Retirement policy implementation and retirees' welfare: a case of Church of Uganda's retired clergy people in central Uganda dioceses

by

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Introduction

The study addressed itself to the relationship between Church of Uganda's retirement policy implementation and the welfare of its retired clergy people in central Uganda dioceses. The study comprised nine chapters, namely; introduction, review of existing literature, methodology; presentation of the independent variable's historical, theoretical, and philosophical aspects; analysis, interpretation, and discussion of findings; and a summation of the study including its contribution to existing knowledge and recommendations.

Study objectives

The study was based on the following four objectives:

1. to investigate the relationship between the provisions of the retirement policy of the Church of Uganda and their implementation, in central Uganda dioceses,

2. to assess the effect of implementing the retirement policy of the Church of Uganda on the cost of living of its retired clergy people,
3. to analyse the effect of the cost of living on the welfare of the retired clergy people in central Uganda dioceses of the Church of Uganda, and
4. to assess the contribution of the implementation of the retirement policy on the welfare of retired clergy people in the central Uganda dioceses of the Church of Uganda.

Methodology

The study adopted the post-positivism research paradigm. This approach takes into consideration the use of both quantitative and qualitative patterns. The target population was 240 people out of whom a sample size of 148 respondents was selected using the simple random sampling technique for retired clergy persons, and the non-probability/ purposive sampling technique for administrators. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, an interview guide and a document checklist. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in quantitative analysis, while thematic analysis was employed to analyse qualitative data.

Key findings

An investigation of the relationship between retirement policy and its implementation using descriptive statistical showed the following: the state of the retirement policy yielded results of (Mean = 3.26, SD = 1.13) while retirement policy implementation yielded results of

(Mean = 3.08, SD = 1.30).Thereafter correlations yielded a low positive significant relationship between the retirement policy and its implementation [r(94) =.464, p<0.01].The regression analysis further revealed that implementation was about 22 % conterminous with the retirement policy; implying that the policy had gaps in relation to 'how' 'where' 'who' and 'when'. This is because provisions of a policy and its implementation go hand in hand.

As for the relationship between Church of Uganda's retirement policy implementation and the cost of living, the correlations yielded a low significant relationship between implementation of the retirement policy and the cost of living for retired clergy people [r (94) = .262, p <0.05]. The regression analysis showed that implementation of the retirement policy contributed 7% to retired clergy people's cost of living. The results indicated that there was a linear relationship between retirement policy implementation and retired clergy people's cost of living. That is to say, a unit change in retirement policy implementation caused a similar change in the cost of living of retired clergy people.

As to whether the cost of living affected the welfare of retired clergy people, descriptive statistical results for the state of welfare were (Mean = 3.10, SD = 1.14). The correlations yielded a low significant relationship [r(94) =.641, p<0.01], and the model summary produced results that showed that cost of living affected welfare at [r^2 =.411]. This signified that the cost of living impacted the welfare of retired clergy people at about 41%. Implying that the cost of living ought to be put into consideration

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when welfare benefits are considered and that what dioceses gave as retirement benefits were incommensurate with the cost of living of retired clergy people and therefore very inadequate to meet the cost of living.

Considering the overall assessment of the effect of retirement policy on the welfare of retired clergy people as per the correlations, there was a low positive relationship $r(94)=.404$, $p<0.01$. This implies that the policy contributed to welfare but the contribution was even less than 50%.

Key recommendations

In light of the above findings, the study made the following recommendations:

One, the Provincial Assembly should revise the current retirement policy, to integrate key retirement policy provisions that should support dioceses during the implementation process.

Two, Diocesan Councils and Secretariats should be mandated to implement a revised retirement policy. The councils should also encourage the establishment of "retirement offices" whose officers should periodically provide information on the welfare of retired clergy people. The proposed "retirement offices" should among other things be responsible for pre-retirement programs like seminars and counseling for clergy people.

Three, the Church Commissioner should come up with Provincial and Diocesan projects that are aimed at funding a revised retirement policy. Such projects should include

a loan fund to ease the housing burden of retired clergy people since the findings of the study indicated that 57% of the retired clergy people cited housing as an acute challenge they faced.

Four, in a bid to ease the burden that comes with having to take care of a large number of retired clergy people, the Church of Uganda should consider raising the retirement age: for instance from 65 to 70 for low-rank clergy people, and to 75 for.

Five, further research on the welfare of the active clergy should be undertaken. This is because the findings of this study showed that the working experience of a clergy person determines his or her retirement welfare, as supported by the Life Course theory according to which the experiences of retirees are not necessarily the result of a fixed stage in life (retirement) but a reflection of their accumulated life experiences (Amaike, 2009; Markson & Hollis-Sawyer, 2000; Moen, 2001). Such a study could help to ascertain how dioceses can plan for better working conditions and the welfare of clergy people.

Key references

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