

**THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF LEADER POWER ON THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND GROWTH  
OF EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN KENYA.**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Purpose of the Study:** This study seeks to establish the mediating effects of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of the evangelical churches in Kenya. The study examines five indicators of power as outlined by French and Ravel and how they mediate the relationship between servant leadership and growth of the evangelical churches in Kenya. The indicators include legitimate power, referent power, coercive power, reward power and expert power. The objective of the study is to establish the intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and church growth.

**Methodology:** Pluralist theory of power will be used to develop a theoretical background of the study. The study will use positivistic research philosophy while adopting cross sectional design. The total population of the study will be the 179 churches registered under the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya umbrella. A Stratified random sampling technique will be used to choose a sample size of 124 churches scientifically calculated using the Slovin's formula from which the leader will respond making a total respondent of 124. The study has used both primary and secondary data. Primary data will be collected using questionnaires which contain both open ended and closed ended questions. Closed ended questions will be based on Likert scale while open ended questions will seek additional details on the answers provided at the end of every section. Data collection through the questionnaire will be done electronically distributed using email requiring the respondents to fill in google forms for the questionnaires after an informed consent. Upon completion of data collection period and achieving the desired response rate, the data collected using the electronic tools will be downloaded and transferred to a statistical software for data analysis. Quantitative data from the closed ended questions will be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 while qualitative data from the open ended

questions will be analyzed using NVivo version 12. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation will be used for the quantitative data while inferential data analysis will be done using Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis.

**Results:** The findings of the study show that when servant leadership and leader power are both held constant, growth of evangelical churches will remain at -.250. At the same time, an increase in servant leadership by one unit would improve the growth of evangelical churches by 0.605 units (p-Value=0.000) and same as leader power where the increase would be 0.462 units p-Value=0.000<0.05).

**Conclusion:** This implies that leader power, when controlling for servant leadership, has a significant influence on growth of evangelical churches in Kenya. Equation (iii) below summarizes the relationship. The study rejects the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and conclusion drawn as follows: there is significant intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of evangelical churches in Kenya. The findings will be critical for the evangelical alliance of Kenya's secretariat as they develop policies on the influences of church growth in Kenya.

**Keywords:** *Servant leadership, church growth, evangelical churches*

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## INTRODUCTION

The drive to grow church numerically and financially has become common amongst denominations, clergy and local churches in the recent past. The concerns became more urgent amidst significant congregational decline especially among the historical evangelical and non-protestant churches (Johnson, 2013). Most studies on church growth are inclined towards theological and biblical constructs as opposed to pragmatic (Hong, 2004; Benjamin, 2017). Donald Mac Gavran (1991) who is accredited as the pioneer of the church growth theory agrees to the fact that church growth arises in theology and biblical faithfulness but adds that the concept draws heavily on the social sciences because it always occurs in societies. Van Rhee (1996) on the other hand identifies three interdependent disciplines that explains church growth: theology, social sciences, and strategy. The theological part includes a study or investigation of theology and biblical faithfulness. The Social Science deals with social sciences and related topics while Strategy handles how persons become genuinely Christian and the factors which encourage that faith. The same idea is alluded to by Peter Wagner (1987) in his work, 'Strategies for Church Growth' which postulates that God is genuinely concerned with the practical implementation of His great commission. These practical ways may include constructs like leadership style.

Organizations, regardless of the size, complexities and sector depend so much on its leadership. Ribeiro (2018) affirms that leadership is indeed a prime factor affecting either the success or the failure of an organization. Cincala (2018) further adds to this knowledge by asserting the world's craving for ethical and effective leadership that serves others more than self and that which invests in their development and shared vision as a way of achieving growth.

There are many approaches to leadership as there are many developments to the leadership as a discipline. Northouse identifies 12 leadership approaches; Trait Approach, Skills Approach, Behavioral Approach, Situational Approach, Path–Goal Theory, Leader–Member Exchange Theory, Transformational Leadership, Authentic Leadership, Servant Leadership, Adaptive Leadership, Psychodynamic Approach and Team Leadership (Northouse, 2016). Northouse progressively develop these theories from a more leader centered approach like Stodgill's (1974) great man theory which was popularly known as the trait theory, Robert Katz's (1955) skills theory that emphasizes on a leaders skill or capabilities and style approaches or behavioral theories which focuses on what a leader do and how they act as proposed by Blake and Mouton (1964). He further highlighted approaches that were more follower centered like servant leadership by Greenleaf (1977) and team leadership which emerged after researches that shows organization with great team perform much better than organization without a formidable team. Porter (2000) builds to this discussion noting that team-based organizations have faster response capability because of their flatter organizational structures, which rely on teams and new technology to enable communication across time and space.

This study adopts servant leadership approach justified by its definition of being a servant first. Cincala (2018) points out that servant leadership is the most recognizable approach to leadership in Christian organizations an ideas that got a node from Dennis (2010) in quoting Greenleaf (1977) idea that servant-leader's primary mission is to serve, begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead' This indeed fits perfectly well in the leadership of Jesus in Mathew chapter 20 verses 28 that's states "just as the son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many". Various writers espouses servant leadership as a valid, modern theory for organizational leadership both for profit and nonprofit (Gandolfi, 2017). Greenleaf also called for the application of servant leadership in business, education, churches and foundations.

Servant leadership focuses on the constituent more than it does for the leader, it develop leaders who do not place themselves at the center nor seek attention rather place others at the center and are concerned with the attention of others (Ng'ollan, 2017). The motivation of the servant leader is to serve his or her followers so that they too can become servant leaders who will do the same (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leadership therefore as a concept, moves beyond the competency and performance traditionally used to measure leader effectiveness it instead emphasizes the moral, emotional, and relational dimensions of leadership behaviors (Bolden, 2006). Such leaders develop others through modelling attractive behaviors. The servant leader's behaviors contribute to the social learning of followers who, in turn, become servant leaders. This creates a servant led culture and climate resulting to a servant led institution that exemplifies the values of the group. It is in respect to these that this paper prefers among the many leadership styles the servant leadership seen to embody the human factor critical for a church set up.

This study will focus on three dimensions of servant leadership strategy namely interpersonal support, building community and moral integrity as key constructs of servant leadership and investigate how they influence growth of the evangelical churches in Kenya.

Power as a phenomenon is as old and ubiquitous as the many social theories can boast (Wisse, 2019). It is no doubt therefore that it is a critical area of study in organizational behavior and management. It is asserted that leader's fear losing their power hence the idea of power has a critical effect to a leader's behavior even as they aim at acquiring power or retaining the power that they already have.

In her recent review of French and Raven's (1959) dynamics of power, Kovach (2020) describes five power bases which can be utilized, enhanced, and built by the leader to exert greater influence over his /her followers. These bases include Coercive power which is basically based on control over punishments, Reward power which is the ability to reward, Legitimate power which is the follower's belief that the leader has the positional right or authority to influence, Referent power is based on relationships that is when the leader in his exercise of power is being perceived as a lovable person whose behavior is garbed with warmth, understanding and charisma. (Rylander, 2016). The other bases of power are the expert power which is pegged on an accepted belief that the leader has skills and abilities that followers value and need. Raven (1974) later added to the list another base of power acknowledging the fact that leaders can attempt to influence their

subordinates merely by their access to and control of information. This study seeks to determine the intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and church growth in the evangelical churches in Kenya.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The growing challenge of church growth in our contemporary is something worth researching on because church growth is an integral quest for any church leader. Studying the challenges of pastors in the church from a structural and identity theory perspective, Cafferata (2017) identifies that the number of churches in the west has been declining at a rate of about 1 to 2% per year. Harris (1999) also researched on the declining membership from the Anglican Church in Wales and found out that the decline was not only on membership but also on doctrine, clergy, laity, evangelism and variety in worship.

The same trend is in Kenya where there has been a decrease in the number of people attending church especially the evangelical churches. Many young people hop from one church to another trying to find relevance and the few who attend are questioning their belonging to the said churches. This has left churches with financial deficiency because many people do not want to make commitment to their churches financially. Several factors have been proposed as the causes of such decrease in membership and commitments top amongst them is the outcry of leadership deficiency, and dominance in the Kenyan church in such ways as not to promote growth (Tanui, 2016).

On the premise of the study background and new issues in power, the research problem is built on the conceptual gap of the un concluded debate on the intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between leadership style and performance (Lunenburg, 2016). Theoretically, the research seeks to fill the gap evident by lack of consensus whether servant leadership style which has been widely criticized as a romanticized approach to leadership (Eaton, 2020) mediated by leader power has an effect on the growth of the church. The leader power concept is built on the premise of the French and Raven's taxonomy of power bases as key constructs to aid the study determining the intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of the evangelical churches in Kenya.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this study is to determine the mediating effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of the evangelical churches in Kenya.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEWS**

### **Pluralist Theory of Power**

The theory was developed as a rejection of the class theory of power and the elite theory of power developed by the Karl Max and Pareto respectively. In his work, Dahl whom the theory is attributed asserts that power in society is used neither by one class nor by the elite but several different groups (Dahl, 1961).

The principle of the theory is that in every society, there are several groups of people each of which represent a major interest or some interest. These groups compete to share power and influence in the society. Power can mean the ability of a party to transform or control the behavior, attitudes, opinions, objectives, desires and interests another party (Rahim, 1989). Its strength is determined by the extent to which the leader can influence subordinates (French & Raven, 1959). In other words, the source of power that leaders use is directly proportional to their influence. critical to the influence they acquire. French and Raven (1959) have organized a typology to identify five power bases which includes; legitimate power summarized as the leaders right by virtue of their position to suggest or control behaviors of their followers (French, 1959). Secondly, the coercive power which is the leaders control over punishment and the reward power which is the leader's control over reward. Further to this is the expert power which is the leader's special knowledge or expertise and finally, the referent power which describes the subordinate's desire to identify with the leader based on relationships.

This paper analyzes this group power in the way it influences the followers. Robbins and Judge (2017) has defined power not only as the ability to influence power, but when the followers acts in line with the influencer's desires. They further argued that while an individual can hold power they may not necessarily use it (Robbin, 2017). The five basis of power bases of power as identified by French and Raven (1959) includes referent, expert, legitimate, reward, and coercive. Among them, the only power base with a negative influence is the coercive power. The five power dynamics are further classification into two categories including formal and informal

(French,1959). This research adopts evaluation of power in relation to the French and Raven taxonomy of power as the measurements in determining the leader's behavior towards the influence and observe the behavior among the evangelical churches in Kenya.

Pluralist power develops people who make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past and their respective groups. A concept that is also developed by Mullar who held that when researchers use pluralist theory building, they move between description and theory and between single and multiple perspectives through four iterative steps with specific deliverables the first step is to create perspective accounts, then synthesize multiperspective account, the third step is to create theory fragments, and finally synthesize pluralist theory. The pluralist theory offers practically useful approach to group involvements and ownership of processes (Mullar, 2020).

### **EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

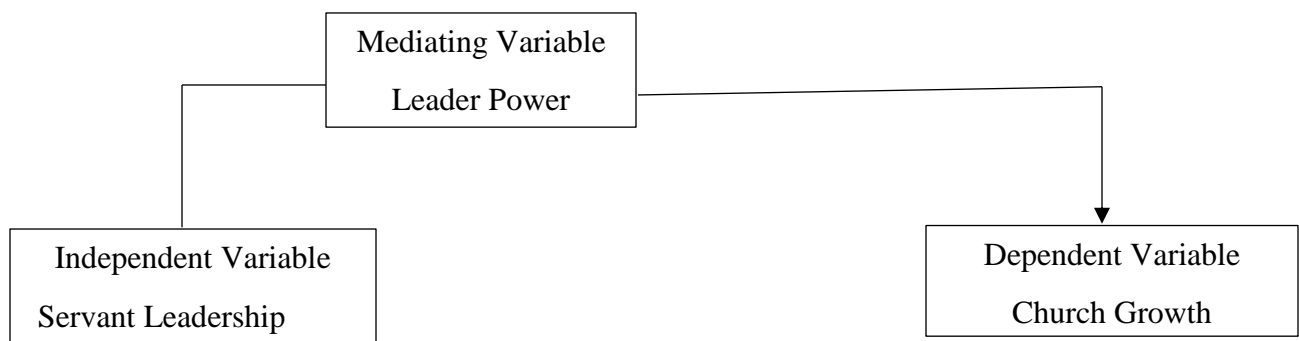
In determining the leadership features that are affecting church growth in western North Carolina churches of God, Harold (2019) recognizes the essential leadership factors necessary for the stimulation and sustainability of church growth for Church of God churches operating in Western North Carolina (Harold, 2019). The study whose purpose was to find out the major leadership traits, aptitudes, and strategies used by successful regional pastors to promote church growth was accomplished using a rounded theory research approach with a sample of 30 respondents. They used constructivist grounded theory to collect and analyze data using recorded personal interviews of lead pastors serving within the Western North Carolina region of the United States. The data was coded, analyzed and categorized using ATLAS.ti data analysis software. The result of the study shows that power and its constructs plays a critical role in the growth of churches in western North Carolina churches of God.

Servant leadership assumes a very low power distance between the leader and the followers. In their study, Hu *et al.*, (2018) evaluated how team power distance can moderator the relationship between leaders and followers. The hypotheses of the study were tested using data collected from 72 work teams and 354 individuals from 11 information and technology companies in China using a multiple-source, time-lagged research design. They found a positive relationship between leader humility and team information sharing only in circumstances where there is low power distance

between the leader and the followers. The research however found an inverse relationship between leader humility and team psychological in places where there is high power distance. The same relationship posted a positive but non-significant in teams with low power distance.

Palich and Hom (1992) in their studies to determine the impact of leader power and behavior on leadership perception holds that human recognize leaders and non-leaders on the basis of their frequency in displaying leadership behaviors. Employing LISREL they investigated the linkages of power and behavior to leadership impressions through cognitive schemata. The result of the study indicated that leader behavior had direct effect on perceptions of leadership whereas leader power did not. They further found out that leader power did affect perception of leader behavior in keeping with categorization theory and finally displayed leader behaviors contributed to the developments of power perceptions.

In their study the fragile balance of power and leadership, Jones and York (2016) highlights the difference between power and effective leadership holding that they aren't interchangeable and should therefore not be treated as such arguing for power as a tool while leadership as a skill. According to the research, leaders are always garbed with some degree of power that enables them to maintain a particular position. Sampling 33 responses, the study results depict that because leaders have power at their disposals, power can also negatively affect a leader rendering him/her ineffective and exposing the relationship between power and leadership.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



From the framework, the research will seek to determine mediating effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership (Independent Variable), and Church growth (The Dependent Variable).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted positivism philosophy. Positivism philosophy states that there exists real evidence of phenomena that can be well understood, investigated and identified as well as measured (Upagade & Shende, 2012). It states that there is a causal relationship between variables and thus allowing for explanation and prediction (Nayak, 2016). According to Chawla and Sodhi (2011) the positivists assume that for causal relationship to occur, the two variables must be correlated, predictor must occur first before the predicted variable and that the association must not have confounders and therefore the outcome is only due to the factors understood, identified, and measured. Using positivism philosophy, the study will seek to deduce cause and effect relationships between servant leadership and church growth

The current study adopted cross-sectional research design. Cross-sectional research design involves the collection of data about variables without influencing them or manipulating them and at a specific single point in time (Kothari, 2004). This research design enables collection of large data and about several characteristics within a short period of time (Shirish, 2012). Using this research design, this study focused on several characteristics of servant leadership at one single point and without manipulation.

The current study targeted all denominations registered as members (churches) of the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK). This formed the unit of analysis. There were 179 registered denominations as at April 2020. Therefore, the target population will be 179 churches.

The study used Slovin's formula to arrive at the desired sample size from the target population as follows:]

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where;

n - Is the sample size; N - is the population size and; e - is the tolerance error, taken as 0.05.

Therefore, using this formula, the sample size for this study was calculated as follows;

$n = 179 / (1 + 179(0.05^2)) = 123.66 \approx 124$  member churches.

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires which contain both open ended and closed ended questions. Closed ended questions will be based on Likert scale while open ended questions will seek additional details on the answers provided at the end of every section.

Upon completion of data collection period and achieving the desired response rate, the data collected using the electronic tools was downloaded and transferred to a statistical software for data analysis. Quantitative data from the closed ended questions was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 while qualitative data from the open ended questions was analyzed using NVivo version 12.

Inferential data analysis was done using simple regression analysis

The model for the study:

$$CG = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SL + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where:

CG = Church growth,

SL= Servant Leadership: Interpersonal support, Building community and Moral Integrity,

$\beta_0$  = Constant,  $\beta_1$  = Beta coefficients,  $\varepsilon$  = Error term

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Response rate

The total number of questionnaires administered to the respondents were 124. Those that were adequately filled and returned were 104 questionnaires. This translates into an average response rate of 83.87% as illustrated in Table 1 below. Maria (2018) recommends a response rate of at least 70 percent for a face-to-face survey. Therefore, an overall response rate of 83.87% was considered adequate to generalize the findings of this study.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

	Total	
	Frequency	Percent
Response	104	83.87%
No response	20	16.13%
Total	124	100.00%

**Reliability Test and Adequacy of Data Sets**

Reliability test was undertaken to determine the forte of internal consistency of items included in each of the two study variables where Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ -coefficient) was computed for each of the study variables. Sekaran and Bougie (2014) recommends a Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than or equal to 0.7 for data to be reliable. On the other hand, Bidogeza et al. (2009) recommends that for a data set to be regarded as adequate and therefore appropriate for statistical analysis, the value of KMO statistic should be greater than 0.5.

**Table 2: Reliability Statistics**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
a) Servant leadership	.724	17

**Validity Test**

Validity test was done using the factor analysis to shade out any variable that was found to be expressively outlying or redundant in addressing the study objectives since their addition would adversely alter the accuracy of the output. Trochim (2006) recommends factor analysis to determine the validity of the research instrument. This was realized by determining the factor loadings between the variable and the projected components. Preferably, factor loadings of less than 0.4 are considered trivial. The researcher imposed a loading-threshold of 0.4 and therefore suppressed any loadings ranging between -0.4 and + 0.4 (Trochim, 2006).

(Inferential) analysis.

**Table 3: Principal Component Matrix on Leader Power**

Factors on Leader Power	Factor Loadings
a) The leaders reward their employees	0.87
b) Leaders are promoted or recognized	0.957
c) Leaders reward their exemplary members	0.954
d) People like to identify with the leaders	0.952
e) Many members of the congregation respect their leaders for who they are rather than what they do	0.948
f) The leaders are formal in the way they discharge their duties	0.746
g) There is a struggle for position	0.941
h) The leaders refer to their positions while communicating their expectations	0.837
i) Leaders are educated	0.795
j) People follow leaders because of their experience	0.829
k) Leaders have skills to solve issues	0.923
l) The leaders work close to the people he/she perceive to be loyal to him	0.822
m) Members perceived to be disloyal are often punished	0.92
n) The leaders withhold responsibility from fellow leaders perceived to be disloyal	0.919

The table above shows the principal component analysis for leader power. The highest factor loading was 0.957 with statement "leaders are promoted or recognized (0.957)". Other statements had the following factor loadings: "leaders reward their exemplary members (0.954)"; "people like to identify with the leaders (0.952)"; "many members of the congregation respect their leaders for who they are rather than what they do (0.948)"; "there is a struggle for position (0.941)" and "leaders have skills to solve issues (0.923)". Statements with the least factor loadings included: "people follow leaders because of their experience (0.829)", "the leaders work close to the people he/she perceive to be loyal to him (0.822)", "leaders are educated (0.795)", and "the leaders are formal in the way they discharge their duties (0.746)". Since all loadings were more than 0.4 means

that there were no trivial loadings between leader power and the estimated components. This confirms that all the 14 constructs made on leader power were reliable to be subjected to inferential analysis.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Leader Power**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Reward</b>	%	%	%	%	%		
1) The leaders reward their employees	11.5	1.0	19.2	34.6	33.7	3.634	1.423
2) Leaders are promoted or recognized	1.9	6.7	21.2	44.2	26.0	3.707	1.187
3) Leaders reward their exemplary members	1.9	5.8	18.3	51.0	23.1	3.726	1.152
<b>Average</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>3.689</b>	<b>1.254</b>
<b>Referent</b>	%	%	%	%	%		
1) People like to identify with the leaders	0.0	0.0	26.9	31.7	41.3	3.985	1.128
2) Many members of the congregation respect their leaders for who they are rather than what they do	0.0	18.3	11.5	48.1	22.1	3.597	1.216
<b>Average</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>3.791</b>	<b>1.172</b>
<b>Legitimate</b>	%	%	%	%	%		
1) The leaders are formal in the way they discharge their duties	0.0	13.5	12.5	47.1	26.9	3.726	1.199
2) There is a struggle for position	4.8	19.2	24.0	22.1	29.8	3.393	1.386
3) The leaders refer to their positions while communicating their expectations	11.5	8.7	11.5	23.1	45.2	3.670	1.544
<b>Average</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>3.597</b>	<b>1.376</b>
<b>Expert</b>	%	%	%	%	%		

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
1) Leaders are educated	0.0	1.5	27.5	36.5	34.4	3.883	1.121
2) People follow leaders because of their experience	0.0	9.6	9.6	42.3	38.5	3.939	1.202
3) Leaders have skills to solve issues	9.6	1.9	4.0	39.4	45.0	3.926	1.410
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>3.916</b>	<b>1.244</b>
<b>Coercive</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>		
1) The leaders work close to the people he/she perceive to be loyal to him	26.7	21.2	17.3	24.0	10.8	2.605	1.438
2) Members perceived to be disloyal are often punished.	52.9	30.6	7.3	8.3	1.0	1.672	1.013
3) The leaders withhold responsibility from fellow leaders perceived to be disloyal	41.9	40.6	12.5	4.6	0.4	1.740	0.906
<b>Average</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.006</b>	<b>1.119</b>
<b>TOTAL AVERAGE (LP)</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>3.400</b>	<b>1.233</b>

As indicated on Table, respondents agreed that people like to identify with church leaders (mean = 3.985, standard deviation = 1.128) and they follow those leaders because of their experience (mean = 3.939, standard deviation = 1.202), skills to solve issues (mean = 3.926, standard deviation = 1.410), education (mean = 3.883, standard deviation = 1.121), as well as their willingness to reward their exemplary members (mean = 3.726, standard deviation = 1.152). Additionally, the leaders are formal in the way they discharge their duties (mean = 3.726, standard deviation = 1.199).

Respondents were indifferent on the view that church leaders struggle for position (mean = 3.393, standard deviation = 1.386). They could also not agree or deny that some leaders work close to the people he/she perceive to be loyal to him (mean = 2.605, standard deviation = 1.438). Nonetheless, respondents disagreed that leaders do withhold responsibility from fellow leaders perceived to be

disloyal (mean = 1.740, standard deviation = 0.906). They also disagreed that members perceived to be disloyal are often punished (mean = 1.672, standard deviation = 1.013).

Average mean score for reward, referent, legitimate, expert, and coercive was 3.689, 3.791, 3.597, 3.916, and 2.006 respectively. Their corresponding standard deviation was 1.254, 1.172, 1.376, 1.244, and 1.119 respectively. The overall mean score for leader power was 3.400 with a standard deviation of 1.233. This implies that while the leadership in evangelical churches in Kenya have highly been characterized by reward, leader’s referent, legitimacy, and expertise, there is very little coercions by leaders particularly on members perceived to be disloyal.

### **Intervening Effect of Leader Power**

The objective aimed at assessing the intervening effect leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of evangelical churches in Kenya. The null hypothesis was stated as: *There is no significant intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of evangelical churches in Kenya.*

The objective was achieved by first computing the aggregate mean score across all the factors that explained leader power as well as those factors on growth of evangelical churches. A stepwise regression analysis was then performed with four using Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedures stated as follows:

### **Step I: Servant Leadership Predicting Growth of Evangelical Churches**

This is the first step in drawing the verdict that leader power has an intervening effect on the relationship between servant leadership (SL) and growth of evangelical churches (CG). This step was intended to confirm the significance of the relationship between the servant leadership (LS) and Growth of evangelical churches (CG) expressed as

$$LS \rightarrow S_t \dots\dots\dots \text{Model 1}$$

From the results, when LS (servant leadership) is held constant, Y (growth of evangelical churches) will remain at 5.778. At the same time, an increase in servant leadership by a unit would lead to a decrease in growth of evangelical churches by 0.925. This relationship is significant given the p-Value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . On the other hand, R-Square = 0.676 with F-Calculated (1, 102) = 212.662 which is greater than F-Critical (1, 102) = 3.934, and p-Value =  $0.000 < 0.05$  as well as a

negative elasticity (0.925). This implies that servant leadership significantly predict growth of evangelical churches in Kenya as shown by Equation (i) below:

$$S_t = 5.778 - 0.886L_p \dots\dots\dots (i)$$

**Step II: Servant leadership Predicting Leader power**

This is the second step and intends to confirm the significance of the relationship between servant leadership (LS) and leader power (LP) illustrated as

$$SL \rightarrow LP \dots\dots\dots \text{Model 2}$$

**Table 5: Model Summary of Servant Leadership and Leader Power**

R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.738 <sup>a</sup>	.545	.541	.42779

Results in the table above show R-Square was (.545) with the standard error of estimate being 0.428. This implies that servant leadership explain 54.1 percent of the variation in leader power in evangelical churches in Kenya.

**Table 6: ANOVA for Servant Leadership and Leader Power**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	22.387	1	22.387	122.328	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	18.667	102	.183		
Total	41.054	103			

As shown in the table above, F-Calculated (1, 102) = 122.328 which is greater than F-Critical (1, 102) = 3.934 at 5% significant level (2-tailed test). Results also show p-Value = 0.000 < 0.05. This indicates that, servant leadership significantly influence leader power.



**Table 7: Regression Coefficients on Servant leadership and Leader power**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.099	.217		5.063	.000
Servant Leadership	.693	.063	.738	11.060	.000

Findings as shown in the table above express that, when the predictor (servant leadership) is held constant, the outcome (leader power) remains at 1.099. At the same time, an increase in servant leadership by one unit would lead to an increase in leader power by 0.693 units with a p-Value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . Consequently, the researcher summarizes that servant leadership significantly predicts leader power as shown below.

$$LP = 1.099 + 0.693LS \dots\dots\dots(ii)$$

**Step III: Servant Leadership and Leader Power Predicting Growth of Evangelical Churches**

The third step confirms that the intervening variable is a significant predictor of the dependent variable controlling for the independent variable (LP|SL → CG). It was intended to confirm whether leader power (LP) controlling for servant leadership (SL) significantly predicts growth of evangelical churches expressed as:

$$LP|SL \rightarrow CG \dots\dots\dots \text{Model 3}$$

**Table 8: Model Summary for Intervening effect**

R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.862 <sup>a</sup>	.743	.738	.38735

The table above shows a strong R-Square of 0.743 with the standard error of estimate being 0.387. This implies that leader power (controlling for servant leadership) explains 74.3% of the variations in growth of evangelical churches in Kenya.

**Table 9: ANOVA for Intervening Effect**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	43.884	2	21.942	146.243	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	15.154	101	.150		
Total	59.038	103			

The findings as shown above indicate that F-Calculated (2, 101) = 146.243 which is greater than F-Critical (2, 101) = 3.086 at 5% significant level (2-tailed test). Results also show p-Value = 0.000 < 0.05. This further confirms that the overall model for the influence of leader power on growth of evangelical churches while controlling for servant leadership is significant.

**Table 10: Regression Coefficients for Intervening Effect**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.250	.220		-1.138	.258
Servant Leadership	.605	.084	.538	7.191	.000
Leader Power	.462	.090	.385	5.153	.000

Findings, as shown in the table, show that, when servant leadership and leader power are both held constant, growth of evangelical churches will remain at -.250. At the same time, an increase in servant leadership by one unit would improve the growth of evangelical churches by 0.605 units (p-Value=0.000) and same as leader power where the increase would be 0.462 units p-Value=0.000<0.05). This implies that leader power, when controlling for servant leadership, has a significant influence on growth of evangelical churches in Kenya. Equation (iii) below summarizes the relationship.

$$S_t = -.250 + 0.605LS + 0.462LP \dots\dots\dots(iii)$$

In summary, R-Square = 0.743 with F-Calculated (2, 101) = 146.243 which is greater than F-Critical (2, 101) = 3.934 at 5% significant level (2-tailed test) and p-value = 0.000 < 0.05. At the same time,  $\beta_1(0.925)$ ,  $\beta_3(0.693)$ ,  $\beta_5(0.605)$  and  $\beta_6(0.462)$  is not significant. This implies that there significant intervening effect given that p-Value=0.00<0.05. As stipulated by Baron and Kenny (1986), when the residual direct effect of the treatment variable on the outcome ( $\beta_5$ ) is smaller (in absolute value) than the overall treatment effect in the total direct effect ( $\beta_1$ ) the intervening effect is complete. Partial intervening effect will exist when the residual direct effect of the treatment variable on the outcome ( $\beta_5$ ) is larger (in absolute value) than the overall treatment effect in the total direct effect. In the current study, the results show that  $\beta_5$ , which is 0.605 is less (in absolute value) than  $\beta_1$  which is 0.925. This is an indication of a complete intervening effect of leader power in evangelical churches in Kenya.

Therefore, the study did reject the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) and conclusion drawn as follows: *there is significant intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of evangelical churches in Kenya.*

## CONCLUSION

In summary, R-Square = 0.743 with F-Calculated (2, 101) = 146.243 which is greater than F-Critical (2, 101) = 3.934 at 5% significant level (2-tailed test) and p-value = 0.000 < 0.05. At the same time,  $\beta_1(0.925)$ ,  $\beta_3(0.693)$ ,  $\beta_5(0.605)$  and  $\beta_6(0.462)$  is not significant. This implies that there significant intervening effect given that p-Value=0.00<0.05. The results also show that  $\beta_5$ , which is 0.605 is less (in absolute value) than  $\beta_1$  which is 0.925. This is an indication of a complete intervening effect of leader power in evangelical churches in Kenya. Therefore, the study did reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and conclusion drawn as follows: *there is significant intervening effect of leader power on the relationship between servant leadership and growth of evangelical churches in Kenya.* These results can be generally interpreted to mean that in order to provide service to the church members, the clergy ought to possess specialized skills and competencies (Riad, 2016). The other bases of power are the expert power which is based on an accepted belief that the leader possesses skills and/or abilities that follower's value and need.

Regarding church members liking to identify with church leaders (as given by mean of 3.985 and standard deviation of 1.128) and following those leaders because of their experience (mean = 3.939, standard deviation = 1.202) it can be argued that church pastors are often seen as people

capable of sharing their experiences and innovations for the purpose of church growth. This leadership trend is clearly in the direction of less structure and fewer layers of oversight. Skills to solve issues (mean = 3.926, standard deviation = 1.410) was also found to be a key bases of power contributing to church growth. Raven (1974) later added to the list another base of power acknowledging the fact that leaders can attempt to influence their subordinates merely by their access to and control of information. This because today's environmental pressures force the church leaders to focus on accelerating technology, innovation, technical complexities, social and legal issues, cost, risk, competence, skills of staff and technology itself. In respect to this change, the idea of building non-profit organizational capacity have increased rapidly in recent year as the stakeholders seek ways to improve performance (Anderson, 2016).

On the leader's willingness to reward their exemplary members (mean = 3.726, standard deviation = 1.152). Additionally, the leaders are formal in the way they discharge their duties (mean = 3.726, standard deviation = 1.199). As noted by Laub (2018) in his study, all leaders must act hence even servant leaders must have personal power to act. It is therefore essential that servant leaders understand how power is necessary for effective leadership. As a result of this, leaders refuse to admit that they have personal leadership power and therefore must use that power to benefit and serve others. Various theories of power are presented and contrasted to this practical and usable view of personal leveraged leadership power and the results shows positive relationship between servant leadership, personal power and developing of workplace spirituality.

Respondents were indifferent on the view that church leaders struggle for position (mean = 3.393, standard deviation = 1.386). They could also not agree or deny that some leaders work close to the people he/she perceive to be loyal to him (mean = 2.605, standard deviation = 1.438). Nonetheless, respondents disagreed that leaders do withhold responsibility from fellow leaders perceived to be disloyal (mean = 1.740, standard deviation = 0.906). They also disagreed that members perceived to be disloyal are often punished (mean = 1.672, standard deviation = 1.013).

Average mean score for reward, referent, legitimate, expert, and coercive was 3.689, 3.791, 3.597, 3.916, and 2.006 respectively. Their corresponding standard deviation was 1.254, 1.172, 1.376, 1.244, and 1.119 respectively. The overall mean score for leader power was 3.400 with a standard deviation of 1.233. The findings imply that, servant leadership assumes a very low power distance between the leader and the followers in their study. As found by Hu *et al.*, (2018) examined team

power distance as a moderator of the relationship. They tested the hypotheses using data gathered from 72 work teams and 354 individual members from 11 information and technology firms in China using a multiple-source, time-lagged research design. They found a positive relationship between leader humility and team information sharing only within teams with a low power distance value. In addition, leader humility was negatively related to team psychological safety in teams with a high power distance value, whereas the relationship was positive yet non-significant in teams with low power distance.

Given the limitations and the delimitations as well as findings of this study, the researcher recommends a similar study to be carried out targeting other church umbrellas including the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCCK) and the Organization of African Independent Churches of Kenya (OAICK) this will ascertain the findings and give a wider call for churches to embrace servant leadership in their structures

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