

Who Qualifies to Manage the Church? Exploring Historical and Biblical Accounts of Management and Agency Theories in Not-For-Profit Organisation (NPO) Sector in Gauteng, South Africa

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Abstract

As an NPO, the church has always required managers to run its affairs. In the books of Genesis, Acts and Timothy, there are inferences of management that human beings and churches had to adhere to. Thus, even though management has grown in other fields, such as business, it is also an indispensable commodity in NPOs in general and churches in particular. Qualitative research methods in the form of interviews and document analysis were employed. A total of 26 church managers from five Gauteng regions were interviewed. Data was analysed through the use of Atlas ti. Software. The findings indicate that while most participants had theology qualifications, many felt the need to acquire managerial qualifications. These findings suggest that church managers require both Biblical and academic qualifications in management. While most participants had theology qualifications, many felt the need to acquire a managerial qualification. This article contributes to the areas of management and agency theories. Thus, this strengthens the argument that all modern organisations, including NPOs, ought to be strategically managed.

Keywords: agency theory; church; church managers; management theory; not-for-profit organisations; qualifications



Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae

<https://unisapressjournals.co.za/index.php/SHE/index>

Volume 50 | Number 3 | 2024 | #12340 | 18 pages

<https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/12340>

ISSN 2412-4265 (Online), ISSN 1017-0499 (Print)

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Introduction

“Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now, the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church? He must not be a recent convert” (1 Timothy 3: 1-6).

The discipline of management stems from when God gave humans dominion over all creatures (Genesis 1: 28)). This responsibility is still applicable today. Thus, human beings have been mandated by their Maker to exercise management over all creations on earth. This reality extends to all organisations as private and public entities. To this end, Grant (2003) and Grant (2021) also infer that all modern organisations have to be strategically managed. This notion includes churches as NPOs (Marren 2021). In this article, the qualifications of church managers are explored with reference to Biblical, academic, and other related managerial qualifications and skills. In this research, aspects and inferences of both management and agency theories are also made, and the ideas thereof are expanded in the NPO context. The dichotomy of identifying a suitable church manager remains. Thus, this article seeks to explore the management of churches in recent times in relation to what the bible instructs.

Literature

In their analysis of the management subject field, Trigeorgis and Reuer (2017) submit that modern managers have a quandary in dealing with decisions regarding commitment versus flexibility and conflicts about competition versus cooperation. This section explores management and its theories, the Biblical qualifications of church managers, and Modern church management.

Management and its Theories

Within the Abrahamic religions, the subject field of management has also been prevalent and practised. There are also historical accounts of management, which will be discussed in the next section. Seminal authors such as Drucker (1954), Drucker (1964), Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (2005) and Thornton III (1980) position management within the principles of planning, organising, leading, and control. These principles apply to corporate and not-for-profit organisations (NPOs) as they manage for growth and sustainability (Gratton 2018).

Meanwhile, according to management and agency theories, managers act as agents and stewards whom their principals enlist to serve within organisations (Panda and Leepsa 2017). The complexity of management and its related theories has evolved over time.

For this reason, it is imperative to explore how these management complexities affect churches as NPOs.

Biblical Qualifications of Church Managers

Management has always been there, even before human existence. God the Creator Himself managed the existence of Heaven and Earth and went on to create Man. This first man and his spouse were stewards and agents entrusted by God to take care of nature and their surroundings. Even after their fall through sin, God continued to create human beings to be leaders, agents, and stewards in order to manage the affairs of His people and Kingdom. Principles of management (planning, organising, leading and control) continued to prevail. For instance, Abraham managed his household (Genesis 17:4-6), Noah was tasked to build an Ark (project management) (Genesis 6:19), Moses, Aaron, Mariam and Joshua managed the transition of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan (logistics management) (Exodus 16:27; Joshua 1:1-18), Nehemiah and Solomon built temples (project management) (2 Chronicles 5:2-14; Nehemiah 1:1-7), the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ were events planners, financial managers and logisticians (Matthew 14:13-21).

Moreover, the Books of Acts and Timothy allude to the appointment of church managers, and they prescribe who needs to be a church manager (Acts 6:1-5; 1 Timothy 3: 16). None of the aforementioned Biblical personalities were perfect, but the perfect God enlisted them regardless. Still, the element of righteous living of church managers has always been an interesting aspect that has never been fulfilled to date, given that no human being is perfect. However, all Christians are compelled to emulate the holy Christ.

Modern Church Management

The current requirements for church managers point to well-rounded figures and personalities. While the “reverence of God” and the love for His people are essential and prerequisites for church managers, the environmental dynamics require even more managerial attributes and efficacies. That is why Wujema, Rasdi, Zaremozzabieh, and Ahrari (2022) heighten self-efficacy as a useful means for graduates to remain relevant for work purposes. Conceptual, interpersonal, psycho-social, and even technical skills are among the leading skills that church managers ought to acquire (Ramírez et al., 2022). In recent times, numerical skills and technological know-how also merit attention. This means that the current and future church management training curriculum needs to be aligned with the current realities of church managers and their volatile environment. For instance, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic tested the prowess of many managers, and the managers of the church were not spared. Strategic leadership and agility became requirements for many modern churches as they were confronted with robustness and complexities (Tsui 2019). The question is: Are the current managers equipped enough to handle contemporary environmental

complexities? Are they qualified to manage their churches, denominations, and community structures?

Research Problem

There seems to be a contradiction between what the Bible and the modern church perceive as ideal and qualified to manage the church. Historically, churches based their choice for a church manager on 1 Timothy 3, which states that to qualify as a church manager, one requires honesty, faithfulness, self-control, sobriety, gentleness, a peaceful spirit, contentment, family orientation, and mature Christian living as some of their key attributes (1 Timothy 3: 1-6). Even though some of these had inferences of emotional intelligence, none of these qualities are of an academic nature. In a complex contemporary society, the church is confronted with the need to have managers with academic qualification(s) in managerial studies (Boya and Chiloane-Phetla 2022; Antonites, Schoeman and Van Deventer 2019).

This reality creates myriads of intricacies for the church when it has to choose and/or employ a church manager. For this reason, this research sought to explore how the modern church employs its manager.

Central Research Questions

In specific, the following constituted the central questions of this research:

1. Which managerial qualifications do church managers possess?
2. Which managerial qualifications do church managers require to execute their tasks?
3. Do members of management receive training/orientation to execute their tasks?
4. What does the training/orientation entail?

Research Methodology

Research can be done through quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods (a combination of the former and the latter). In this research, qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviews and document analysis was pursued. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2018) credit qualitative research as a method that can determine the deep-seated thoughts of participants while at the same time enhancing the credibility of the enquirer.

Participants had to meet the following criteria:

The participant must have been over the age of 18. The participant must be a church manager (or member of management/board [preferably the chairperson]). The church must have been from the Gauteng region(s). The participant must have been somehow involved in the strategic management processes of the church. This may include a church executive/board member involved in planning. The participant must have been willing to be interviewed, and the conversation thereof be published (anonymously).

This section also seeks to describe the biographical information, emphasising their qualifications and experience. Table 1 provides such specifics.

Table 1: Details of participants

P	Gender	Region	Major Denomination	Estimated Membership	Years of Experience	Qualification(s)
1	Male	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	50	Two	Master of Science Bachelor of Theology
2	Female	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	80	10	Master of Art
3	Male	Johannesburg	Yes, Protestant	50	13	Doctor of Philosophy (Theological)
4	Male	Sedibeng	Yes, Adherent	300	10	Diploma in Theology Diploma in Project Management
5	Male	Sedibeng	Yes, Adherent	100	Eight	BTech in Marketing
6	Male	Sedibeng	Yes, Protestant	110	20	Doctor of Philosophy (Theological) BA in Psychology
7	Female	Sedibeng	Yes, Protestant	300	30	Master of Education
8	Male	Sedibeng	Yes, Adherent	70	Three	Bachelor of Theology
9	Male	Sedibeng	Yes, Adherent	80	Five	Bachelor of Theology
10	Male	Johannesburg	Yes, Adherent	50	Four	Master of Theology MBA
11	Female	Sedibeng	Yes, Adherent	50	Not disclosed	Bachelor of Theology
12	Male	Ekurhuleni	Yes, Protestant	150	20	Diploma in Business Studies BA in Biblical Studies (Current)
13	Male	Ekurhuleni	Yes, Adherent	200	Eight	Honours BTh X 2
14*	Male	Ekurhuleni	Yes, Protestant	150	33	Master of Theology
15*	Male	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	200	27	Sales and Marketing Cert.

16	Male	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	100	2 & Half	Honours Bachelor of Theology Honours BA Ancient History Diploma in Organisational Development
17	Male	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	130	17	Doctor of Philosophy (Religious Studies) Church Development & Leadership Short Business Programme
18*	Male	West Rand	Yes, Protestant	70	38	Doctor of Philosophy (Theological) X 2
19*	Male	West Rand	Yes, Protestant	70	10	Studied Music (unconfirmed)
20	Male	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	80	21	Bachelor of Practical Theology Diploma in Building a Local Church
21*	Male	West Rand	Yes, Protestant	90	10	Undisclosed
22*	Male	West Rand	Yes, Protestant	90	One Year Two Months	Matric, 2nd year student Bachelor of Theology
23	Male	West Rand	Yes, Protestant	300	Seven	Degree in Public Management
24	Male	West Rand	Yes, Protestant	50	38	BA in Church History Bachelor of Theology
25*	Male	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	150	Five	Matric
26*	Female	Tshwane	Yes, Protestant	150	One	Administration Diploma

P means Participant

*Means participated in the interview along with the colleague

A total of 26 participants (church managers) were part of this research. These participants were randomly selected with due regard to their affiliation with the South African Council of Churches (SACC) or the Baptist fraternities.

Of the 26 participants, only four were women, suggesting that the church fraternity is still male-dominated. Historically, within the Abrahamic religions, this has always been dominated by male figures (2 Timothy: 3; Genesis 2: 15). Such a position has recently been challenged by Moraka (2018) and Marren (2021) on women in management and strategy for both profit-making organisations and NPOs. The Sedibeng and Tshwane regions had relatively more participants than other regions, with Johannesburg having the least number of participants. Data were analysed through the use of Atlas ti. Software is able to categorise and organise data so that sense-making and logical flow of data components become realised (Friese 2019). Seven participants were from adherent church denominations, also known as mainline denominations, and 19 were Protestants. This fieldwork outcome had nothing to do with any bias towards the type of denominations to have participated in this research but had to do with how some denominations were a lot more receptive than others. It is also to be appreciated that this research was conducted during a difficult moment of the COVID-19 global pandemic, where fear and uncertainty were very prevalent.

Research Findings

The remaining highlighted columns in Table 1 are pertinent to the research question of this research. The question reads as follows:

Which Managerial Qualifications Do Church Managers Possess?

Table 1 describes the years of experience and the church managers' qualifications. Most of the participants had experience in managing a church. While one participant had one year of church managerial experience, some had over 38 years of service. On average, the participants had approximately seven years of church managerial experience. This is consistent with 1 Timothy 3: 6, which states that mature Christians should manage the church. It is uncertain if modern churches could still sustain the principle of this Biblical text. When exploring the academic qualifications of church managers, the majority of participants had theological qualifications.

One of the participants also held two doctoral qualifications within the field of theology. However, very few of the participants possessed managerial qualifications in academic terms. Thus, the lack of managerial academic qualification was identified as a form of a gap.

Which Managerial Qualifications do Church Managers Require to Execute their Tasks?

The following were some of the responses from the participants with regard to the requisite church management attributes required:

Speaking in meetings, telephone, set out time for planning and deal with strategic issues once after three months, and appending attribute of reviewing what we have planned. Also, outsource speakers who are vested in a particular topic. (Participant 3)

The participant suggested a need to train managers on soft skills and etiquette. In broad terms, the participants felt that office bearers needed to equip themselves to handle the day-to-day running of their office. Among others, this participant referred to telephone etiquette, communication skills for role-player engagement and conceptual skills for planning. These are some of the key skills most disciplines should not find difficult to offer. It is unclear how this participant had hoped his church could achieve the realisation of such skills. Meanwhile, participant 4 mentioned the following:

We do have people who are professionals in the corporates who work on different management fields that we do ask them to come and present things to us to help us with your S.W.O.T analysis, to help us evaluate what we call; we had a five-year plan, to evaluate how far are we and so on. (Participant 4)

This participant made inferences that his church had a complement of capable church members who could play supporting roles in the church's management issues. For instance, some church members seemed to have volunteered to assist the church manager with strategic planning issues. This could suggest that church managers had to rely on people involved in consultancy to fulfil their primary obligations.

This suggests that the church managers did not have the requisite skills to fulfil their roles fully. A gap in conceptual skills became apparent. The following participant could identify some of the skills needed to be strengthened within his church.

Right now, I'm doing an organisational development course with WITS (meaning the "University of Witwatersrand"). Because I realise here there's a lot of change happening around here, and I have to be equipped to deal with change especially change on human beings so that we can find our way. We find out you are a social worker and that you are psychologist, and we find out you are having many skills of helping the poor. So, we end up having these skills that are equipping you. (Participant 16)

It would appear that the participant identified the skills gap within himself, his church, management team and community. Some of the challenges he experienced were managerial and psycho-social in nature. For instance, he had to do counselling and help feed the poor in his surroundings. As such, he took it upon himself to address the skills gap by enrolling in a reputable institution of higher education to improve his managerial and human relations skills. Thus, this suggests that being a church manager requires

several skills that must be properly considered and packaged. The following participant also identified a certain set of skills.

I am set to do nomination tests first, and to do some management and leadership courses, issues of strategy, also there's another course that I'm going to do with the University on written communication. This is because I need those skills and skills of strategy as I said. So, I've enrolled with the Gordon Institute of business science at the University of Pretoria to assist me with those skills. (Participant 17)

Various skills gaps were identified. This participant heightened the need for him to acquire communication and conceptual skills. This is consistent with the accession that strategy ought to be communicated in order for it to be converted from just being a mere idea into something solid (Chiloane-Tsoka & Boya 2015). This participant also further enrolled at an institution of higher education.

Despite all his achievements, which included a doctorate in practical theology (see Table 1 Participant 17), the above participant still displayed hunger and desire to acquire communications and strategic management qualifications that would be instrumental in communication and conceptualising the strategic trajectory of his church, denomination and community.

You can do this, and you wonder you know nothing about the practical things, but it is difficult. I would like to have more training you know, managerial skills and I think something like bookkeeping are required to flash that I must be able to read German as part of our curriculum. (Participant 24)

Another participant was particularly concerned with acquiring language (German) and numerical (bookkeeping) skills. He advocated that a church manager's curriculum be amended to incorporate such skills. It is worth mentioning that this participant's church and denomination had a German background, which is the language he would have to have learnt during his theological training. Furthermore, despite his 38 years of service and the consideration of retirement, this participant displayed a keenness to be a lifelong learner.

Do Members of Management Receive Training/Orientation to Execute their Tasks?

Regarding the training or orientation received by church managers, the following is what they had to say:

There is no training for things, you do this because you love to, you do it with your heart, you don't come help here because you qualify, you don't go help at the church because you qualify, you come help here because you want, and you want to give something back. And you wanna hope that you can keep this for our children and their children's children. (Participant 5)

The participant confirmed that there was no church management training or orientation within his church. It was unclear if the participant's views were based on the lack of resources or if he did not believe in management training.

Though this participant was passionate about service, his inferences suggested that training was unimportant. This raises a question: Is passion alone enough for someone to serve his/her church, denomination, or community? Contrary to this, the next participant mentioned the following:

That we really try and do, but I think it must happen more. I myself lack in that, but after that the beginning of the year when we got that two days, we usually set aside a few Sunday afternoons from 15:30 to 17:30. That I myself try and give them some tools, then I use the people in my congregation and from the University to come and equip them and help them understand what is necessary to do what they do. It happens.
(Participant 6)

This participant acknowledged that some training efforts were made but not enough. He clearly stated that he valued the need for managers to get some training and/or orientation. Indeed, time was set aside for training and/or orientation, and people from the university acted as consulting experts for capacity development. This approach is commendable for any learning organisation, and it is encouraging that some churches were taking the initiative to collaborate with institutions of higher learning.

So, that's something we have been exploring this year, but we haven't fully developed a plan along those lines, but it is something we have started to try and develop.
(Participant 12)

One participant confirmed that no specific orientation occurred, but rather, an informal briefing was given to individuals instead of team members. The concern with this approach is that it could result in building silos instead of an integrated management system (Vishnevskiy, Karasev and Meissner 2016). This is inconsistent with the integrative nature of management theory (Koontz 1961; Koontz 1980). However, it is encouraging that the church in question was still deliberating on introducing some form of training and/or orientation. The following participant explicitly stated who received training/orientation.

The elders yes but not formal so you know as a local church. (Participant 22)

The following participants alluded that their training and/or orientation is exclusive to elders only. Based on the theological literature, most elders are often confined to theological principles and have little to do with managerial orientation. Thus, this leaves a gap in terms of a church manager being well-rounded for the benefit of other church role-players.

What Does the Training/Orientation Entail?

Participants mentioned the type and manner of training practices within their churches and denominations.

Synod, like I told you, is the society. The church is the church, and the synod reports to the bishop. So, the synod makes the training for leadership, especially when there are new elections when new people are elected, we call the stewards. So, when a steward is elected, he/she goes for training, maybe for two to three days. We are told about the church and everything. Locally, we make our own workshops according to our needs. We do workshops every year, in fact, annually. (Participant 7)

The above participant explained that various stakeholders were involved in training and equipping newly appointed church managers with what they would be required to execute their tasks.

The term *Synod* refers to a society that liaises with the church's Bishop to facilitate training programmes at the denomination level. This was further trickled down to churches where managers as stewards were trained. This is consistent with literature on inclusivity, agency theory and management theory (Bernstein 2017; Siems and Seuring 2020). The participant further referred to training workshops that take two to three days. Literature advocates for learning organisations when dealing with strategy implementation. However, it was unclear how effective these two to three-day workshops were in managing the modern church (King Committee on Governance 2016; Barrows 2009). The following participant alluded to the formal training that his church and denomination undertook.

The booklet that the diocese provides is guiding the activities of the parish pastoral council and guiding the activity of the parish finance council. So, that booklet has the regulations and the diocesan policy. So, we teach them that also basic management skills, and we introduce them also to our planning strategies. So, in that they get to know what is required of them, how they carry out their meetings, how their minutes are written and ah, their time of office and the guiding principles are stipulated in the booklet of diocesan policy. (Participant 8)

Instead of physical training, the participant referred to a booklet that the diocese developed to enable church managers to discharge their duties in an orderly manner. The booklet was divided into two broad spheres in the form of pastoral and financial councils. The former dealt with church elders and spiritual matters, and the latter dealt with diaconate and administrative matters. This seeks to outline the roles of church managers and their jurisdictions.

This document was very detailed in that the basic church principles and the strategic trajectory of the church were clearly articulated to provide clarity, especially regarding strategy implementation. It is to be noted that this comprehensive document was made available to the author. This is consistent with the principles of inclusivity, ethics, and

openness (King Committee on Governance 2016). Furthermore, the next participant articulated the following:

Certainly, my belief is that it's not done by most churches, but I think I can say I'm proud that. I insisted that we need to implement training. With every induction of new people, we do a workshop. So, people understand their role and the role of the priest in the community and that minimises conflicts because sometimes people come to the church council and don't understand their roles as church council members, and then they infringe on the role of the priest, and sometimes they even think they are the bosses of the priest you know. (Participant 13)

This participant seemed proud of and confident about their approach to preparing the church for service. Through workshops and inductions, managers such as pastors and executives were orientated about their particular roles to eliminate conflicts and uncertainty. This is essential in that ambiguity, if not eliminated, has the potential to hamper strategy implementation of any organisation, including the church. This approach could be useful, especially for various church role-players with competing interests.

Proper denominational POVs do offer training for elders, but when it comes to the board, or management or the stewardship properties or deacons there is no real training they do. We do offer ones that come on board. It's not a formal training. It's not in pieces of paper or anything like that, but we do sit them down and, in an informal way, give them a rundown of what's expected and what happens on the stewardship committee basis. (Participant 20)

This participant indicated that only church managers who were also church elders received formal training. The rest of the church managers appointed as deacons or stewards only received informal, unwritten training. While any form of managerial training is encouraged, it could be difficult to enforce accountability. It is to be remembered that most of the informally trained church managers happen to be unpaid volunteers. It was uncertain how effective this approach was in the wake of complex environments where churches may have found themselves.

Discussion

During the interviews, participants were asked to provide answers regarding:

1. Which managerial qualifications do church managers possess?
2. Which managerial qualifications do church managers require to execute their tasks?
3. Do members of management receive training/orientation to execute their tasks?

4. What does the training/orientation entail?

Table 1 sets out the academic qualifications of the participating church managers. The majority of the participants were well-read, especially about theological qualifications. Some had even more than one postgraduate qualification. It was unclear how these qualifications fully capacitated modern church managers to execute their tasks with the requisite distinction. Is it not time for the church managers' theological and Bible-based qualifications to be reviewed?

This led to the question regarding which managerial qualifications church managers required to execute their tasks. In broad terms, participants alluded to both hard and soft skills that they still needed to acquire. This was despite some of them having more than one postgraduate study. Some of the key requisite skills they needed were in the areas of communication, language, conceptual, office administration, psycho-social, interpersonal, problem-solving, conflict-handling, and numerical skills. These skills ought to be mirrored with the Biblical requirements (1 Timothy 3:1-6 and the theological qualifications curriculum). This task could be a new research project, but it is worth pursuing.

Furthermore, the majority of participants went on to confirm that their churches provided either orientation or training. Nevertheless, most such orientations/training were informal. While any form of capacitation is commendable, it is difficult to fathom the quality and value of such interventions, especially if they are not formalised. Only a few participants could provide their church documents, such as church manuals and church orders, for analysis for this research. Based on such documents, it became apparent that some of the contents may need to be reviewed to align with the Biblical and environmental requirements.

The documents were ideal for the elders and clergy, but minimal covered issues affecting deacons and administration. This reality displayed that the managerial items were lacking and needed to be covered by a modern church manager. Given the volatility of the current environment, this may threaten the effective existence of the modern church.

Conclusion and (Church Managerial) Implications

In this article, the qualifications of church managers were explored. The historical accounts of church managers were alluded to in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:1-6). This research attempted to provide some form of reflection for modern church managers. It follows that both God and His people have specific expectations of church managers. Some expectations are character-based, and others require managers to acquire specific education and skills (Mahajan, Gupta and Misra, 2022). The Bible clearly states what kind of Christian and church manager it requires. Unfortunately, the Biblical requirements are too personal for the church members and denominational heads to

verify. This indicates a gap in determining if churches have appointed the right people to manage their affairs. With all the managers' academic qualifications, the focus was on theology-related subjects and the neglect of managerial subjects. This is an indictment of the curriculums that church managers must cover at higher learning institutions. The most critical gaps are managerial subjects such as finance, strategy, entrepreneurship, publicity, and communication. These are some subjects that for-profit-seeking organisations managers have probably covered at institutions of higher learning. Moreover, these are the types of subjects and skills that some of the participants were keen to have to improve their roles as church managers.

While new members of management received training and orientations, most of the training was purely theological and/or not informal. Any training received should be commended. However, this has to cover the church's managerial roles in their totality (Ramírez et al., 2022). Based on the literature and findings, and as part of the recommendations of this article, the following could constitute some of the steps and actions that the church ought to consider urgently:

1. Do skills audits of managers and other members of the congregation.
2. Identify skill sets and skills gaps within the management teams and congregation.
3. Identify capable congregants willing to volunteer their services to work with the management teams and transfer some of their skills to others.
4. Identify institutions of higher education and corporate organisations that could provide short-term management training, orientations, manuals, and workshops.
5. In the long term, even though urgent, the theological qualifications need to incorporate managerial subjects in their curriculums.
6. Only persons aligned with the principles of 1 Timothy 3:1-6 should manage the church (based on prayer and God's guidance).
7. Church managers should love the Lord and His people (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Mark 12: 29) (based on prayer and God's guidance).

These are some of the mere suggestions. However, the church must guard against treating itself as a for-profit-seeking organisation and instead focus on doing God's will and creating social value for all its role-players (Marinova, Freeman and Marinov 2019). A critical question is: will the Lord say: "Well done, good and faithful servant"? (Matthew 25:21). This statement is also consistent with management and agency theories (Koontz 1980; Panda and Leepsa 2017). After all the discussions in this and other related research work, the question remains: Who qualifies to manage the church?

It is imperative to note that this article never claimed to solve or unfold anything. It was meant to trigger discussion and debate on management in church and NPO contexts. That is why it starts with a question and ends with a question. I find it an interesting and ongoing conversation.

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