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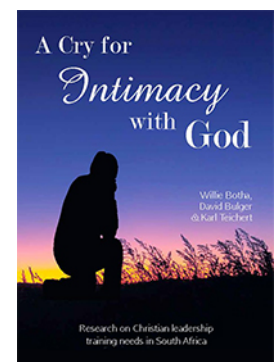
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Welcome to the relaunch of Research Link, which was shared within the OC world between 2007 and 2010. This issue of Research Link highlights two thought provoking resources from Africa that provide insight for training Christian leaders. Enjoy!

A Cry for Intimacy: Insight for Training Christian Leaders

What are the training needs of South Africa's Christian leadership? The need for training Church leaders in South Africa has been apparent for many years, but an accurate and comprehensive picture of the needs facing Christian leaders across South Africa has previously never been adequately researched... until now!

A Cry for Intimacy documents the responses from 800 South African pastoral leaders. OC workers in South Africa helped facilitate this extensive research project conducted by TOPIC (Trainers of Pastors International Coalition) Southern Africa, which involved ten years of scientifically verifiable research. Authors Willie Botha and OC workers David Bulger and Karl Teichert provide vital information for the future of the church in South Africa. It answers a number of key questions, including what gaps exist and what urgent needs face Christian leaders in various locations, denominations and cultural segments. It lays a critical foundation for addressing these needs and provides stimulus for further research.



The surprising discovery of the research was that the greatest felt need of South African Church leaders was intimacy with God. This was mentioned twice as often as the next felt need.

This study is also valuable for those not working in Southern Africa, as it provides an example of applying research to the equipping of Christian leaders. Pastoral trainers and mentors will appreciate chapter 6. The main point of the chapter is "There is a critical need to know your students" (page 90). This particular research brings to light different the felt needs of South African Church leaders based on gender, age, education, experience and other demographics. However reading this chapter should inspire anyone who equips Christian leaders to take into consideration the needs his or her students.

Mission information workers will be particularly interested in chapters 2-5, which provide a detailed description of how this research project was organized and carried out. This information could serve as a useful example for gathering, analyzing and applying information to empower Christian leaders in your area of ministry.

“There is a critical need to know your students.”

These are some of the questions the research project was designed to answer:

- What types of training do Christian leaders say they need?
- How do those needs vary, based on age, gender, economic background, Christian affiliation, level of involvement, etc.?
- What type of training is most needed?
- How important is continued leadership development?
- What are some of the personal challenges facing leaders and their communities?
- How do pastoral leaders believe other leaders in the Church need to be trained?

How would you answer these kinds of questions for the area in which you serve?

You can find out more about *Cry for Intimacy* at: www.ocafrica.net.

17 Insights into African Leadership

The Africa Leadership Study asked over 8,000 African Christians to identify lay leaders, pastors and organizations demonstrating a high level of positive impact. Respondents were also asked to identify key components of mature, impactful leadership.

In the middle of the 17 insights is a cluster of five key areas for developing the impact and influence of African leaders. Consider how these insights apply to your ministry:

Insight #6 African Christian leaders minister within multi ethnic and cross cultural settings where intercultural skills, competencies and commitments are crucial to success.

Insight #7 African Christian leaders are increasingly part of a digital world, although some have limited access. Ability to effectively use digital media such as internet, e-mail and social media to communicate with and train those served is becoming ever more important.



Insight #8 Mentoring is central to the development of leadership in Africa. More than half of the respondents identified mentoring as an important tool used to develop leaders.

Insight #9 Formal education plays a key role in leadership development, but it is not the only factor. Most leaders indicated that they have been shaped by a combination of formal education, informal training and mentoring relationships.

Insight #10 African Christian leaders and organizations achieve success through relational networks. Thus opportunity and skills for building relational networks at the national, regional and global levels are highly important. The report suggests that outsiders working in Africa should understand how these networks work and be culturally appropriate in their participation.

Each of the 17 insights provides additional statistics and questions for reflection which facilitate application to leadership development. This material will also be further expanded upon in the forthcoming book, *Patterns in African Christian Leadership*.

Even if you are not involved in leadership development in Africa, the insights offered in the report will motivate you to critically reflect on ministry in your own context. You can learn more about this study at <http://www.africaleadershipstudy.org>.

Research Quotes

“Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.”

— Albert Einstein

“An expert is a person who has made all the mistakes that can be made in a very narrow field.”

— Niels Bohr

Questions or Comments?

Research LINK is a quarterly bulletin produced by the Research Department of One Challenge and distributed among workers within the OC Global Alliance. Share your questions or comments with us at Research@oci.org. For additional information about OC Research visit www.OCresearch.info.