblies, systematic evaluation mechanisms were lacking, and significant opportunities remain to modernise and improve the AFM's leadership development strategies. Participants called for stronger support systems, more contextualised training content, and the inclusion of digital, emotional, mental health awareness, and multicultural engagement. Evaluation mechanisms were found to be minimal or absent, with

limited feedback loops for assessing the effectiveness of leadership training programmes. Without regular assessment, the church risks stagnation and misalignment with the evolving needs of both its leaders and congregants. To ensure long-term sustainability, a shift is required from compliance-focused models to capability-driven leadership development, incorporating mentorship processes, accountability structures, updating programme content to reflect real-world ministry demands, implementing strategic monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure continuous learning and growth.

Overall, the findings portray a leadership development system that is theologically grounded and structurally defined, yet hindered by uneven implementation and limited adaptability. While the AFM's servant-leadership ethos aligns with its doctrinal identity, the practical realisation of this vision requires stronger institutional systems, evaluative rigour, and responsiveness to contemporary ministry challenges.

### **6.3 Limitations And Constraints of the Study**

Although this study offers significant insight into the leadership development strategies utilised by the AFM of SA in DCR, several limitations and constraints must be acknowledged. Firstly, the study was geographically confined to the DCR, and while this region reflects a diverse and dynamic urban church environment, its unique context may limit the transferability of findings to other regions of the AFM, particularly those operating in rural or socio-culturally different settings.

Another key limitation lies in the size and selection of the sample. The study employed purposive sampling, interviewing twelve (12) pastors from a regional population of 58. While this approach facilitated the collection of rich, experience-based data, it may not capture the full spectrum of perspectives across the broader population. Moreover, the voluntary nature of participation may have resulted in a bias toward those more engaged or reflective about leadership development, leaving out voices that are less active or critical of current practices.

A further limitation concerns gender representation. Female pastors were few in number within the DCR and were largely unavailable during the data collection period. For those who were available, unstable internet connectivity presented challenges that prevented successful interviews. This significantly limited the inclusion of gendered perspectives in the findings and reduced the study's ability to analyse how leadership development strategies affect male and female pastors differently.

Finally, the study was constrained by time and resource limitations. The researcher had to work within a fixed academic timeframe, which restricted the breadth of participant engagement and the inclusion of other important voices such as theological educators, more regional leaders, or assembly governing bodies. As a result, this study relied solely on self-reported data obtained through semi-structured interviews, without triangulation from documentary sources, institutional performance records, or congregational feedback. While this method aligns with the qualitative, interpretive nature of the research, it introduces potential bias and limits objective validation of the leadership development outcomes discussed. Although these limitations were managed through rigorous data analysis and reflexive interpretation, they nonetheless constrain the generalisability of findings and call for broader, multi-perspective exploration in future research.

#### **6.4 Delimitations of the Study**

The study focused solely on ordained pastors within the AFM in DCR and did not include non-ordained pastors with their spouses, governing bodies, youth leaders who may have distinct developmental needs. These delimitations were necessary to ensure analytical depth and to focus on individuals directly accountable for leadership development implementation. By adopting a qualitative case study design, the research privileged experiential depth over statistical breadth, consistent with Grenier's (2023) framework for contextual inquiry. The study emphasised leadership development strategies rather than doctrinal issues or theological debates, narrowing its thematic focus to organisational and developmental concerns.

#### **6.5 Conclusion**

The findings reaffirm Conger and Kanungo's (1998) view that sustainable leadership emerges from the interplay between structural design and motivational alignment, underscoring the need for both formal systems and intrinsic engagement.

This study concludes that while the AFM of SA in the DCR has a structured leadership development framework in place, primarily implemented through the MIL and PCD programmes, their implementation remains inconsistent at the regional level, with issues related to access, engagement, and evaluation emerging as significant concerns. A dominant theme in the findings was the church's deep commitment to servant leadership, often integrated with strategic, transformational, and shepherding approaches. This theological foundation aligns with both biblical values and contemporary leadership models. However, leadership transitions emerged as a critical vulnerability within the AFM's system, characterised by informality, lack of succession planning, and insufficient institutional support.

These gaps present risks to organisational continuity, emotional well-being, and effective governance.

The study also surfaced critical areas for improvement, including the need for stronger evaluation mechanisms, greater contextual relevance, and increased pastoral support. Participants expressed the importance of integrating digital skills, mental health awareness, and cultural competence into leadership development strategies, highlighting the growing complexity of pastoral ministry in a post-pandemic, multicultural, and digitally connected society. While the study was grounded in theological and pragmatic perspectives, it faced limitations, including a lack of female participation and connectivity challenges during interviews. These constraints, however, do not diminish the study's contribution; rather, they point to opportunities for further inquiry and broader representation in future research.

Ultimately, this study confirms that the AFM of SA in the DCR is grounded in a theologically sound and structurally defined leadership development ethos. Yet, to remain responsive to contemporary challenges and future leadership needs, the church must move beyond compliance-based models toward more transformative, contextually adaptive, and inclusive development strategies. Strengthening feedback systems, formalising succession processes, and expanding support for pastoral well-being will be essential steps in ensuring the long-term vitality and missional effectiveness of the AFM's leadership. In essence, while the AFM of SA in DCR demonstrates commendable commitment to structured, theologically grounded leadership development, the sustainability of this framework depends on its capacity to evolve, shifting from compliance-based to transformation-oriented practice, supported by continuous evaluation, inclusive engagement, and contextual adaptation.

## **6.6 Recommendations**

Drawing upon the findings of this study and guided by its research, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance both the structural and relational dimensions of pastoral leadership formation within the AFM of SA in the DCR..

### **6.6.1. Strengthen Implementation of MIL and PCD at Regional Level**

- Improve accessibility and communication regarding MIL and PCD objectives.
- Shift focus from compliance to developmental impact through better facilitation and participant engagement.
- Encourage the integration of these programmes with practical ministry contexts.

- It is further recommended that the AFM establish a regional leadership development committee to oversee implementation, evaluation, and coordination of these initiatives.

#### 6.6.2. Formalise and Institutionalise Succession Planning

- Develop a structured succession framework applicable across all assemblies, guided by policy but adaptable to context.
- Identify and mentor potential leaders early, supported by clear criteria and pastoral oversight.
- Facilitate smooth transitions through orientation, emotional support, and council-led transitional processes.

#### 6.6.3. Establish Structured Mentorship and Peer Support Networks

- Design mentorship programmes that pair experienced leaders with emerging pastors for relational and skill-based development.
- Promote regular peer-learning sessions and reflective retreats to foster shared learning and well-being.
- Address the emotional and psychological needs of pastors, particularly in isolated or demanding ministry contexts.

#### 6.6.4. Modernise Programme Content to Reflect Contemporary Challenges

- Incorporate digital ministry skills, mental health awareness, and cross-cultural leadership into training modules.
- Use hybrid delivery methods (in-person and digital) to increase access and relevance, especially for rural or bi-vocational pastors.
- Ensure theological education remains grounded but responsive to real-world societal dynamics.

#### 6.6.5. Develop Clear Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks

- Apply models like Kirkpatrick's four-level framework to evaluate learning, behaviour change, and impact in ministry settings.
- Introduce feedback mechanisms such as biannual assessments, impact narratives, and performance reviews.
- Use evaluation data to update and refine leadership programmes systematically.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>Implementation</b>	Improve access to MIL and PCD; increase engagement focus
<b>Succession</b>	Develop formal, context-sensitive succession planning
<b>Mentorship</b>	Establish structured peer mentorship networks
<b>Modernisation</b>	Integrate digital literacy, mental health, cultural training
<b>Evaluation</b>	Introduce regular evaluation using Kirkpatrick model

*Table 6.1 Recommendations Summary*

## **6.7 Contribution Of The Study**

The study contributes to the growing body of scholarship on faith-based leadership development by bridging theoretical leadership frameworks with the lived realities of pastoral ministry in a Pentecostal African context. It bridges gaps between theoretical leadership models and practical ministry realities, offering an integrated framework applicable in other denominational or regional church settings. The contributions are outlined below:

### **6.7.1 Theoretical Contribution**

The study deepens understanding of leadership development within African Pentecostal contexts by applying and adapting established leadership development theories, such as Conger and Kanungo's (1998) skill-value-vision framework, Day's (2001) human and social capital theory, and Kirkpatrick's (1994) four-level evaluation model, to a faith-based, post-apartheid South African setting. It demonstrates that leadership development in the church cannot be limited to skill acquisition but must integrate spiritual formation, emotional intelligence, and contextual adaptability. This multidimensional approach expands existing theory by highlighting the role of servant leadership as a theological and practical foundation in pastoral leadership formation.

### **6.7.2 Practical Contribution**

Practically, the study provides a structured evaluation of the leadership development strategies currently used by the AFM of SA in the DCR. It identifies tangible gaps, particularly in succession planning, standardised implementation, feedback mechanisms, and contextual relevance, and offers evidence-based recommendations to address these.

The research highlights the lived experiences of pastors, bringing to light challenges such as emotional exhaustion, poor connectivity in training delivery, and lack of gender inclusivity. These findings can inform the design and implementation of more relevant, responsive leadership development programmes in Pentecostal churches across South Africa and beyond.

### **6.7.3 Contribution to Church Governance and Policy**

This study contributes to church governance by exposing limitations in the AFM's current leadership transition processes and training delivery models. The findings can inform policy reform at both regional and national levels, particularly in the areas of:

- Structured succession planning
- Leadership programme evaluation and accountability
- Gender representation and inclusion in leadership
- Integration of digital tools in leadership training

These insights can guide the National Leadership Forum (NLF) and theological training institutions in shaping future leadership frameworks that are both theologically grounded and practically effective.

### **6.7.4 Contextual and Cultural Contribution**

By focusing on a culturally diverse and socio-economically complex region like DCR, the study offers a valuable contextual lens into the unique challenges faced by pastoral leaders in urban, multicultural congregations. It demonstrates the importance of localised, flexible leadership development strategies that consider digital literacy, mental health awareness, and cultural intelligence as core leadership competencies in a post-COVID, post-apartheid South African context.

### **6.8 Areas For Further Research**

This study has highlighted several key insights into leadership development within the AFM of SA; however, it also opens up multiple avenues for further scholarly exploration. First, future research could expand the geographical scope beyond the DCR to include other AFM regions across South Africa. Comparative studies could help identify regional disparities, contextual influences, and best practices that may inform the development of a more cohesive, national leadership strategy for the denomination.

Secondly, the study revealed a notable underrepresentation of female voices due to their limited number in leadership and logistical challenges during data collection. Future research

could focus specifically on the experiences, challenges, and development needs of female pastors within the AFM and other Pentecostal denominations. Such gender-focused studies would provide valuable insights into inclusivity and equitable leadership formation in church contexts.

Thirdly, while this study focused on the perspectives of ordained pastors, additional research could explore the views of other stakeholders involved in leadership development, including church councils, theological educators, emerging leaders, and congregants. This would offer a more holistic understanding of leadership development processes and outcomes from multiple vantage points within the church ecosystem.

Furthermore, there is scope for longitudinal research that tracks the long-term impact of the MIL and PCD programmes on leadership effectiveness, church growth, and community engagement. Such studies could evaluate the sustained outcomes of current strategies and provide data to support strategic refinement.

In light of emerging challenges such as digital ministry, mental health, and multicultural engagement, further investigation is also needed into how contemporary competencies are being integrated into pastoral development. Future studies could examine the readiness of church leaders to adapt to these evolving demands and assess the effectiveness of new or proposed interventions aimed at future-proofing church leadership.

Lastly, given the informal and varied nature of succession planning observed in this study, focused research on models of pastoral succession, particularly those that are biblically grounded, culturally appropriate, and administratively sound, would be a valuable contribution to leadership scholarship in African Pentecostal contexts.

In conclusion, future research should prioritise longitudinal, comparative, and inclusive approaches that capture the evolving realities of pastoral leadership in a post-pandemic, multicultural, and digitally mediated South African church environment.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Informed Consent Letter

#### UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 04 September 2025

Dear Pastor

My name is Nondumiso Nxumalo from the UKZN Graduate School of Business and Leadership. My contact details are as follows: [REDACTED] and [218059141@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:218059141@stu.ukzn.ac.za)

UKZN Graduate School of Business and Leadership supervisor is:

Prof. Simon Taylor – [TaylorS@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:TaylorS@ukzn.ac.za)

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves the Exploring Leadership Development Strategies in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in Durban Central Region, KwaZulu Natal. The aim and purpose of this research is to understand the leadership development strategies used in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in Durban Central Region, KwaZulu Natal. The study is expected to enrol pastors of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa leading the assemblies in Durban Central Region. Interviews will continue until data saturation is reached. It will involve a semi-structured interview and a member check at the end of the process, where the transcript of the interview will be shared with you for your approval. The duration of your participation is expected to be for a period of one year.

I do not foresee the study having any risks or discomforts. I hope that the study will contribute to leadership development strategies which is currently a challenge, and that it will also benefit the pastors in their development.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSSREC/00009260/2025).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at [REDACTED] and [218059141@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:218059141@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or [REDACTED] or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION  
Research Office, Westville Campus  
Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X 54001  
Durban  
4000  
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609  
Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Participation in the current research is voluntary and participants may withdraw participation at any stage. Should you wish to withdraw, you will not incur penalties or loss of treatment or other benefits to which they are normally entitled to you as a pastor. You will be required to communicate your withdrawal either telephonically or through email. All data collected from the you will remain part of the study so as not to delay or negatively impact the study.

Your anonymity as the participant will be ensured at all times. All personal information, as well as data collected, will be saved on a password-protected computer to protect confidentiality. In addition, anonymization will be utilized, and pseudonyms will be applied to research participants. Signed consent forms will be stored in a locked cabinet. Data storage will happen for a reasonable time of five years and then be destroyed.

## Appendix 2: Consent to Participate in Research

I (**NAME AND SURNAME**)..... have been informed about the study entitled: Exploring Leadership development strategies in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in Durban Central Region, KwaZulu Natal.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at [REDACTED] and [218059141@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:218059141@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or [REDACTED]

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers, then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION  
Research Office, Westville Campus  
Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X 54001  
Durban  
4000  
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609  
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview YES / NO

X.....  
Signature of Participant

X.....  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness  
(Where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Translator  
(Where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Appendix 3: Interview Schedule**

### Consolidated Interview Schedule

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#### Objective 1: Leadership Development Strategies

1. What leadership development programs or initiatives currently exist for pastors in the Durban Central Region, and which have proven most effective?
2. Which leadership models (e.g., transformational, servant leadership) are emphasized in pastor development, and how are they applied in practice?
3. What formal and informal methods (e.g., mentorship, workshops, retreats) are used in leadership development, and how are they integrated?
4. How have these strategies impacted church growth, pastoral performance, or ministry effectiveness? Please share examples.
5. How are leadership development initiatives evaluated for success, and what improvements or future plans are being considered?

#### Objective 2: Leadership Transition Challenges

6. What challenges commonly arise during leadership transitions in the AFM of SA, especially for outgoing and incoming pastors?
7. Are there formal succession guidelines or support mechanisms to facilitate smooth transitions? How effective are they?
8. What is the impact of leadership transitions on church continuity — in terms of ministries, finances, and strategic direction?
9. Can you share a personal experience of a leadership transition, and what lessons were learned from it?
10. What strategies or recommendations would you suggest to improve leadership transitions in the future?

#### Objective 3: Enhancing Leadership for the Future

11. To what extent are current leadership development programs addressing the changing needs of the modern church context?
12. What key gaps have you identified in these programs that must be addressed to improve their relevance and effectiveness?
13. How can feedback from past leadership experiences be integrated into future training and development initiatives?
14. What role should mentorship and succession planning play in preparing future leaders?
15. What are your top recommendations for strengthening pastoral leadership development in the Durban Central Region?

## Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance



03 September 2025

**Nondumiso Faith Nxumalo (218059141)**  
**Grad School of Bus & Leadership (Prior Restructuring)**  
**Westville Campus**

Dear NF Nxumalo,

**Protocol reference number:** HSSREC/00009260/2025

**Project title:** Exploring Leadership development strategies in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in Durban Central Region, KwaZulu-Natal

**Degree:** Masters

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 02 September 2025 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

**Incidents of adverse events and serious adverse events (AEs and SAEs) should be reported in writing to HSSREC, the study sponsors, and any regulatory authority (where appropriate), within 7 working days of the occurrence for local sites and 14 days for all other South African sites.**

This approval is valid until 03 September 2026.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

**Doctor Shamila Naidoo (Interim Chair)**

/nng

#### Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

**INSPIRING GREATNESS**

## Appendix 5: Gatekeeper's Letter



To whom it may concern

**RE: Permission letter to conduct study**

Mrs. Nondumiso Nxumalo, student number 218 059141 is a registered Masters in Commerce Leadership Studies student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal-Westville campus. We The Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, Regional Office acknowledges and understand that her research project will contribute towards her master's thesis project titled: 'Exploring Leadership development strategies in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in Durban Central Region, KwaZulu Natal'.

The AFM of SA, Durban Central Regional Office is aware that the study will take place during office hours for which he/she will be collecting data by means of interviews with the key person(s) in the Durban Central Region which she deems necessary to achieve the objectives of this research.

The AFM of SA, Durban Central Regional Office supports and understands that this project involves accessing personal views and information from pastors, assembly leaders and their spouses from Durban Central Region. Such data will be provided to the researcher with all personally identifying information; however, during the data presentation in the form of the final thesis e.g., names shall be removed so that the data cannot be traced to any individual.

I support and grant permission to conduct this research at The AFM of SA, Durban Central Region.

Sincerely



Mbonge Khumalo

Regional Secretary

Durban Central Region

Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa

