



Human Resources Management as Catalyst for Sustainable Church Growth in Local Baptist Churches in Oyo Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated human resources management as catalyst for sustainable church growth in local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis with objectives of investigating the root causes of human resources mismanagement and ascertaining effective human resources management for sustainable church growth among Local Baptist Churches (LBCs) in Oyo metropolis. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The sample size of the study consisted of 300 respondents made as follows: fifty (50) pastors, fifty (50) deacons, fifty (50) church workers, and one hundred and fifty (150) church members. They are purposefully selected randomly from fifty (50) local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis. A total of six (6) respondents were drawn from each of the fifty (50) local Baptist Churches in the designated sample. The research instruments used for this study were both self-structured questionnaire and interview guide of some leaders in the selected churches. Findings showed that poor leadership and inefficient administration, lack of delegation of authority, lack of insight on the part of leaders, power tussle between leaders and members, slow or lack of technology adoption among others are the root causes of human resources mismanagement in local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis. The means to manage the resources are; utilizing recognition system for church workers, church workers review and evaluations, involving members in the church activities, effective delegation of duties, leadership development, accountability, continuous mentoring, and so on. The study concluded that no church can grow beyond the administrative capacity or administrative sensitivity of the leader in utilizing the available human resources. The study, therefore, recommended that local Baptist churches in



Oyo metropolis through their leaders ensure that human resources are adequately motivated by praise and honest appreciation.

Keywords: Human Resources Management, Local Baptist Churches, and Sustainable Church Growth

Introduction

Successful church leadership goes beyond management of plans and tasks. It envisions the future and sets a new direction for the local church. Successful leaders mobilize all possible means and human resources; they inspire all members of the local church to support the new mission and execute it with enthusiasm. Human Resources (HR) management is widely recognized as an important way to improve organizational performance. Many companies have adopted a number of human resource management policies and practices to more clearly reflect the contribution of their employees to the bottom line. However, the goals and practices of human resource management are not without criticism, and while there are many ethically-oriented analyzes of various aspects of human resource management, there is little evidence of the role of human resources in church organizations (Fremaux & Michelson, 2017:34-37).

HR management is used as an umbrella term that encompasses all aspects of human resource practices such as: recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, personnel policy, personnel philosophy, and practices aimed at attracting, retaining, motivating, and developing employees (Armstrong & Taylor, 2017). Scholars pointed out that within the church's unusual structure as an institution symbolically referred to as the body of Christ, the church still needs to be managed in the same way as other secular institutions (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015:551-555). Scholar agrees that the church is both an institution and a spiritual entity, and that church leaders need to understand both aspects of this definition. Therefore, suffice it to say that church leaders, such as the top clergy of the church, should be aware of the need for specialized expertise in the church's HR management function (O'Brien, 2019). Therefore, it



is imperative to understand human resource management in the context of religious organizations, especially with respect to the internal and external factors prevalent in these organizations.

Statement of Problem

The ideal approach to leadership in managing human resources for sustainable church growth has been a major challenge for the church. Churches are generally reluctant to use management science in church administration (Oosthuizen & Lategan, 2015). Also, it has been contended that the church's lack of management science training posed challenges in performing basic administrative tasks, including personnel management (Sifuna-Evelia, 2017). In addition, some pastors in churches and church organizations are well educated in spiritual formation but lack administrative aspects and therefore face administrative challenges (Gibson, 2018). Such deficiencies lead to inefficient management of the church's human resources, resulting in problems such as poor performance. However, the aforementioned studies have not sufficiently explored management of human resources for sustainable church growth. Therefore, this paper sought to explore issues that lead to mismanagement of HR for lack of sustainable church growth and as well to discuss effective management of human resources for sustainable church growth in Local Baptist Churches (LBCs) in Oyo metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

This paper aims to examine human resources management as a catalyst for sustainable church growth in Local Baptist Churches (LBCs) in Oyo metropolis. The objectives are to:

1. investigate the root causes of human resources mismanagement among LBCs in Oyo metropolis
2. ascertain how human resources can be managed for sustainable church growth among LBCs in Oyo metropolis.

Literature Review

Concept of Human Resources



Human Resources (HR) is the set of people who make up the workforce of an organization, business sector, industry, or economy. A narrower concept is human capital, the knowledge and skills which the individual's command. Similar terms include manpower, labor, or personnel. The Human Resources department (HR department) of an organization performs human resource management, overseeing various aspects of employment, such as compliance with labor law and employment standards, interviewing and selection, performance management, administration of employee benefits, organizing of employee files with the required documents for future reference, and some aspects of recruitment (also known as talent acquisition) and employee off boarding (Blaine, 2017:137).

Human resources serve as the link between an organization's management and its employees. The duties include planning, recruitment and selection process, posting job ads, evaluating the performance of employees, organizing resumes and job applications, scheduling interviews and assisting in the process and ensuring background checks. Another job is payroll and benefits administration which deals with ensuring vacation and sick time are accounted for, reviewing payroll, and participating in benefits tasks, like claim resolutions, reconciling benefits statements, and approving invoices for payment (Heathfield, 2021). Human Resources also coordinate employee relations activities and programs including, but not limited to, employee counseling.

Pioneering economist John R. Commons mentioned "human resource" in his 1893 book "The Distribution of Wealth" but did not elaborate. The expression was used during the 1910s to 1930s to promote the idea that human beings are of worth (as in human dignity); by the early 1950s, it meant people as a means to an end (for employers) (Kaufman, 2008). Among scholars the first use of the phrase in that sense was in a 1958 report by economist E. Wight Bakke (McGaughey, 2018). One major concern about considering people as assets or resources is that they will be commoditized, objectified, and abused. Human beings are not



"commodities" or "resources", but are creative and social beings in a productive enterprise.

Management of Human Resources

Human Resource Management (HRM) is defined as a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets; the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives (McGaughey, 2018). From this definition, one can deduce that HRM or simply HR is a function in organizations designed to maximize employee performance in service of their employer's strategic objectives. Human Resource is primarily concerned with how people are managed within organizations, focusing on policies and systems (Armstrong, 2006). Human Resource departments and units in organizations are typically responsible for a number of activities, including employee recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, and rewarding (e.g., managing pay and benefit systems) (Johnason, 2009:19-27). Human Resource is also concerned with industrial relations, that is, the balancing of organizational practices with regulations arising from collective bargaining and governmental laws (Collings & Wood, 2009:6).

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a product of the human relations movement of the early 20th century, when researchers began documenting ways of creating business value through the strategic management of the workforce. The function was initially dominated by transactional work, such as payroll and benefits administration, but due to globalization, company consolidation, technological advancement, and further research, Human Resources now focuses on strategic initiatives like mergers and acquisitions, talent management, succession planning, industrial and labor relations, ethical considerations, diversity and inclusion. These, among other initiatives contribute to the understanding of HRM as a contemporary issue owing to their sustained evolutionary nature (Pauwe & Boon, 2009:38-54).

Sustainable Church Growth



One of the essential qualities of God's kingdom is growth. The church is a living organism and any healthy organism must essentially grow. This is reflective in the teachings of Jesus about the principles of fruitfulness, commission to go and make disciples and his parables about growth in the kingdom of God (Hayward, 2000:2-3). There is no doubt that the Church world-wide has experienced a substantial and exponential growth from its inception in the first century till now. What started with a few above hundred people in Judea has now grown to millions of people globally. However, sustainable church growth is geared towards attracting new people and repelling those who remain. This is why a scholar emphasizes the balance of qualitative and quantitative growth in the definition of Church growth. Church growth is all that is involved in bringing men and women that do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ into fellowship with Him and into responsible Church membership (Wagner, 2007:18). This appears to give a good picture of a sustained Church growth. People are brought to become part of the Church and then made to become responsible church members who are committed to following the Lord in all its ramifications. Also, if organizational and structural development is neglected, growth will be hindered. When new people are not effectively absorbed into the church because of poor or lack of leadership development of programmes to meet their needs, the church will keep experiencing growth problem.

On the other hand, if organizational development is emphasized without careful attention to quantitative and qualitative growth, the church will not be distinguishable from the average social club. The church is a living organism, the body of Christ; and it should grow in size, in effectiveness, in faithfulness and in outreach. Scholar argues that sustainable church growth requires three balances: balancing the five-fold purpose of God for His church, balancing the eight areas of church growth and balancing the natural and supernatural dimensions of church growth. Balancing the five-fold purpose of God for His church implies that the church must increasingly be experiencing the power and presence of God in worship (worship); be increasingly reaching out to the lost and winning them (evangelism); becoming deeper in mutual love (fellowship); be more and



more like Christ, growing into deeper maturity as more disciples are being raised in the Church (discipleship); and be increasingly giving opportunities of service to members as they all affect the community more and more (ministry) (Rainer, 1990:448-9).

Balancing the eight areas of church growth means that the church must simultaneously and correspondingly be increasing in size and number; adding more structures as well as material resources to create more conducive environment; planting more churches; growing in grace and knowledge of Christ; increasing in income, and sharing love more and more. The natural dimension of church growth refers to the need for the pastor and church workers to make efforts and put some things in place for the church to grow. The supernatural dimension is for God to bring the actual growth by releasing His power and grace upon the pastor and church workers, blessing their growth efforts and supernaturally causing the growth to occur. In actual fact, sustainable church growth is ensuring the three balances are sustained and maintained (Rainer, 1990).

Sustainable growth requires the church making all necessary adjustments to catch up with technological advancement. Sustainable church growth also requires the church to help workers in performing the described role by learning to assign responsibilities and select church workers based on their SHAPE (spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experience). For sustainable church growth, church workers in pastoral leadership, diaconate leadership, new members' assimilation, and all committees'/ministries' heads must appreciate the importance of every member's involvement.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. It involves collecting data that accurately and objectively describe how things are in their present situation. The population comprised all leaders, workers and members in all churches in Oyo metropolis. The sample size of the study consisted of 300 respondents made as follows: fifty (50) pastors, fifty (50) deacons, fifty (50) church workers, and one hundred and fifty (150) church members. They are purposefully selected



randomly from fifty (50) local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis. A total of six (6) respondents were drawn from each of the fifty (50) local Baptist Churches in the designated sample. The research instruments used for this study were both self-structured questionnaire and interview guide of some leaders in the selected churches.

Result and Discussion

To investigate the root causes of human resources mismanagement in LBCs in Oyo metropolis

Table 1: Root Causes of Mismanagement of Human Resources in LBCS in Oyo Metropolis

Items	Respondents	SA	A	SD	D	Total
Poor leadership and inefficient administration	Pastors	24	25	1	0	50
	Deacons	17	31	0	2	50
	Workers	32	18	0	0	50
	Members	83	54	2	11	150
	Total	156	128	3	13	300
Lack of delegation of authority	Total Percentage	52%	42.7%	1%	4.3%	100%
	Pastors	17	23	6	4	50
	Deacons	29	15	1	5	50
	Workers	29	15	0	6	50
	Members	75	45	19	11	150



Lack of insight on the part of leaders	Total	150	98	26	26	300
	Total Percentage	50%	32.6%	8.7%	8.7%	100%
	Pastors	24	15	1	10	50
	Deacons	21	23	5	1	50
	Workers	23	22	4	1	50
	Members	103	34	0	13	150
Poor communication skill between the leader and members	Total	171	94	10	25	300
	Total Percentage	57%	31.4%	3.3 %	8.3%	100%
	Pastors	19	26	0	5	50
	Deacons	23	19	6	2	50
	Workers	32	16	0	2	50
	Members	98	36	4	12	50
Clergy/laity conflict	Total	172	97	10	21	150
	Total Percentage	57.3%	32.4%	3.3 %	7%	100%
	Pastors	21	23	4	2	50
	Deacons	13	28	3	6	50
	Workers	20	27	2	1	50
	Members	94	35	11	10	150
	Total	148	113	20	19	300



	Total	49.3%	37.7%	6.7%	6.3%	100%
	Percentage					
Hectic schedules and overwhelming workloads on both the leaders and members	Pastors	31	18	0	1	50
	Deacons	19	25	3	3	50
	Workers	23	27	0	0	50
	Members	79	60	7	4	150
	Total	152	130	10	8	300
	Total	50.7	43.3%	3.3 %	2.7%	100%
	Percentage					
Lack of accountability	Pastors	23	19	0	9	50
	Deacons	27	19	2	2	50
	Workers	28	15	7	3	50
	Members	58	71	13	4	150
	Total	136	124	22	18	300
	Total	45.4%	41.3%	7.3%	6%	100%
	Percentage					
Slow or lack of technology adoption	Pastors	17	23	6	4	50
	Deacons	29	15	1	5	50
	Workers	29	15	0	6	50
	Members	75	45	19	11	150
	Total	150	98	26	26	300
	Total	50%	32.6%	8.7%	8.7%	100%
	Percentage					
Little or no motivation for church workers	Pastors	23	19	0	9	50
	Deacons	27	19	2	2	50
	Workers	28	15	7	3	50
	Members	58	71	13	4	150
	Total	136	124	22	18	300
	Total	45.4%	41.3%	7.3%	6%	100%
	Percentage					



Power tussle between leaders and members	Pastors	19	26	0	5	50
	Deacons	23	19	6	2	50
	Workers	32	16	0	2	50
	Members	98	36	4	12	50
	Total	172	97	10	21	150
	Total Percentage	57.3%	32.4%	3.3 %	7%	100%

Source: Field work 2024

Table 1 shows the responses of the respondents on the root causes of mismanagement of human resources in churches in Oyo metropolis. The table reveals that poor leadership and inefficient administration is a contributing factor for mismanagement of human resources in churches in Oyo metropolis as agreed by 94. 7% of the respondents. Every church has real possibilities for growth but the major responsibilities rest on church leadership. Human resources management poses a challenge to the church. Part of the wastage which the church is experiencing is on human resources. There are so many untapped human resources waiting on the pews of the church today. This calls for administrative improvement (Olaleye, 2012). Lack of delegation of authority is another cause of mismanagement of human resources s agreed by 82.6% of the respondents. 88.4% of the sampled population agreed that lack of insight of the part of leaders is a cause for mismanagement of human resource in churches in Oyo metropolis. This affirmed by scholar that once a leader's job grows beyond his personal capacity to achieve, his success lies in his ability to teach others (that is, multiply himself through others), and share the jobs with the able ones, so that the greater jobs, because of his unique organizational placement, he performs alone (Adeniji, 2008).



Also, the table shows that 89.7% of the respondents agreed that poor communication skill between the leader and members is one of reasons for mismanagement of human resources in churches in Oyo metropolis. In the same vein, 87% of the respondents agreed that clergy/laity conflict resulted into mismanagement of human resources in churches in Oyo metropolis. The table further reveals that hectic schedules and overwhelming workloads on both the leaders and members is a cause for mismanagement of human resources with 94% respondents agreeing to the statement. Moreover, 86.7% of the respondents agreed that lack of accountability is a cause for mismanagement of human resources. Item eight of the table shows that 82.6% of the respondents agreed that slow or lack of technology adoption is cause for mismanagement of human resources in churches in Oyo metropolis. Another cause of mismanagement of human resources as is little or no motivation for church workers as 86.7% respondents agreed with the statement. The last item of the table shows that 89.7% of the respondents agreed that power tussle between leaders and members is cause for mismanagement of human resources in churches in Oyo metropolis.

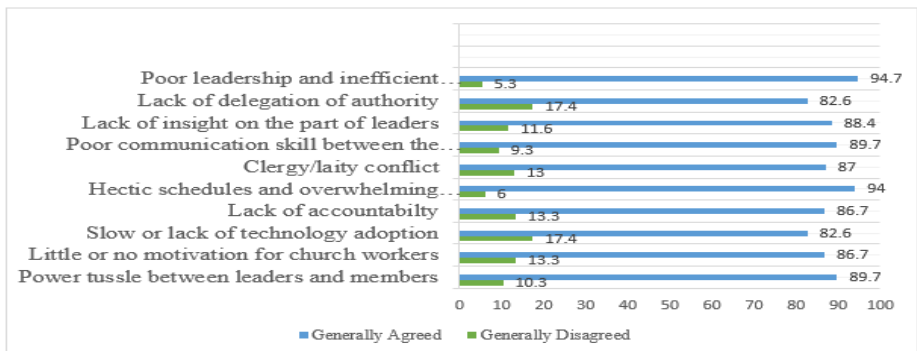


Figure 1: Perception of Respondents on the Root causes of human resources mismanagement in Local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis



How to managed human resources for sustainable church growth in local Baptist churches in OBC

Table 2: Management of Human Resources for Sustainable Church Growth in Local Baptist Churches in Oyo metropolis

Items	Responde nts	SA	A	SD	D	Tot al
Utilizing recognition system for church workers	Pastors	29	18	1	2	50
	Deacons	37	13	0	0	50
	Workers	39	7	2	2	50
	Members	93	54	2	1	150
	Total	198	92	5	5	300
Church workers reviews and evaluations	Total Percentage	66 %	30. 6%	1.7 %	1. 7 %	100 %
	Pastors	39	7	0	4	50
	Deacons	26	20	1	3	50
	Workers	43	7	0	0	50
	Members	95	25	15	1	150
Involving members in the church activities	Total	203	59	16	2	300
	Total Percentage	67. 7%	19. 7%	5.3 %	7. 3 %	100 %
	Pastors	29	21	0	0	50
	Deacons	21	27	1	1	50
	Workers	23	26	0	1	50



Effective delegation of duties	Members	103	43	0	4	150
	Total	176	117	1	6	300
	Total	58.	39	0.3	2	100
	Percentage	7%	%	%	%	%
	Pastors	19	26	0	5	50
	Deacons	23	25	0	2	50
	Workers	32	16	0	2	50
Unity of purpose	Members	98	36	4	1	50
					2	
	Total	172	103	4	2	150
					1	
	Total	57.	34.	1.3	7	100
	Percentage	3%	4%	%	%	%
	Pastors	21	27	0	2	50
Good relational skills/communica tion	Deacons	13	28	3	6	50
	Workers	20	27	2	1	50
	Members	94	46	0	1	150
					0	
	Total	148	128	5	1	300
					9	
	Total	49.	42.	1.7	6.	100
Good relational skills/communica tion	Percentage	3%	7%	%	3 %	%
	Pastors	31	18	0	1	50
	Deacons	19	25	3	3	50
	Workers	23	27	0	0	50



Good leadership and administration	Members	79	60	7	4	150
	Total	152	130	10	8	300
	Total Percentage	50. 7	43. 3%	3.3 %	2. 7 %	100 %
	Pastors	23	19	0	9	50
	Deacons	27	19	2	2	50
	Workers	28	15	7	3	50
	Members	58	71	13	4	150
	Total	136	124	22	1 8	300
	Total Percentage	45. 4%	41. 3%	7.3 %	6 %	100 %
	Pastors	17	23	6	4	50
Accountability	Deacons	29	15	1	5	50
	Workers	29	15	0	6	50
	Members	75	45	19	11	150
	Total	150	98	26	2 6	300
	Total Percentage	50 %	32. 6%	8.7 %	8. 7 %	100 %
	Pastors	23	19	0	9	50



Continuous mentoring	Deacons	27	19	2	2	50
	Workers	28	15	7	3	50
	Members	58	71	13	4	150
	Total	136	124	22	1	300
	Total Percentage	45.4%	41.3%	7.3%	6%	100%
Right orientation	Pastors	19	26	0	5	50
	Deacons	23	19	6	2	50
	Workers	32	16	0	2	50
	Members	98	36	4	1	50
	Total	172	97	10	2	150
Effective budgeting and implementation.	Total Percentage	57.3%	32.4%	3.3%	7%	100%
	Pastors	39	7	0	4	50
	Deacons	26	20	1	3	50
	Workers	43	7	0	0	50
	Members	95	25	15	1	150
	Total	203	59	16	5	300
					2	



Complimenting spirit	Total	67.	19.	5.3	7.	100
	Percentage	7%	7%	%	3 %	%
	Pastors	21	23	4	2	50
	Deacons	13	28	3	6	50
	Workers	20	27	2	1	50
	Members	94	35	11	1	150
	Total	148	113	20	0 9	300
Total		49.	37.	6.7	6.	100
Percentage		3%	7	%	3 %	%

Source: Field work 2024

Table 2 shows the perception of the respondents on the management of human resources for sustainable church growth in local Baptist Churches in Oyo metropolis. The table shows that 96.6% of the respondents agreed that utilizing recognition system for church workers is one of the ways for the management of human resources. Church workers reviews and evaluations is another way for the management of human resources as agreed by 87.4% of the respondents. 97.7% of the respondents agreed that involving members in the church activities is one way for the management of human resources in local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis. Subsequently, 91.7% of the respondents agreed that effective delegation of duties is a means on how to manage human resources in the church. It further shows that 92%, 94%, 86.7%, and 82.6% of the respondents are of the opinion that unity of purpose, good relational skills/communication, good leadership and administration, and accountability respectively are the practical ways to effectively manage human resource in local Baptist churches in Oyo



metropolis. The table shows that 86.7% of the respondents agreed that continuous mentoring is a way to manage the human resources in the church. Right orientation to the kingdom service is another way on how to manage the human resources in the church as agreed by 89.7% of the respondents. 87.4% of the respondents agreed that effective budgeting and implementation is also a means for the management human resources in the church. The last item of the table shows that complimenting spirit is one way for human resources to be well manage in the church as 87% of the respondents agreed with the statement.

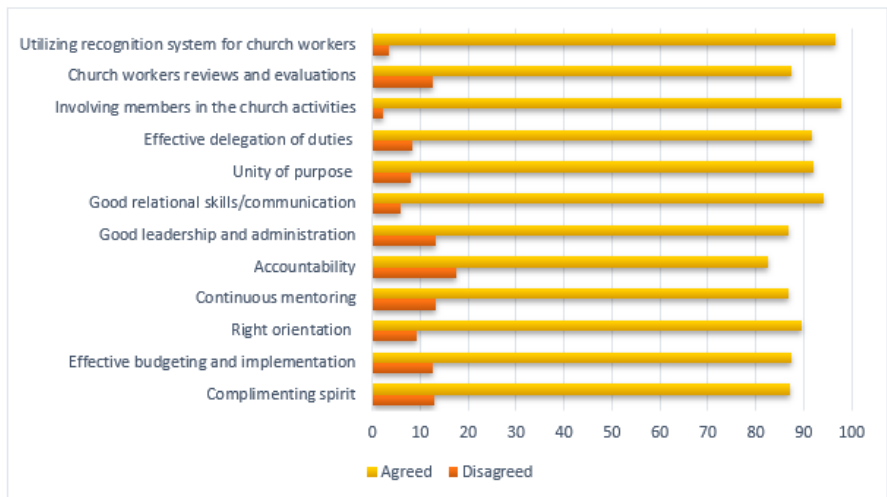


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents on utilizing human resources in LBCs in Oyo metropolis

Conclusion

Successful leadership goes beyond management of plans and tasks. It envisions the future and sets a new direction for the local church. Successful leaders mobilize all possible means and human resources;



they inspire all members of the local church to support the new mission and execute it with enthusiasm. Human resource management is widely recognized as an important way to improve organizational performance. There are lots of wastage in many churches as a result of bad administration. Good administration will put wastage in check. A close study of contemporary trend in church growth clearly shows that new generation churches take advantage of poor administration or administrative loop holes of the older churches to draw their members. The level at which a church would make impact is greatly determined by the level of administration that is put in place. No church can grow beyond the administrative capacity or administrative sensitivity of the leader. Hence, the need for good leadership and administration for the management of human resources for sustainable church growth in local Baptist Churches in Oyo metropolis.

Recommendation

Based on the outcome of the research, the following recommendations are made as follows;

1. Based on the finding that poor leadership and inefficient administration is a contributing factor for mismanagement of human resources in LBCs in Oyo metropolis, therefore church leaders and unit head department should acquire good leadership and administration skills through leadership seminars and conferences geared towards human resources management.
2. The study affirmed that utilizing recognition system for church workers is a way to enhance human resources for sustainable church growth. Therefore, local Baptist churches in Oyo metropolis should ensure that human resources are adequately motivated by praise and honest appreciation. This is because the human resources that are motivated would deliver their best towards organizational growth and development.

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