

Effect of Individualized Consideration as a Dimension of Transformational Leadership on Growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Kenya.

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Abstract

This study sought to examine the effect of individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership on the growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Kenya. Individualized consideration focuses on the way leaders meet the needs of followers and support personal development through mentorship and coaching. The independent variable that was considered was individualized consideration and was regressed against church growth whose indicators include evangelism, fellowship, discipleship and numerical growth. The target population was 11046 leaders from 60 presbyteries. The study sample was 371 respondents attained through stratified sampling method. The study employed a descriptive-explanatory research design which targeted senior church leaders across selected presbyteries. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data which was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics that included regression analysis. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 30.0 was applied for data analysis. The findings showed that individualized consideration has a statistically significant effect on growth of PCEA. These results implied that when leaders are driven by individualized consideration behaviours they are able to invest in individual development of members through mentorship, coaching and delegation which eventually enhances spiritual and numerical growth. The study recommends that PCEA comes up with structured mentorship and coaching programs across all levels of the church. Individualized consideration principles should also be included in the leadership training and all leaders be encouraged to engage in continuous personal development. Further research is recommended focusing on other dimensions of transformational leadership as well as examining how they affect growth in other denominations.

Keywords: Individualized consideration, church growth, transformational leadership

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1. Introduction

This study intended to establish the effect of individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). Individualized consideration is important because it denotes how leaders are able to give attention to the needs of followers, their abilities and spiritual formation (Islam et al., 2025). These type of leaders focus on mentorship, coaching and delegation of duties thereby providing personalized support that enhances individuals involvement in broader institutional goals. Studies report that individual consideration is able to affect growth in both for profit and non-profit organizational contexts (Agazu et al., 2025; Aboramadan et al., 2020).

In faith-based context members level of trust and confidence as well as involvement in ministry activities have a bearing on how the leaders give them attention and also how they enhance the interpersonal relationship (Lee et al., 2024). Individualized consideration dimension of transformational leadership therefore demands that leaders recognize and address the diverse needs of followers in order for them to understand their different giftings and know their challenges for them to offer both relevant and effective guidance (Shukri & Noor, 2024).

Individualized consideration dimension of transformational leadership is linked to positive follower development in literature specifically in secular organizations. For instance, Ndarwa and Mulinge (2023) research reported that individualized consideration as part of transformational leadership dimensions had a positive influence on the implementation of strategic practices in the banking sector of Kenya and was capable of shaping firm's effectiveness.

Nevertheless, its effect on faith-based organizational growth is not sufficiently researched (Muthuku et al., 2023). This therefore creates a knowledge gap on how this dimension is applied by leaders in the church context especially in PCEA.

Church growth which refers to holistic growth of a congregation comprises of both spiritual and numerical expansion. Spiritual expansion means that a church has members who participate in evangelism and outreach programs, engage in deeper discipleship, share their faith and show greater participation in the broader church ministry activities. Numerical growth indicators include new converts, growth in registered members and church attendance and the retention of the existing members (Muthuku et al., 2023).

Fellowship is a key indicator of church growth for it shows the depth of relationship among church members. This is enhanced when leaders engage in mentorship, discipleship and small groups ministries thereby fostering a sense of belonging and support (Muguna et al., 2025). When members feel valued and engaged they are moved towards participation in the church goals, enhance their cohesion and a culture of care and collaboration.

Discipleship is another critical indicator of growth and it denotes how members live out their faith, their participation in Bible study and how their leaders get involved through mentoring them into their diverse ministry roles (Muthuku et al., 2023). In essence transformational leadership behaviours that include individualized consideration are central in nurturing holistic growth and ensuring both quantitative and qualitative growth of the church.

2. Literature Review

The purpose of this section is to present individualized consideration as an independent variable, church growth as the dependent variable and also present transformational leadership and Natural Church Development theories that underpin this study.

2.1. Transformational Leadership

This style of leadership is widely conceptualized in research in a multidimensional way where it is seen as an approach that helps leaders to inspire, motivate and build the capacity of followers for the achievement of higher levels of performance and meaningful organizational change. This is done through the four components namely, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Agazu et al., 2025). Idealized influence refers to the ability of leaders to be role models to the followers thereby winning respect, trust and confidence due to the value driven life and ethical conduct that the leaders exhibit. This dimension is also referred to as charisma which make followers to identify with their leaders and embrace their vision and mission (Otieno et al., 2019). Research indicates that idealized influence has the ability to move followers to commitment, participation and higher levels of performance within the organization (Afshari, 2022).

Inspirational motivation as another dimension of transformational leadership is involved with vision casting followed by inspiration and motivation of the followers for them to achieve more than expected. Leaders who operate through these behaviours are able to communicate hope and optimism as well as bring enthusiasm to their followers thereby instilling a sense of purpose and collective direction. This has been reported in research as being crucial in enhancing morale, engagement and commitment from followers leading to collective success in the realization of organizational goals (Agazu et al., 2025).

Intellectual stimulation denotes the ability of leaders to allow creativity, innovation and critical thinking of the followers which encourage them to challenge assumptions thereby creating an environment where followers participate in decision making, explore new ideas and recommend solutions to the prevailing challenges within the organizations. This dimension is advanced in research as a great enhancer of innovative work behaviour and workers' competence that contribute to improved organizational performance (Afsar & Umrani, 2020).

2.1.1. Individualized Consideration

This dimension of transformational leadership which is also the primary focus of this study refers to how leaders provide individualized attention, guidance, mentorship to the members based on their area of gifting, their needs and development objectives (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Individualized consideration is defined in research as the way the leader responds to personal differences, foster personal growth, faith formation and followers engagement within the institution (Change, 2025). This definition aligns with Shafique and Kalyar (2020) who posited that individualized consideration is a process where leaders are expected to be active listeners, identify and acknowledge followers gifts and give guidance based on personal aspirations. Leaders who are driven by individualized consideration behaviour create a participatory environment where followers air their views freely, seek support and make a meaningful contribution to the organizational goals (Ngwiri et al., 2025).

Empirical literature reports that individualized consideration is central in enhancing followers commitment, engagement and performance at large. For example Change (2025) noted that individualized consideration influences workers engagement in parastatal sector in Kenya by virtue of promoting motivation, recognition and a sense of belonging. Similarly a study by Ngwiri et al. (2025) found out that individualized consideration enhanced performance in TVET colleges through offering support to staff and also creating an environment of greater participation. In faith-based organizations, these practices may be seen through discipleship, mentorship of emerging leaders and giving attention to personal needs of members which has a probability of enhancing spiritual and numerical expansion.

Moreover, individualized consideration enables the alignment of personal and organizational goals through recognition of followers skills and competencies thereby helping leaders to assign responsibilities and roles that would maximize participation as personal development is also nurtured (Khisa & Kyule, 2025). In the church context, leaders who recognize and respond to personal needs of members will get good results through enhanced participation, collaboration and a sense of ownership of ministry affairs.

Individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership contributes to the psychological well being of followers particularly when attention and support are given thereby resulting to feelings of value and respect which have a ripple effect in commitment and engagement of members in church initiatives (Shafique & Kalyar, 2020).

The PCEA may benefit from this practices through motivation of members in voluntary ministry activities, increasing attendance and ensuring leadership continuity. This would culminate in holistic growth as church members are turned from being passive to actively involved in the church vision and mission (Muthuku et al., 2023).

Mentorship is one of the components of individualized consideration and refers to a structured and progressive guidance that leaders give to their followers to support their holistic development. Research reports a positive effect of mentorship noting that it results to more follower engagement, development of skills and commitment which translates into greater participation in activities and enhances preparedness particularly in faith-based settings (Ghosh & Reio, 2021). Similarly, mentorship in churches enhances spiritual maturity and succession planning particularly when leaders provide their mentees with biblical knowledge, skills and values which develop their capacity for better ministry results. When this mentorship activities are focused on the youth it increases their involvement in church initiatives which has a bearing on both spiritual and numerical growth (Muthuku et al., 2023).

Coaching is another element of individualized consideration and denotes a process where leaders give individualized feedback and motivation which support followers' confidence, self-awareness and overall performance. Studies have revealed that coaching results to motivation, ability to solve problems and enhances confidence among followers which are critical for sustainable church growth results including volunteerism and engagement (Halliwell et al., 2025; Collins et al., 2025).

In the church settings, coaching enhances the ability of members to handle challenges and complex responsibilities as well as improve their decision making skills and initiative in ministry activities. This results to more church productivity and brings a culture of improvement that supports church growth. (Soni et al., 2023).

Delegation is an element of individualized consideration that shows how responsibilities and authority is entrusted to followers while not neglecting the oversight role of the leaders. It is measured through indicators like the extent of the assigned responsibility, level of freedom in assigned roles and the decision making power

attached to the followers through out the process. Evidence in research shows that delegation is central for it enhances workers engagement, creates a sense of ownership and responsibility among followers (Lee et al., 2018).

Moreover delegation enhances capacity building and shared leadership which helps the organizations to function effectively. Karanja et al. (2025) research reported that delegation had a strong and positive significance influence on performance in the rice sector in Kenya, a view that was supported by Thiongo and Minja (2023) who observed that delegation significantly influenced performance in public organizations in Kenya thereby demonstrating its importance as a leadership practice. In the church context delegation works well in enhancing the participation of members, boosts ministry effectiveness and develop future leaders for continuity and overall congregational growth.

2.2. Church growth

Church growth denotes the holistic development of a church in both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Research conceptualizes church growth as a construct that is multidimensional encompassing increased membership, participation and deeper spiritual growth of members (Kim, 2020; Kgatle, 2021). Moreover in African contexts church growth is connected to contextualized ministry approaches that respond to both spiritual and socio-cultural needs of members. Church growth is commonly defined through key elements including evangelism, fellowship and discipleship (Muguna et al., 2025).

Evangelism involves going out to preach the good news targeting new members and expanding the church outreach and it has been viewed as a strong means of numerical growth and spiritual transformation (Kgatle, 2021). Fellowship is another element of church growth and refers to development of interpersonal relationships and a sense of belonging which enhances participation and overall growth of members (Pettifer & Payne, 2023). Discipleship is a key element of church growth and refers to the level of spiritual formation and maturity of members which is acquired through intentional teaching, mentoring and involvement of members in the church ensuring that they grow in faith and make a contribution to the mission of the church (Kim, 2020).

Numerical growth is another commonly studied element of church growth and denotes increase in membership, participation and attendance in church ministry over time. This is the most visible church growth indicator and is used along other indicators including spiritual growth to gauge church vitality. Empirical research reports that churches that prioritize spiritual strategies, follow up programs and outreach gain significant numerical expansion (Muguna et al., 2025). When churches track numerical growth they can gain insights on the effectiveness of their qualitative efforts and come up with strategies to fill any observable gaps thereby fostering a wider church development and mission effectiveness.

Despite individualized consideration being widely researched in organizational contexts, evidence on its application in faith-based organizations remains scanty (Muthuku et al., 2023). Its effect on the longer term church results such as evangelism, discipleship, fellowship and numerical growth is limited. The knowledge on how individualized consideration directly affects growth in PCEA to enhance spiritual and numerical growth is also limited and so this study helped in providing insights for the leadership of the church to apply thereby resulting to sustainable development.

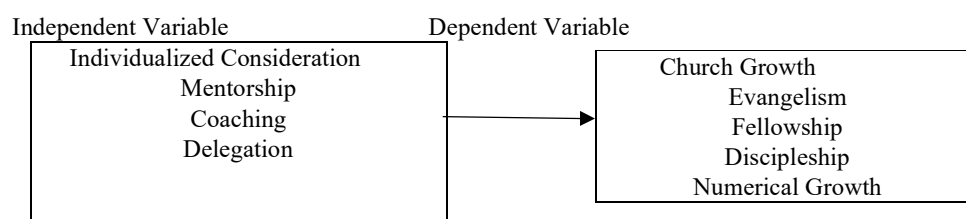


Figure 1: Conceptual Model
 Source: Current Research (2026).

2.3. Transformational Leadership Theory

This theory originated from the works of James Macgregor Burns in 1978, and was taken over for further development by Bernard Bass in the 1980s who argued that a transformational leader endeavors to uplift the morale of the followers and motivates them to engage in the common task for the betterment of the organization

.It states that leaders motivate followers in order to help them work beyond their expectations. This is done through the four dimensions that include individualized consideration, idealized influence, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. Individualized consideration which is the focus of this study involves behaviours that give attention to followers' needs through mentorship and coaching which result to personal development.

Recent research has demonstrated the relevance of this theory by observing that individualized consideration as an element of transformational leadership significantly affects organizational results by enhancing commitment, trust and performance which is as a result of personalized support and mentorship (Ngwiri et al., 2025). In faith based settings this theoretical perspective supports this study by stating that leaders who are driven by individualized consideration behaviours empower their members holistically thereby enhancing participation and overall church growth and effectiveness.

2.4. Natural Church Development Theory (NCD).

This theory was posited by Christian Schwarz (2006 cited in Buscemi, 2018) whereby he equated the church to a growing seed that grows, matures and the farmer reaps a harvest. The theory emphasizes more on quality over quantity and holds that God designed the church to grow naturally when obstacles are removed. This theory posits that church growth is a function of church health and goes beyond numerical expansion to encompass eight quality characteristics that include empowering leadership, gift- based ministry, passionate spirituality, effective structures, inspiring worship, holistic small groups, need-oriented evangelism and loving relationships. This theory has been applied in research as an assessment tool in order to understand the dimensions of the church that support growth results. (Muthuku et al., 2023). Longitudinal church growth investigations have reported that NCD processes are central in enhancing church health, increasing attendance and engagement of members thereby creating a link between church health enhancement and growth results (Rolfsen, 2025). This theory supports this study by proposing a framework that links leadership driven initiatives with natural and holistic growth beyond numerical expansion.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-explanatory research design that was based on the purpose of the study which was to examine the effect of individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. Descriptive explanatory design has been applied in previous research with good results (Hassen, 2026). The target population was the 11046 senior church leaders from the 60 presbyteries of PCEA in Kenya. The unit of analysis was the elders and ministers while the sample size was 371 respondents acquired through stratified sampling method. Quantitative data was collected using structured questionnaires with a 5- point Likert scale and delivered online. 284 responses were received and collectively used for data analysis.

4. Findings and Discussion

The study data was analyzed through statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 30.0. A simple linear regression was done to establish the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Church growth was regressed against individualized consideration. The objective of the study was to find out the effect of individualized consideration on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The hypothesis was that: Individualized consideration does not have a statistically significant effect on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The analytical model was as follows $CG = \beta_0 + \beta_1IC + \epsilon$

Where:

CG = Church Growth

β_0 = Constant

IC = Individualized Consideration

ϵ = Error term.

4.1. Correlation Analysis.

The purpose of correlation analysis is to measure the strength and direction of study variables. The decision criteria is how the coefficient is closer to +1.00 or -1.00. As shown in Table 1, all the four dimensions of transformational leadership (4Is) were examined at the correlation level to find out their relationship with church growth with idealized influence having a correlation coefficient of 0.503 which is significant at $p < 0.001$, inspirational motivation coefficient being 0.511 which is significant at $p < 0.001$, intellectual stimulation having a correlation coefficient of 0.464 which is significant at $p < 0.001$ and individualized consideration having a correlational coefficient of 0.560 that is significant at $p < 0.001$. It is worth noting that individualized consideration which was the primary independent variable of this study had the highest but moderate correlational coefficient.

Table 1: Correlational Analysis
Correlations

		Idealized Influence	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Individualized Consideration	Organizational Structure	Church Growth
Idealized Influence	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	284					
Inspirational Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.664**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	284	284				
Intellectual Stimulation	Pearson Correlation	.452**	.610**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	284	284	284			
Individualized Consideration	Pearson Correlation	.498**	.559**	.572**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	284	284	284	284		
Organizational Structure	Pearson Correlation	.571**	.565**	.596**	.592**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	284	284	284	284	284	
Church Growth	Pearson Correlation	.503**	.511**	.464**	.560**	.574**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Current Research (2026)

The results of the correlation demonstrate that there is a moderate and positive relationship between the dimensions of transformational leadership and organizational structure and the growth of the PCEA. The relationships found in the study provide a strong empirical basis for performing a regression analysis to test the study's hypothesis and to assess the predictive role of individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership on church growth.

4.2. Regression Analysis.

This study sought to find out the effect of individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership on growth of the PCEA. Church growth indicators are evangelism, fellowship, discipleship and numerical growth. The objective of the study was to find out the effect of individualized consideration on growth of the PCEA. The null hypothesis (H_0) was that: individualized consideration does not have a statistically significant effect on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. A simple linear regression was used to test the level of individualized consideration on church growth.

As shown in Table 2 the correlation value (R) was 0.560 implying that there was a significant relationship between individualized consideration and church growth. This was confirmed by the coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.314$ which showed that the effect of individualized consideration on church growth was 31.4% with the remaining 68.6% representing other factors. The beta coefficient was 0.445 showing the amount of change in church growth which is the dependent variable when there is one unit increase of individualized consideration which is the independent variable. The level of significance was 0.001 which is less than the conventional threshold of 0.05 and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted confirming that individual consideration has a statistically significant effect on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Kenya. The regression model therefore is : $CG = 1.581 + 0.445IC + \epsilon$, Where CG = Church Growth, IC = Individualized consideration, ϵ = Error term.

Table 2: Effect of individualized consideration on church growth.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.560 ^a	.314	.311	.50085	.314	128.819	1	282	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Individualized Consideration

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.315	1	32.315	128.819	.000 ^b
	Residual	70.741	282	.251		
	Total	103.056	283			

a. Dependent Variable: Church Growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Individualized Consideration

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.581	.148		10.690	.000
	Individualized Consideration	.445	.039	.560	11.350	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Church Growth

Source: Current Research (2026)

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made:

The PCEA should leverage individualized consideration as a dimension of transformational leadership across all levels of the church. This should be done through institutionalization of mentorship and coaching programs where leaders nurture emerging leaders based on their areas of interest, needs and challenges. This will help to enhance faith formation and ensure the retention of members as well as leadership continuity.

PCEA leadership should engage in capacity building of members. This should be done through delegation of responsibilities based on followers abilities and calling. This will help to foster a sense of belonging and active participation in ministry initiatives. Individualized consideration principles should also be included in leadership training programs in the church and its related institutions for capacity building.

The church should also come up with age-specific discipleship and mentorship programs for youth and children. This will help in addressing the holistic needs of young people and should include age appropriate vocational bible study, mentorship programs, talent development activities and guidance and counselling. This will help to strengthen early spiritual formation among young people and prepare future leaders who are deep rooted in faith and committed to the overall mission of the church.

6. Areas for further study

Further studies can be done focusing on other churches in Kenya and beyond to find out the effect of individualized consideration and church growth. Studies can be done focusing on other dimensions of transformational leadership because individualized consideration effect on church growth was only 31.4% leaving room for more inquiry into the remaining percentage. Further study can also be done with involvement of church members to collect their views on the effect of individualized consideration and church growth. Further studies can also be done through other research designs like mixed studies to validate this quantitative study.

7. Conclusions

This study findings have revealed that individualized consideration has a statistically significant effect on growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Kenya. Leaders who practice individualized consideration give attention to the gifts and talents of their members and provide mentorship and coaching in order to foster holistic personal development and commitment in the church initiatives. The findings also underscore the centrality of individualized consideration in driving key elements of church growth including evangelism, discipleship, fellowship and numerical growth despite that other aspects of transformational leadership effect were unexplored. This findings encourage the PCEA leadership and the church at large to adopt individualized approaches in preparing leaders to face the emerging challenges in life and ministry through mentorship, coaching and delegation of roles and responsibilities thereby enhancing sustainable church growth and overall effectiveness.

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