

Relationship between Authentic Leadership and Volunteer Retention in Word of Faith Churches in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Volunteer turnover poses a significant challenge for churches and other volunteer-driven organizations. High turnover rates are often attributed to leadership issues, highlighting the need for leaders to understand volunteer motivations and expectations to foster better engagement. This study focused on the impact of authentic leadership's four dimensions on volunteer retention within Word of Faith Churches in Kenya, aiming to deepen understanding and provide insights crucial for sustaining and enhancing volunteerism in church contexts. The research employed a correlational approach grounded in positivist principles. The study targeted volunteer workers from Word of Faith Churches, encompassing 3,757 individuals across 333 local churches and 28 regions in Kenya, each led by a regional overseer, pastors, and volunteer ministry leaders. Stratified sampling was used, and data collection utilized a structured questionnaire incorporating the Authentic Leadership Inventory and Likert scale items to measure volunteer retention. Multiple linear regression analysis tested the study hypotheses, revealing that authentic leadership explained 47.1% of the variance in volunteer retention. However, among the leadership facets examined, only relational transparency demonstrated a statistically significant impact on volunteer retention ($\beta = .411$, $p < .001$). These findings underscore the critical role of relational aspects, particularly transparency, in predicting volunteer retention. This aligns with theories positing that leaders who cultivate open and trusting relationships with followers are more effective in inspiring loyalty and commitment. The strong positive relationship observed between Leader Relational Transparency and Volunteer Retention supports Authentic Leadership theory's emphasis on honest and transparent interpersonal interactions in leadership. In response to these findings, leaders within Word of Faith Churches are encouraged to prioritize relational transparency, fostering a leadership culture that values and promotes open communication among leaders and volunteers.

Key words: Authentic Leadership, Balanced Processing, Relational Transparency, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Volunteer Retention

INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism is the act of willingly participating in activities to help others, often through organizations dedicated to particular causes (Darja & Holtrop, 2019). It includes the generous contribution of one's time, money, and energy to support those in need, whether individuals or communities (John et al., 2020). The spirit of volunteerism is embodied in actively seeking out opportunities to engage in volunteer work (Gronlund & Helsinki, 2019). This form of service is defined by voluntary and unpaid efforts, commonly measured by the hours individuals dedicate to providing services either directly or through organized groups outside their families (Kim & Cuskelly, 2017).

Volunteerism is a common practice around the world (Overbeeke, 2017). Each year, millions of people globally devote their time and effort to various organizations aimed at helping those in need. Their contributions take many forms, including providing social support, physical help, organizational and advisory roles, ensuring the smooth operation of group activities, and advocating for causes that aim to improve the overall quality of life (Darja & Holtrop, 2019). Globally, 14.3% of the population engages in informal volunteering, while 6.5% participate in formal volunteer activities, according to UNICEF (2022). By 2018, the equivalent of 109 million full-time paid employees reflected the scale of volunteer contributions (United

Nations Volunteers, 2018). The impact of volunteerism is further highlighted by its contribution of approximately 2.4% to the global Gross National Product (GNP) (UNICEF, 2022). Notably, in countries like the Netherlands, nearly half of the population volunteers at least once a year (Overbeeke, 2017), underscoring the extensive and significant nature of volunteerism across various regions.

In Africa, Fondling et al. (2023) provided an overview of volunteering that traces its historical roots and discusses the challenges and opportunities for promoting volunteerism on the continent. They emphasized that volunteerism is deeply embedded in African social life, supported by strong normative and moral foundations. In many African communities, volunteerism is integral to the culture, exemplified by concepts like Ubuntu in South Africa and Harambee in Kenya. In Kenya for instance, the principle of Harambee is fundamentally centered on volunteerism. This concept has been encouraged since the early 1960s (Gathangu, 2020). Volunteer efforts in Kenya are estimated to contribute approximately \$269.7 million, representing around 2.5 percent of the nation's GDP, and involve over 100,000 full-time equivalent volunteers within civil society (Graham et al., 2013). However, the prevalence of volunteering varies significantly across countries, with over 50 percent of the populations in Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana participating in volunteer activities, while less than 10 percent of the population in Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, and South Africa engage in such activities (Fondling et al., 2023). This provided the impetus for the current investigation on volunteer retention, especially in the church where volunteerism is mission-critical. In the church sector, retaining volunteers involves keeping them engaged and active in ministry over the long term. This is evident in volunteers' positive attitudes towards their roles, their dedication to serving, and their desire to continue volunteering (Dhakal & Pande, 2019). Effective church leadership should prioritize fostering continuous support and involvement from volunteers. Well-structured and supervised volunteer programs can increase cost-effectiveness by enhancing service quality, allowing paid staff to handle specialized tasks, and boosting the church's efforts in fundraising and community relations (Overbeeke, 2017).

The substantial benefits of authentic leadership within organizations underscore its profound influence. The motivations driving individuals to participate in volunteer work are varied, with authentic leadership playing a key role, as emphasized by Krajnakova et al. (2018). According to Johnson (2019), authentic leadership taps into the core of human motivation in project activities. This leadership style is deeply rooted in personal experiences, implying that authentic leaders are guided by ethical values and cultural sensitivity, and they prioritize transparency, ethics, and honesty (Laguna et al., 2019).

Authentic leadership entails being genuine and steadfast in upholding personal principles and beliefs, consistently aligning actions with words to foster trust among followers (Guenter et al., 2017). There are various dimensions of authenticity within the framework of authentic leadership theory, including elements such as self-awareness, self-control, fair assessment, and openness in relationships. Self-awareness involves ongoing introspection and evaluation of one's strengths, weaknesses, emotions, capabilities, aspirations, personality, and beliefs, influencing personal behavior and interactions (Mohammadpour, 2017). Authentic leaders, benefiting from self-awareness, understand their strengths and weaknesses, guiding their values and worldview's impact on others, potentially shaping volunteer engagement (Mohammadpour, 2017). Guenter et al. (2017) highlight authentic leadership's direct appeal in volunteer decisions, emphasizing leaders' character and values as key factors, contrasting the contractual loyalty of paid employees (Sullivan, 2017). Peter (2020) examines how leaders' self-awareness correlates with organizational performance and volunteerism, integrating feedback into decision-making processes to enhance effectiveness. Arenas et al. (2018) discuss ethical consistency in authentic leadership, influencing organizational outcomes and volunteer commitment, echoed by Nielsen and Marrone (2018) on ethical conduct and humility's role in volunteerism. Slemp et al. (2018) argue that authentic leaders serve as moral exemplars, fostering ethical behavior and organizational values conducive to volunteer engagement. Balanced processing, as defined by Durrah et al. (2022), promotes collaborative decision-making and transparency essential for ethical leadership and volunteerism, with Lopez (2018) and Obuba (2023) underlining relational transparency's role in trust and volunteer retention.

Volunteer turnover presents a significant challenge for churches and other volunteer organizations reliant on committed volunteers (Dhakal & Pande, 2019). High turnover rates are often attributed to leadership challenges, necessitating a thorough understanding of volunteer motivations and expectations from leaders to enhance engagement. A case study conducted within a Christian-owned supermarket in Denmark, operating

commercially yet compensating volunteers, illuminated the complexities at the intersection of volunteerism, business enterprise, and church ownership, relying on qualitative data from focused interviews to explore volunteer retention issues (Dhakal & Pande, 2019). Despite various studies examining leadership's impact on church performance and growth (Muriithi, 2019; Nango & Maende, 2017; Ndonge, 2018), none have specifically investigated leadership's role in volunteer retention. In contrast, Mwaura et al. (2019) explored volunteer commitment in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa but did not focus on leadership's influence on retention. This study aimed to fill this gap by examining how the four facets of authentic leadership influence volunteer retention in Word of Faith Churches in Kenya, aiming to expand understanding and provide insights crucial for sustaining and enhancing volunteerism in church settings (Mwaura et al., 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Authentic leadership traces its roots to ancient Greek humanistic philosophy, now encapsulated in the popular phrase "be true to yourself" (Medina, 2021). Johnson (2019) attributes the concept's development to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which posits that individuals strive to fulfill their unique life purposes. The concept itself is relatively recent, emerging around 2003, although scholarly exploration of authenticity dates back further (Medina, 2021). According to several authors (Arda et al., 2016; Medina, 2021; Johnson, 2019; Dugan et al., 2017), the evolution of authentic leadership theory is credited to the foundational work of Luthans and Avolio (2003). Avolio et al. (cited in Medina, 2021) suggested that the authentic leadership model was developed to address the increasing challenges posed by moral decay. Johnson (2019) proposed that leaders play a pivotal role in achieving organizational goals and are central to decision-making processes. Nikolić et al. (2020) defined authentic leadership as a set of interconnected behaviors that shape how leaders interact with followers, make ethical decisions, and utilize information.

Mburu (2020) characterizes authentic leadership as a framework where leaders promote a culture of high ethical standards, encourage deep self-awareness, and embody an internalized moral perspective. This leadership approach emphasizes the fair evaluation of information and advocates for transparent relationships between leaders and followers, ultimately fostering positive personal growth and development. Covelli and Mason (2017) define self-awareness as the ability to recognize inherent strengths and weaknesses in individuals, which, when effectively utilized, contribute to developing a well-rounded workforce that complements each other. Leadership competence hinges primarily on leaders' self-awareness, serving as the foundation for effective organizational leadership. Mburu (2020) identifies elements of self-awareness within authentic leadership, including values, self-identity, beliefs, and desires, emphasizing that authentic leaders possess a deep understanding of themselves, their strengths, and their weaknesses.

The concept of internalized moral perspective, also referred to as self-regulation, as described by Covelli and Mason (2017), pertains to a leader's ability to align their actions with their values and ethical principles consistently. McPherson et al. (2022) elaborate that leaders with an internalized moral perspective demonstrate strong values and ethical integrity, guiding their decision-making without succumbing to external pressures or societal expectations. This consistency influences team dynamics by setting clear boundaries and expectations for everyone involved.

Balanced processing, another facet of authentic leadership, involves impartially considering and evaluating various perspectives before making decisions (Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015). Idris and Suleiman (2021) assert that balanced processing enables leaders to establish and uphold standards that guide their actions objectively, ensuring that decisions are informed by a broad spectrum of viewpoints and organizational data. This approach democratizes information flow within the organization, fostering an environment where employees feel valued and heard.

Relational transparency, integral to authentic leadership, refers to the extent to which leaders openly communicate their thoughts and emotions with followers (McPherson et al., 2022). Idris and Suleiman (2021) emphasize that relational transparency involves maintaining ethical standards, honesty, and avoiding hidden agendas in interactions. This transparency builds trust and credibility between leaders and followers, although Mburu (2020) suggests that achieving relational transparency can be hindered by unclear communication or a lack of legitimacy in articulating issues on behalf of the group.

Authentic leadership's significance in volunteer retention research is underscored by the fact that authentic leaders foster trust, loyalty, and strong commitment among their followers (McPherson et al., 2022). This is because individuals who work under authentic leaders typically experience positive emotions and feel valued, acknowledged, and empowered. Moreover, the moral integrity, honesty, and ethical standards upheld by authentic leaders contribute to the establishment of enduring and reciprocal relationships with their followers (Mburu, 2020). Research has further validated this by demonstrating a connection between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors (Arda et al., 2016). From the empirical literature, there appears to be a general agreement on the positive impact of effective leadership, particularly in terms of influencing volunteer retention and commitment. Hensen and Hemby (2023) suggest that leadership modeled after Jesus Christ's example can inspire and empower followers, which aligns with findings from Decremet (2018), Piatak and Carman (2023), and Smith (2018) regarding the influence of leadership on volunteer retention. However, there is a notable gap in directly exploring the concept of authentic leadership specifically in the context of volunteerism, as highlighted by Pardasani (2018). Laguna et al. (2019) offer insights into how authentic leadership fosters employee engagement in entrepreneurial settings, suggesting a potential positive impact on volunteers, though direct evidence in the volunteer sector remains sparse. Therefore, while leadership competency is recognized as pivotal in volunteer retention across various studies, the specific impact of authentic leadership on volunteerism requires further empirical exploration.

Additional evidence present a nuanced perspective on the impact of authentic leadership within various organizational contexts, albeit with varying degrees of focus on volunteer retention specifically. Glass (2018) identified that fostering collaborative relationships, motivating teams, and implementing strategic communication practices were effective in improving volunteer retention within non-profit organizations, indirectly linking these practices to elements of authentic leadership such as relational transparency (Khan et al., 2022). Benevene et al. (2018) explored ethical leadership's influence on volunteer satisfaction and commitment, highlighting a positive correlation, albeit with notable contextual gap given the study's focus in the West. Lorenzo and Aurora (2022) underscored the positive associations between authentic leadership, job satisfaction, and work engagement across European teams, emphasizing its role in promoting organizational transparency and enhancing reputation. Lux et al. (2019) delved into how authentic leadership fosters trust and organizational commitment among followers, factors crucial in volunteer retention contexts, particularly in church-based settings where trust is pivotal. Srivastava and Mohaley (2022) indicated that leader self-awareness, a component of authentic leadership, may positively impact volunteer retention, despite their study being conducted in the Indian banking industry, necessitating further research in religious organizations. Zhang et al. (2018) and Zia-ur-Rehman et al. (2018) offered insights into the mechanisms through which authentic leadership influences employee behaviors and attitudes, providing indirect implications for volunteer retention, though conducted in profit-driven sectors and not specifically within volunteer settings. Overall, while the studies collectively suggest that authentic leadership traits can enhance organizational commitment and satisfaction, more focused research was needed to directly explore its impact on volunteer retention within church and non-profit environments.

The literature on authentic leadership within Christian contexts highlights its foundational importance, albeit with varying emphases and methodologies. Thomas (2018) and Haruna (2021) emphasize transformational leadership through discipleship and personal development, aligning with Christian principles and spiritual growth. McDonald (2023) finds a strong link between authentic leadership and organizational commitment in Christian universities, emphasizing integrity and commitment. Purnomo and Wibowo (2021) stress pastors' character as crucial for church success, echoing broader themes of leadership influence and integrity. Hedger (2021) focuses on transparency and ethical leadership among school superintendents, critical for organizational performance. Occilien-Similien (2021) discusses leader exchange in church growth, highlighting teamwork's significance. Adepoju (2020) identifies Jesus Christ as an exemplar of authentic leadership, emphasizing humility, sacrificial mission, transparency, and results-oriented focus. However, Adepoju's study lacked exploration of challenges facing leaders managing volunteers in church contexts, suggesting a need for further research in this area. Keita (2018) examines authentic leadership among church volunteers, stressing biblical values and effective communication, despite methodological limitations. Overall, these studies collectively affirm the role of authentic, transformative, spiritually grounded leadership in fostering organizational success and spiritual development within Christian communities. Yet, they primarily reflect a Western perspective,

suggesting a potential bias that warrants consideration in future research.

In Kenya, Kamau and Oginde (2022) emphasized authentic leadership among Kenyan Christians, focusing on continuous learning, strategic planning, and value preservation, which resonate with broader themes of effective leadership but do not directly connect these practices to volunteer management in churches, highlighting a conceptual gap. Nzeng'e et al. (2021) identified self-regulation as crucial for growth in Pentecostal churches in Kenya, linking these factors to volunteer retention and church growth, thus aligning with themes of leadership effectiveness and organizational development. Mwaura et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of relational transparency in church leadership within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), revealing its influence on church performance and volunteer engagement, despite focusing primarily on church leaders. Gathuma and Komu (2020) focused on youth retention in Pentecostal churches in Nyeri County, Kenya, emphasizing the role of leadership in addressing youth challenges and enhancing their church engagement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study was correlational, grounded in positivist principles. Its primary objective was to guide the collection and analysis of data to establish connections between variables and estimate effect sizes (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). This methodological approach is situated within the quantitative research framework and adheres to a post-positivist research paradigm (Patel & Patel, 2019). This design was selected because it adopts an objective perspective that supports the development and testing of hypotheses, aligning with the study's goals (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It facilitated the exploration of relationships between authentic leadership and volunteer retention.

The participants in this study were volunteer workers from Word of Faith Churches. The church operates through ten ministries, offering opportunities for members to volunteer. These ministries include Pastoral, Choir/Singing, Evangelism/Outreach, Ushering, Media, Youth, Sunday School, Medical, Men's, and Women's Ministries. With a national presence of 333 local churches across 28 regions in Kenya, each led by a regional overseer, the target population consisted of 3,757 individuals: 28 regional overseers, 333 local church pastors, and 3,390 volunteer ministry leaders. The sample size was 336 participants.

Stratified sampling method was employed, where the target population is divided into distinct, naturally occurring categories or sub-groups and then a simple random sample is derived from each category (Taherdoost, 2018). This approach enhances the precision of research results by ensuring that various heterogeneous groups are represented in the sample, providing a more accurate reflection of the larger population compared to other sampling methods (Rahaman et al., 2022). The criteria for stratification were leadership category and region.

The research utilized quantitative data to clarify the dynamics between authentic leadership and volunteer retention, highlighting how personal factors influence this relationship. Quantitative methods enabled statistical analysis, revealing the strength and direction of the connections between variables. For the authentic leadership items, Neider and Schriesheim (2011) conducted validation tests, demonstrating that all items effectively measured authentic leadership and that each dimension's items were robust. In the current study, the content validity of the remaining items was confirmed through thorough literature review. For each sub-scale of authentic leadership, alpha coefficients ranged from 0.82 to 0.90, indicating that the instruments met the reliability requirements (Bakari & Hunjra, 2017). The questions related to volunteers were adapted from Ping et al. (2011), and the calculated average Cronbach's alpha was a robust 0.91. Conversely, questions about personal factors were independently developed. Similar calculations were applied to all other survey items, with appropriate modifications made to achieve an alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher for each set of questions.

Data was gathered using a structured questionnaire. The study utilized the Authentic Leadership Inventory (ALI) developed by Neider and Schriesheim (2011), which contains 14 items rated on a 5-point scale. These items were categorized into self-awareness (3 items), self-regulation (4 items), balanced processing (4 items), and relational transparency (3 items). Bakari and Hunjra (2017) evaluated the psychometric properties of ALI in a Pakistani sample and found reliability scores of $\alpha = 0.82$ for self-awareness, $\alpha = 0.90$ for balanced

processing, and $\alpha = 0.90$ for relational transparency. Data on volunteer retention was gathered using a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5.

Multiple linear regression techniques was then used to test the study hypotheses (Anguinis & Boik, 2005). The regression equation took the following form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e;$$

Where,

Y= Volunteer retention measured by volunteers' attitudes towards volunteering, their commitment to serving, and their intention to continue volunteering

β_0 = the intercept for the dependent variable (volunteer retention)

β_{1-4} regression coefficients

X_{1-4} = authentic leadership dimensions namely: self-awareness, self-regulation, balanced processing, and relational transparency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research achieved a 65% response rate, as evidenced by the distribution of successful responses. This rate is sufficient for empirical analysis, aligning with Wang's (2018) assertion that response rates over 60% are considered good. This level of participation enhances the reliability and validity of the study's findings, allowing for more confident interpretations and conclusions to be drawn from the data. In terms of demographic profile, most of the respondents were within the age range of 40-49 years, of the female gender, had post-secondary level of education and had volunteered for over 5 years. The output of multiple linear regression modelling is presented in table 1.

Table 1 Regression of Volunteer Retention on Authentic Leadership

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.686 ^a	.471	.450	.44232		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Leader Relational Transparency, Leader Self-Regulation, Leader Balanced Processing, Leader Self-Awareness						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.759	4	4.440	22.693	.000 ^b
	Residual	19.956	102	.196		
	Total	37.716	106			
a. Dependent Variable: Volunteer Retention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Leader Relational Transparency, Leader Self-Regulation, Leader Balanced Processing, Leader Self-Awareness						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.910	.252		7.588	.000
	Leader Self-Awareness	.137	.071	.207	1.921	.058
	Leader Self-Regulation	.110	.065	.145	1.708	.091
	Leader Balanced Processing	.047	.065	.076	.720	.473
	Leader Relational Transparency	.264	.057	.411	4.596	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Volunteer Retention						

The model summary indicated that the predictors collectively accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in Volunteer Retention ($R = .686$, $R \text{ Square} = .471$, $\text{Adjusted } R \text{ Square} = .450$, $\text{Std. Error of the Estimate} = .44232$). These statistics suggest that approximately 47.1% of the variability in Volunteer Retention can be explained by the four authentic leadership dimensions included in the model. The ANOVA results further support the significance of the regression model ($F(4, 102) = 22.693$, $p < .001$), indicating that the regression model as a whole is statistically significant in predicting Volunteer Retention. These results emphasize the significance of transparent leadership in improving volunteer retention rates. They align with prior studies on authentic leadership (Arda et al., 2016; McPherson et al., 2022), indicating that authentic leaders inspire trust, loyalty, and dedication among their followers.

Examining the coefficients, it was found that Leader Relational Transparency demonstrated the strongest relationship with Volunteer Retention ($\beta = .411$, $p < .001$), followed by Leader Self-Awareness ($\beta = .207$, $p = .058$) and Leader Self-Regulation ($\beta = .145$, $p = .091$). Leader Balanced Processing did not show a significant relationship ($\beta = .076$, $p = .473$). The intercept (Constant) also showed a significant positive relationship with Volunteer Retention ($B = 1.910$, $p < .001$). These results suggest that leaders who exhibit high levels of Relational Transparency are likely to have a greater impact on Volunteer Retention, while other leadership qualities such as Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation also play significant but somewhat lesser roles. This is consistent with findings from Hedger (2021), who underscores the importance of transparent leadership based on biblical principles and dedication to honesty, predicting both staff and volunteer performance and retention, reflecting the beneficial effects of relational transparency. Similarly, it corresponds with research by Krejci (2017), which identifies a link between relational transparency and team trust, promoting team performance despite potential challenges arising from overly high trust and transparency. Likewise, it supports Idris and Suleiman's (2021) argument that relational transparency nurtures a positive work atmosphere and facilitates information exchange, contributing to enhanced organizational effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

The study has demonstrated that certain elements of authentic leadership exert varying degrees of influence on volunteer retention. Through regression analyses, the study evaluated the relative significance of each element in predicting retention. Leader relational transparency emerges as the most impactful factor, as indicated by its strong positive correlation with retention and its substantial contribution to explaining retention variability. Thus, the study depicts a hierarchical structure of factors, with leader relational transparency at the forefront, succeeded by leader self-awareness, self-regulation, and balanced processing. Together, these elements collectively influence volunteer retention within Word of Faith Churches in Kenya, with leader relational transparency playing a primary role. This has implications on Authentic leadership theory, which emphasizes the importance of context and relationships in leadership effectiveness. The study's findings underscore the

significance of relational aspects (e.g., transparency) in predicting Volunteer Retention. This aligns with the theory's view that leaders who build strong, trusting relationships with their followers are more likely to inspire loyalty and commitment. The significant positive relationship found between Leader Relational Transparency and Volunteer Retention supports Authentic Leadership theory's emphasis on the importance of transparent and honest interpersonal relationships in leadership. Leaders who are perceived as transparent are likely fostering trust and positive relationships among volunteers, which could enhance their retention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Word of Faith Churches Leadership should prioritize relational transparency by cultivating a leadership culture that values and promotes open communication and transparency among leaders and volunteers. They should encourage leaders to actively solicit feedback and share information transparently with their teams. One effective approach is to invest in leadership development programs that enhance relational skills and nurture an environment of trust and collaboration within the church community. The findings suggest that leadership development programs should emphasize the cultivation of relational transparency among leaders. This could involve training leaders in communication skills that promote openness, honesty, and authenticity in their interactions. Additionally, while not as strongly supported in this study, ongoing development of self-regulation and self-awareness remains important for comprehensive leadership development aligned with authentic leadership principles.

Further research should expand to compare how authentic leadership practices impact volunteer retention across various church sects or denominations in Kenya. Examining whether these findings remain consistent in different religious contexts would offer valuable insights into the broader applicability of the relationship between authentic leadership and volunteer retention. Future studies could also investigate whether specific components of authentic leadership act as mediators in the relationship between others and volunteer retention. For example, researchers could explore whether leader self-awareness mediates the connection between relational transparency and volunteer retention. By testing mediation models, researchers can uncover the underlying mechanisms through which authentic leadership shapes retention outcomes.

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