

## Manager-Sensitive Theological Curricula: Rethinking Pastoral Care for Christians in High Positions Based on a Namibian Case Study

**Authors :** Florence Matsveru

**Abstract :** The 21st-century church in Africa is faced with a myriad of challenges, which need attention. One of those challenges is pastoral ministry to congregants in high positions. This paper is based on a Ph.D. study entitled, 'Wellbeing and work performance of Christians in managerial positions: A Namibian case study' conducted between 2015 and 2018. The study was conducted with 32 purposively selected Christians working in managerial positions in Ohangwena Region, Namibia. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, i.e., both qualitative (to get participants' feelings and perceptions) and quantitative (to get proportions of the experiences and perceptions). The research process involved a questionnaire survey and interviews. The study revealed that Christians in managerial positions have both common and unique experiences in three spheres: the workplace, the family and the church. The experiences lead to physical, emotional, psychological, social and spiritual needs. The findings also showed that some of the expectations placed upon Christians in managerial positions in the church may be unrealistic, while at the same time this group of congregants want to use their work experiences for the benefit of the church. A worrying finding was that pastors are generally not well-trained for ministry to congregants in high positions. Since these were perceptions of the participants (some of whom were also pastors), the researcher went further to do a short internet survey of the curricula of a number of theological colleges in Southern Africa. This survey did not show any 'manager-sensitive' modules in the surveyed colleges. Theological education for pastors, especially in African theological institutions, seems to ignore the unique needs of congregants in high positions. This paper argues that the needs of Christians in high positions should be considered in pastoral care and that theological education is key in equipping pastors with the necessary knowledge and skills. This paper is, therefore, a call to theological institutions to include ministry to people in high positions in their curricula. Pastors who are already beyond theological school may find it helpful to attend or hold workshops that focus on congregants in high positions so that this kind of 'sheep' will find good pasture in the church. A paper of this nature helps to strengthen pastoral ministry and to enhance the relevance of theological education.

**Keywords :** Christian managers, theological curricula, pastoral care, African

**Conference Title :** ICCPT 2019 : International Conference on Christian Philosophy and Theology

**Conference Location :** New York, United States

**Conference Dates :** January 30-31, 2019