

**EXPLORING LEADERSHIP PERCEPTIONS ON AFRICA INLAND CHURCH'S ROLE
IN ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE: A CASE STUDY OF AFRICA INLAND CHURCH-
KENYA, KAJIADO TOWNSHIP**

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SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration

This is my original work and has not been presented for Award of a degree in Scott Christian University

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MT/10/14

Sign: Date:

Approval

This research Thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors

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Second Supervisor: Professor Agnes Makau Ph.D.

Sign: Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family for their encouragement all through my academic life. May the Almighty God abundantly bless them with long lives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the Almighty God for His care and good health during my work. I would like to acknowledge my supervisor: Dr. Mary Namukoko Mumo and Professor Agnes Makau and Christian University for their support in compiling this piece of work.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIC-K	Africa Inland Church-Kenya
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ATR	African Traditional Religion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OAU	Organization for African Unity
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Church Leadership

Pastors: Ordained ministers responsible for preaching, teaching, and pastoral oversight.

Elders: Lay leaders entrusted with governance, discipline, and spiritual guidance.

Sunday School Teachers: Leaders responsible for Christian education of children and youth.

Women's Ministry Leaders: Coordinators of women's fellowship, empowerment, and spiritual growth.

2. Dimensions of Perception

Theological: Beliefs about scripture, sin, stewardship, and moral responsibility.

Practical: Views on feasibility and effectiveness of church-led interventions.

Legal: Awareness of national laws and policies, and the church's role in compliance or advocacy.

Cultural: Perceptions shaped by traditions, peer influence, and societal norms.

3. Role of the Church

Prevention: Teaching, awareness campaigns, and moral guidance.

Response: Counseling, chaplaincy, and spiritual interventions.

Reporting: Accountability mechanisms, referrals, and collaboration with legal/community structures.

Healing: Restoration of spiritual, moral, and social well-being.

Faith-Based Interventions: Programs integrating biblical principles with practical support.

Theological Messaging: Scripture-based teachings promoting child protection as a divine mandate.

4. Child Protection and Community Context

Child Abuse: Acts or omissions causing physical, emotional, sexual harm, or exploitation.

Pastoralist Community: Maasai population in Kajiado County, whose lifestyle influences child vulnerability.

Safe Spaces: Environments offering emotional support, guidance, and protection.

Mentorship Programs: Initiatives providing guidance, life skills, and spiritual formation.

Community Awareness: Efforts to educate and sensitize the population on child rights and abuse prevention.

Institutional Collaboration: Partnerships with NGOs, government, and civil society to enhance child protection services.

ABSTRACT

Child abuse remains a pressing global challenge, with faith-based institutions increasingly recognized as frontline actors in safeguarding vulnerable children. In Kenya, particularly within rural and pastoralist contexts, churches such as Africa Inland Church-Kajiado Township (AIC-K) play a pivotal role in providing spiritual counseling, safe spaces, and educational support. Yet, systematic evidence on the effectiveness and sustainability of faith-based child protection models remains limited. This study therefore explored church leadership perceptions of AIC-K's role in addressing child abuse, situating the inquiry within Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Structural Theory, and guided by Empowerment and Social Capital frameworks. A qualitative exploratory design was employed to capture rich, contextual insights into leadership experiences and institutional practices. Data were collected through twelve semi-structured interviews with pastors, elders, and ministry leaders, three focus group discussions involving eighteen participants across pastoral, lay, and departmental leadership, and document analysis of church policies and reports. Stratified purposive sampling ensured representation across gender, ministry roles, and leadership strata, while thematic analysis using NVivo software facilitated systematic coding and theme development. Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were applied to enhance rigor. Findings revealed that leaders perceive child protection as both a theological and moral responsibility. However, barriers such as limited training, resource constraints, and entrenched cultural practices, including corporal punishment, hinder effective safeguarding. Conversely, enabling factors included community trust, chaplaincy structures, and spiritual counseling, which fostered resilience and moral development among children. Analysis highlighted a dual dynamic: while structural and cultural barriers constrain intervention, faith-based resources and moral authority provide significant opportunities for child protection. The study concludes that effective faith-based safeguarding requires integration of theological ethics to guide motivation with empirical frameworks to ensure accountability. By bridging universal child rights with African moral worlds, this research contributes to practice by informing faith-based safeguarding strategies and to scholarship by advancing applied ethics and religion-and-development discourse in Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter begins by outlining the background of the study, which sets the context and situates the research problem within its real-world setting. The chapter further presents the problem statement, highlighting the specific issue that necessitated the study, followed by the purpose of the study, which explains the overall aim of the research. It also details the study objectives and research questions that guide the investigation. In addition, the chapter provides the justification for conducting the study, its limitations and delimitations, as well as the underlying assumptions made. Finally, it defines key operational terms used in the study and gives a brief summary that links all the sections together, thereby preparing the reader for the subsequent chapters.

1.1 Background of the Study

Child abuse remains a pervasive global crisis, affecting millions of children annually and undermining their spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. The World Health Organization estimates that nearly 300 million children experience various forms of maltreatment each year, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, with long-term consequences for their health and development¹. UNICEF's 2021 report affirms, "Violence against children is a universal issue, transcending socio-economic, cultural, and religious boundaries."²

¹ World Health Organization. *Global Status Report on Preventing Violence Against Children 2020*. Geneva: WHO, 2020, pp. 23

² UNICEF. *Violence Against Children: Global Status Report 2021*. New York: UNICEF, 2021, pp. 12

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) are uniquely positioned to respond to child welfare concerns. Churches, mosques, temples, and other religious institutions serve as platforms for community engagement, value formation, and support systems. Their moral and spiritual authority enables them to act as advocates, educators, and caregivers in child protection efforts. “Christian organizations such as World Vision and Compassion International exemplify this role through programs focused on education, family strengthening, and poverty alleviation aimed at preventing child abuse.”³

In the African context, child abuse is often caused by socio-economic hardship, harmful cultural practices, and weak institutional systems. “The African Child Policy Forum identifies poverty, illiteracy, and conflict as major contributors to child maltreatment. Practices such as child labor, early marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), and physical violence remain common, leaving many children without access to safety and justice.”⁴

Churches in Africa have historically played a vital role in addressing these challenges. As community anchors, they provide education, healthcare, and social services to vulnerable populations. “Many operate schools and children’s homes, and actively campaign against harmful practices like FGM and child marriage. Initiatives such as the African Network of Religious Leaders Advocating for Child Protection (ANRCL) illustrate how faith leaders are mobilizing to

³ World Vision International. “Child Protection and Advocacy.” Accessed August 30, 2025. <https://www.wvi.org/child-protection>, pp. 4

⁴ African Child Policy Forum. *The African Report on Child Wellbeing 2020: How Friendly Are African Governments Towards Children?* Addis Ababa: ACPF, 2020, PP 47

address child abuse through community-driven, values-based approaches.”⁵ However, church leaders acknowledge persistent obstacles, including limited resources, minimal government support, and cultural resistance. Balancing respect for tradition with the imperative to protect children remains a delicate and ongoing task.

In Kenya, child abuse is a pressing concern exacerbated by poverty, urbanization, and weak enforcement of child protection laws. “A 2019 report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF revealed high incidences of physical, sexual, and emotional violence against children.”⁶ While the government has enacted policies such as the Children’s Act, enforcement is inconsistent due to resource limitations and institutional gaps. Religious institutions, including the Africa Inland Church (AIC-K), are recognized by church leaders as key players in child welfare through their educational, counseling, and advocacy initiatives. Yet, cultural practices and resource constraints continue to challenge their effectiveness.

In Kajiado County, the Maasai community grapples with alarming rates of child abuse, creating a crisis that demands urgent attention. Studies in Kajiado county have shown how poverty forces families into desperate situations, leaving children exposed to exploitation and neglect⁷. The community's low literacy rates compound this vulnerability, as parents lack awareness of children's

⁵ African Network of Religious Leaders Advocating for Child Protection (ANRCL). “Faith and Child Protection.” Accessed August 30, 2025. <https://www.anrcl.org>, pp. 5-7

⁶ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF. *Violence Against Children Survey: Kenya 2019*. Nairobi: KNBS, 2019, pp. 23–30.

⁷Njati, Ibuathu C., and Ogachi Abel. "The Traditional Beliefs Inhibiting Uptake of Education in KajiadoCommunity During the 21 st Century." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science* 9, no. 3 (2024): 540-547

rights and available protective services. Most troubling are the deeply rooted cultural practices, including early marriage of girls as young as 12 and the continued practice of FGM, that normalize harm against children under the norm of tradition⁸.

While AIC-K has made commendable efforts by establishing schools, health centers, and community outreach programs to combat these issues, the magnitude of the problem far exceeds its capacity. The church finds itself fighting an uphill battle against entrenched systems of harm. Traditional authorities actively resist change, viewing child protection initiatives as threats to cultural identity. Chronic underfunding severely limits program reach, leaving many vulnerable children without support. Perhaps most critically, the lack of meaningful collaboration with government agencies creates dangerous gaps in protection, allowing abuse to continue unchecked in communities that fall between institutional cracks⁹.

This fragmented response illuminates a harsh reality: despite well-intentioned efforts, children in Kajiado County remain perilously vulnerable to abuse¹⁰. This implies that without a fundamental shift toward coordinated, well-resourced intervention, the cycle of harm will persist.

⁸ Olenja, Joyce, Anke Van der Kwaak, John Kingsley Krugu, David Kawai, Sarah Karanja, Mercy Apanja, Sharon Sabato, and Dennis Odundo. "Factors influencing teenage pregnancy among Maasai girls in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kenya." *An operational qualitative study report as part of the YES I DO programme implemented from 2016 to 2020*. (2020).

⁹ Njati, Ibuathu C., and Ogachi Abel. "The Traditional Beliefs Inhibiting Uptake of Education in Kajiado Community During the 21 st Century." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science* 9, no. 3 (2024): 540-547.

¹⁰ Olenja, Joyce, Anke Van der Kwaak, John Kingsley Krugu, David Kawai, Sarah Karanja, Mercy Apanja, Sharon Sabato, and Dennis Odundo. "Factors influencing teenage pregnancy among Maasai girls in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kenya." *An operational qualitative study report as part of the YES I DO programme implemented from 2016 to 2020*. (2020).

Effectively addressing child abuse in Kajiado County demands more than good intentions; it requires a transformative, holistic strategy that strengthens partnerships between the church, government, and civil society, mobilizes adequate resources, and courageously confronts harmful traditions through deep theological engagement with child protection¹¹. Thus, by understanding the perception of leadership of AIC Kajiado Township on Africa Inland Church's role in addressing Child Abuse, the study aims at providing insights into the creation of a comprehensive collaborative efforts for the church to fulfill its spiritual and social mandate to truly safeguard the dignity and well-being of every child.

1.2 Problem Statement

Child abuse remains a pressing challenge in rural Kenya, where faith-based institutions often serve as frontline actors in protection and welfare. Within the Africa Inland Church (AIC), leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping responses to abuse through spiritual counseling, safe spaces, and educational support. However, evidence suggests persistent gaps between church-led initiatives and sustainable child protection outcomes. For instance, Morrison (2018) found that 78% of AIC congregants reported knowledge of abuse incidents, yet few cases were formally addressed through structured church mechanisms. More critically, the 2023 conviction of an AIC

¹¹ Waweru, Humphrey M., and Jane Jepkoech Rono. "Alleviation of Child Abuse as a Religious Duty: Examining the Role of the Catholic Church in Promoting Child Welfare in Kajiado County, Kenya." *Jumuga journal of education, oral studies, and human sciences* 5, no. 1 (2022): 1-12.

pastor in Kajiado for child abuse illustrates leadership failure and raises urgent questions about accountability and safeguarding practices within faith-based contexts.

Despite the existence of scholarship programs, mentorship forums, and youth empowerment initiatives in AIC Kajiado Township, the sustainability and effectiveness of these interventions remain uncertain. No study has systematically examined how AIC leaders perceive their role in child protection whether in prevention, response, reporting, or healing nor how theological, practical, legal, and cultural dimensions of perception shape their actions. This absence of empirical evidence constitutes a significant research gap, threatening coherence in both policy and practice.

Therefore, the problem addressed by this study is the disconnect between the church's spiritual mission and the sustainability of its socio-economic and child protection interventions, compounded by unclear leadership perceptions and limited integration with formal child welfare systems. Without rigorous evaluation, faith-based child protection models risk dependency, resource constraints, and weak accountability, undermining their potential to safeguard vulnerable children in pastoralist and rural contexts.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study aimed to explore church leadership perceptions of Africa Inland Church, Kajiado Township's role in addressing child abuse, with a focus on how faith-based teachings can be

translated into practical, community-responsive interventions that promote healing, resilience, and holistic child protection within the pastoralist Maasai context of Kajiado County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine church leadership perceptions of Africa Inland Church, Kajiado Township's theological and moral responsibility in addressing child abuse.
2. To explore the practical roles currently undertaken by AIC Kajiado Township Church in safeguarding children from child abuse
3. To assess the perceived barriers and enabling factors that influence the AIC Kajiado Township church's effectiveness in responding to child abuse according to church leadership perspectives.
4. To develop contextually grounded strategies, informed by church leadership insights, for strengthening AIC Kajiado Township's role in preventing and responding to child abuse.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How did church leaders at AIC Kajiado Township perceive the church's theological and moral responsibility in addressing child abuse within the pastoralist Maasai context?
2. What practical roles and interventions are currently undertaken by AIC Kajiado Township Church to safeguard children from abuse?

3. What were the key barriers and enabling factors that affect AIC Kajiado Township Church's effectiveness in responding to child abuse, particularly in relation to cultural practices, resource availability, and institutional collaboration?
4. What contextually grounded strategies do church leaders propose to strengthen AIC Kajiado Township Church's role in preventing and responding to child abuse?

1.6 Justification

This study is justified by the urgent need to evaluate faith-based child protection models in rural Kenya, where empirical evidence remains limited, particularly in pastoralist contexts. Africa Inland Church (AIC) Kajiado Township presents a compelling case through its integrated approach to child welfare, offering spiritual counseling, safe spaces, and educational support to children vulnerable to abuse. Church leaders have implemented scholarship programs, mentorship forums, and youth empowerment initiatives that promote resilience, vocational clarity, and moral development. By centering church leadership perceptions, this study will generate actionable knowledge to inform faith-based policy recommendations and strengthen collaborative frameworks between churches and formal child welfare systems across Kenya, positioning AIC Kajiado Township as a model for holistic, spiritually grounded responses to child abuse.

The choice of AIC Kajiado Township is not merely a matter of convenience but a purposively selected critical case. Its strategic location at the intersection of rural and peri-urban communities makes it a unique setting where socio-cultural vulnerabilities converge, offering

insights applicable to both rural and urban faith-based institutions. Its institutional significance as a flagship congregation within the Africa Inland Church, with strong chaplaincy structures and active youth ministries, makes it representative of broader faith-based interventions. Documented challenges in pastoral records highlight rising vulnerabilities among children and youth, underscoring the urgency of evaluating existing child protection initiatives. The site also offers accessibility and feasibility for data collection, with established networks of chaplains, elders, and youth leaders facilitating engagement. Finally, while the scope is limited, the socio-cultural dynamics and chaplaincy structures in Kajiado Township are comparable to other AIC congregations across Kenya, allowing findings to be cautiously generalized to similar faith-based contexts while acknowledging local distinctiveness.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The research on church leadership perceptions regarding AIC Kajiado Township's role in addressing child abuse encountered several methodological and contextual limitations. The study focused on a single church institution within Kajiado County, which restricted the generalizability of findings to other denominational contexts or geographical regions. The qualitative methodology, while providing rich insights into leadership perspectives, limits statistical inference and broader quantitative analysis of intervention effectiveness. Access to church leaders was constrained by their pastoral schedules and administrative responsibilities, potentially affecting the depth and breadth of data collection. The sensitive nature of child abuse topics influenced

participant responses, leading to social desirability bias where leaders present idealized rather than authentic perspectives of their institutional capabilities and challenges.

Cultural factors within the predominantly Maasai community affected participants' willingness to discuss family-related issues openly. Additionally, the study's temporal scope prevented longitudinal assessment of changing leadership perceptions and evolving institutional responses. Language barriers, despite mitigation strategies, resulted in nuanced meaning loss during translation processes. Finally, the research relied heavily on self-reported perceptions rather than direct observation of actual church practices and interventions in child protection scenarios.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study was specifically delimited to examining the church leadership perceptions regarding the Africa Inland Church (AIC) Kajiado Township's role in addressing child abuse within Kajiado County, Kenya. The research scope focused exclusively on how church leaders, pastoral staff, and lay leadership understood and articulated their institutional mandate in child protection. The study concentrated on leadership perspectives concerning awareness-raising activities through sermons, educational workshops, and community forums, while exploring their views on mobilizing congregational groups for child advocacy initiatives.

The research delimited its investigation to leadership perceptions on child support mechanisms, including counseling services, safe space provision, and collaborative partnerships with non-governmental organizations. Additionally, the study examined how church leaders

perceive the effectiveness of mentorship initiatives for vulnerable children. Geographically, the boundary was restricted to AIC Kajiado Township's immediate jurisdiction within Kajiado County. Temporally, the study focused on current leadership perspectives rather than historical analysis, concentrating on contemporary understanding of child abuse issues and institutional responses. The research deliberately excluded other denominational approaches or comparative analysis with secular agencies, maintaining focus solely on AIC leadership viewpoints.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The study assumed that church leaders possessed genuine awareness and understanding of child abuse issues within their community context and maintained active engagement in addressing these challenges through their pastoral roles. The research presumed that leadership perceptions accurately reflected the church's institutional commitment and capacity to respond to child protection needs within Kajiado County. The study assumed that selected research instruments, particularly in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, effectively elicited authentic leadership perspectives regarding the church's role in child abuse prevention and intervention. It is presumed that church leaders provided honest, reflective responses about their institutional capabilities, limitations, and theological motivations for child protection work.

Additionally, the research assumed that leadership perceptions regarding collaborative partnerships with external agencies, community mobilization efforts, and victim support services represent accurate assessments of institutional effectiveness. The study presumed that leaders can

meaningfully evaluate their church's impact on child welfare outcomes and articulate strategic visions for enhanced interventions. Finally, it is assumed that findings specific to AIC Kajiado Township's leadership perspectives yielded transferable insights applicable to similar faith-based institutions operating within comparable socio-cultural contexts, contributing valuable knowledge to broader discussions on church-led child protection initiatives.

Summary

Child abuse, encompassing physical, emotional, and sexual harm, demands comprehensive responses from all societal institutions, including faith-based organizations. Churches, as moral authorities within communities, possess unique capabilities to influence child protection through their leadership perspectives and institutional practices. Africa Inland Church (AIC), Kajiado Township in Kajiado County, presents a significant case study for examining how church leadership perceives and articulates its role in addressing child abuse within its pastoral mandate.

The study investigated church leadership perceptions regarding AIC Kajiado Township's theological, moral, and practical responsibilities in safeguarding children from abuse. The research explored how church leaders understood their role in raising awareness through sermons, community workshops, and educational initiatives that inform caregivers about child rights and protective practices. It examined leadership perspectives on implementing interventions, including safe space establishment, counseling service provision, and strategic partnerships with non-governmental organizations to ensure comprehensive child support.

The study analyzed how church leaders perceived the effectiveness of their scholarship programs, mentorship initiatives, and community mobilization efforts in empowering vulnerable children. By focusing specifically on leadership viewpoints regarding measurable outcomes such as improved school attendance and enhanced caregiver engagement, the research aimed to generate insights that strengthened faith-based child protection strategies and informed collaborative frameworks between religious institutions and formal welfare systems in Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The literature examining church leadership perceptions in child protection reveals the critical intersection of faith-based institutions and community welfare, particularly within African contexts where traditional churches serve as primary social anchors¹². The prevalence of child abuse in Kenya underscores the urgent need for institutional intervention, with national statistics revealing that "around one in two young adults in Kenya experienced violence as a child"¹³, highlighting the magnitude of the challenge facing religious organizations.

Within Kajiado County specifically, the crisis is particularly acute, with crime research data indicating concerning patterns of child vulnerability. Local statistics show defilement cases at 27.6% compared to the national average of 31.3%, while recent studies document 182 defilement cases among 321 reported SGBV cases between January and December 2021¹⁴. These statistics demonstrate the environmental context within which AIC Kajiado Township operates, where domestic violence prevalence among adolescents reaches an alarming 90.3%.

¹² Russell, Douglas H., Jacqueline Stewart, and Daryl J. Higgins. "Safeguarding in church: Children and young people's perceptions of safety in religious and other faith-based settings." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 38, no. 3-4 (2023): 4459-4485.

¹³ UNICEF, "Child Abuse," UNICEF Kenya, accessed March 27, 2026, <https://www.unicef.org/kenya/topics/child-abuse>.

¹⁴ Coalition on Violence Against Women, "Women's Agency and Violence Against Women: The Case of the Coalition on Violence Against Women in Kenya," accessed March 27, 2026, <https://covaw.or.ke/womens-agency-and-violence-against-women-the-case-of-the-coalition-on-violence-against-women-in-kenya/>.

Against this backdrop, the church has established itself as a pivotal institution in child welfare advocacy within Kajiado County, with church leadership recognizing their moral and theological mandate to address child abuse challenges¹⁵. Church leaders perceive their role as fundamental in confronting the multifaceted nature of child abuse, understanding that parental factors significantly contribute to these issues. As research indicates, "Issues such as substance abuse, mental health conditions, and a history of being abused as a child can increase the likelihood of neglect or abuse. Also, poor parent-child relationships and a lack of parenting skills also play a role"¹⁶.

The Study indicated that church leadership views their institution's commitment to ethical standards and vulnerable member protection as central to their mission¹⁷. Leaders perceive their awareness-raising activities, including community workshops, child protection sermons, and media collaborations, as essential tools for educating caregivers about child rights and safeguarding practices. The leadership's strategic mobilization of women and youth groups reflects their understanding of community-based advocacy as crucial for creating accountability structures,

¹⁵ Waweru, Humphrey M., and Jane Jepkoech Rono. "Alleviation of Child Abuse as a Religious Duty: Examining the Role of the Catholic Church in Promoting Child Welfare in Kajiado County, Kenya." *Jumuga journal of education, oral studies, and human sciences* 5, no. 1 (2022): 1-12.

¹⁶ Mwai, J. O. S. E. P. H. "Personal Security and Criminal Victimization: Case of Kajiado County, Kenya." PhD diss., Doctoral Dissertation, Kenyatta University, 2024.

¹⁷ Waweru, Humphrey M., and Jane Jepkoech Rono. "Alleviation of Child Abuse as a Religious Duty: Examining the Role of the Catholic Church in Promoting Child Welfare in Kajiado County,

particularly given the documented trauma impact where "up to 93% of child sexual abuse victims in Kenya experience emotional trauma"¹⁸.

The research indicated that leadership demonstrates their perceived responsibility through victim support initiatives, and church leaders view the establishment of safe spaces, counselling services, and partnerships with local and international organizations as core institutional responses to provide comprehensive care, including medical attention, shelter, and education¹⁹. Leadership-driven scholarship and mentorship programs reflected their understanding of empowerment as essential for affected children's futures.

Church leaders evaluate their institutional impact through measurable outcomes, perceiving success through improved school attendance, reduced child labor, and enhanced caregiver capacity. By documenting success stories and tracking intervention trends, leadership assesses their effectiveness while identifying improvement areas²⁰. This systematic approach reflects a broader perspective of church leaders' commitment to ensuring their faith-based interventions create meaningful differences in addressing child abuse, demonstrating their perceived accountability to both their congregation and the broader community.

¹⁸ Olenja, Joyce, Anke Van der Kwaak, John Kingsley Krugu, David Kawai, Sarah Karanja, Mercy Apanja, Sharon Sabato, and Dennis Odundo. "Factors influencing teenage pregnancy among Maasai girls in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kenya." *An operational qualitative study report as part of the YES I DO programme implemented from 2016 to 2020*. (2020).

¹⁹ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

²⁰ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

2.1 Empirical Analysis

2.1.1 Church Leadership Perceptions of Theological and Moral Responsibility

McLeigh et al (²¹) provide a comprehensive global analysis of religious institutions' role in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children. Comprehensive global analysis reveals a complex landscape where religious institutions simultaneously face criticism for child protection failures while serving as essential partners in safeguarding children worldwide. The researchers documented protection failures across diverse faith traditions, including incidents within Catholic churches, the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States, Ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, Islamic educational institutions in Pakistan, and Buddhist monasteries in Bhutan. Despite these documented failures, the study emphasizes that religious institutions remain crucial to global child protection efforts, given that 84% of the world's population maintains religious beliefs.

The analysis establishes that major world religions possess inherent theological foundations supporting child protection. For instance, Christianity and Judaism derive their child protection mandate from the belief that all humanity is created in God's image, as referenced in Genesis 1:26-27, creating a theological imperative for safeguarding children. Islamic tradition similarly recognizes children's lives as sacred, explicitly defining caregivers' and communities' duties toward children. The study concluded that while religious texts and traditions provide robust

²¹ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

theological justification for child protection, the practical implementation of these principles varies considerably across different contexts and communities²².

Eyber et al (²³) conducted a qualitative case study in flood-affected areas of Malawi with local faith leaders and their spouses who participated in World Vision child protection workshops. This study specifically examined how faith leaders define their roles in child protection initiatives after receiving orientation that connected protection concerns to religious teachings. This study demonstrates that when theological foundations are explicitly connected to child protection concerns through structured interventions, faith leaders can become effective advocates for child safety. However, the effectiveness depends heavily on individual circumstances and community positioning.

Spaumer et al (²⁴) focused on Pentecostal churches in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng province, South Africa. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis, they conducted semi-structured interviews with nineteen purposively selected Pentecostal church leaders to examine support provided to children needing care and protection. Their findings indicate that Pentecostal religious leaders actively engage in child protection through a systematic process:

²² McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313

²³ Eyber, Carola, Blessings Kachale, Tracy Shields, and Alastair Ager. "The role and experience of local faith leaders in promoting child protection: a case study from Malawi." *Intervention Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Areas* 16, no. 1 (2018): 31-37.

²⁴ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

proper identification of at-risk children; and addressing physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs. The study further pointed out that individual leaders' approaches varied significantly based on their personal relationships with government institutions such as police services and social workers²⁵.

However, while religious leaders demonstrated willingness to support vulnerable children, the study highlighted the lack of structured referral systems and inadequate knowledge about multidisciplinary team roles limited their effectiveness and potentially risked further rights violations.

A qualitative study by Tesfaye (²⁶) examined four local churches of Ethiopian Full Gospel Believers' Church (EFGBC) in Addis Ababa. The research involved twelve participants: children's ministry leaders, lead pastors, and teaching department heads from each selected church, focusing on church leaders' perceptions of children's ministry and its relationship to servant leadership approaches. The study identified three primary ways church leaders perceive children's ministry: as part of the Great Commission, as ensuring church futurity, and as a foundation for children's holistic growth. The study highlighted that leaders developed these perceptions through personal Sunday school experiences, childhood role model influences, and direct ministry experience with children.

²⁵ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

²⁶Tesfaye, genet. "Church leaders 'perception on children ministry and its impact on selected Ethiopian full gospel believers 'churches in Addis Ababa." (2022).

However, while the study found that church leaders' perceptions aligned with historical church fathers' teachings, the specific theological grounds shaping these perceptions remained unspecified. The research also revealed a positive relationship between leaders' children's ministry perceptions and their preference for servant leadership, though actual servant leadership practice was limited in their direct contact with children's ministry.

The existing literature provides valuable insights across different African contexts, Malawi (interdenominational faith leaders), South Africa (Pentecostal leaders), and Ethiopia (Full Gospel Believers' Church). However, the review identifies a significant gap in understanding child protection perspectives within the Kenyan context, particularly in semi-urban settings like Kajiado Township. The reviewed studies primarily focus on urban contexts (Addis Ababa, Tshwane Metropolitan) or rural disaster-affected areas (flood regions in Malawi), leaving unexplored how church leaders in Kenya's expanding township communities, which blend urban and rural characteristics, understand their child protection responsibilities.

While McLeigh et al (²⁷) establish broad theological foundations for child protection across world religions, and the study by Tesfaye (²⁸) notes alignment with church fathers' teachings, none of the studies systematically examine how specific theological doctrines translate into practical child protection approaches within the Kenyan church landscape. The Tesfaye study explicitly

²⁷ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

²⁸ Tesfaye, Genet. "Church leaders' perception on children ministry and its impact on selected Ethiopian full gospel believers' churches in Addis Ababa." (2022).

notes that "theological grounds of the church leaders' perception remain unspecified." The denominational contexts studied (Ethiopian Full Gospel, South African Pentecostal, Malawian interdenominational) differ significantly from the diverse denominational landscape present in Kajiado Township, where mainline Protestant, Pentecostal, and indigenous Christian movements coexist and potentially hold varying theological perspectives on child protection.

The South African study highlights practical challenges in implementing child protection despite good intentions, particularly around collaboration with secular authorities. On the other hand, the Malawi study shows transformation is possible through structured theological education, but long-term sustainability and systematic implementation remain unexplored. However, these findings emerge from different national child protection frameworks and cannot be assumed to apply to Kenya's religious context.

Each reviewed study focuses on different national and denominational contexts, leaving a significant gap in understanding how church leaders in AIC Kajiado Township specifically interpret and operationalize their moral responsibility for child protection. The township's unique characteristics—including its position as a growing urban center serving surrounding rural areas, its diverse denominational presence, and its location within Kenya's legal and cultural framework; -create a distinct context requiring specific investigation.

None of the existing studies examines how Kenyan church leaders, particularly those in semi-urban township settings, understand their theological mandate regarding child abuse

prevention and response. The reviewed literature establishes that: (1) religious institutions globally have theological foundations supporting child protection; (2) African church leaders across different contexts recognize child protection responsibilities; (3) structured theological education can transform perspectives; and (4) implementation challenges exist in translating theological convictions into effective practice.

However, none of these studies specifically examines how church leaders in Kajiado Township understand their theological and moral responsibility regarding child abuse within Kenya's specific legal, cultural, and ecclesiastical context. The absence of Kenyan perspectives, particularly from semi-urban township settings, represents a significant gap in understanding how local theological interpretations intersect with national child protection frameworks. This study addresses these gaps by examining church leadership perceptions within the specific geographic, cultural, and denominational context of AIC Kajiado Township, providing locally relevant insights that can inform both theological understanding and practical child protection strategies within this unique Kenyan community.

2.1.2 Practical Roles in Child Safeguarding

Spaumer et al (²⁹) assessed religious institutions' practical roles in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children, and according to the authors, religious institutions

²⁹ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

worldwide serve multiple protective functions beyond spiritual guidance, including operating schools, health clinics, food banks, meeting spaces, children's activities, and support groups. These formal resources help families better care for their children, potentially mitigating factors known to influence child maltreatment.

The study highlights successful denominational initiatives across various international contexts, including the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s Decade of the Child and the Episcopal Church's Children's Charter for the Church, which encouraged denominational churches to affirm responsibility for protecting and promoting children's rights through concrete actions. According to the study, the World Council of Churches has mobilized member organizations from 110 countries to promote child protection by ensuring child-safe church environments and contributing to efforts to end violence against children³⁰. This global analysis establishes that religious institutions possess extensive denominational networks that can be leveraged for sharing child protection messages, resources, and advocacy efforts. However, the study primarily documents policy initiatives and organizational commitments rather than examining specific on-ground implementation practices or community-level interventions.

Vieth et al (³¹) present a comprehensive framework for church-based child abuse prevention, treatment, and training developed through multidisciplinary expertise from Christian

³⁰ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

³¹ Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

professionals across disciplines in the United States. The study pointed out the specific practical interventions that churches should implement, including consultation with child protection experts, thorough screening of child workers, and accountable supervision of children in church settings. The authors emphasize that effective church protection policies require professional expertise and systematic implementation rather than relying solely on good intentions.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the recent efforts to sensitively integrate faith perspectives into treatment interventions, which focus on evidence-based approaches, particularly Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), which is a leading empirically supported treatment for child abuse. This demonstrates how churches can support therapeutic interventions while maintaining theological integrity. In addition, response interventions include immediate suspension of church workers when allegations are made against them and mandatory reporting to police authorities. This framework emphasizes that effective church responses require balancing pastoral care with legal obligations and child safety priorities.

The study also examines mission organizations operating internationally and identifies cultural factors that contribute to child abuse in mission fields since organizations sometimes prioritize institutional reputation over child protection, thus failing to value children appropriately, with some operating with unchecked power structures that enabled abuse. However, the study noted that Christian anti-trafficking organizations worldwide demonstrate effective advocacy

efforts as these typically operate independently of specific denominational support structures³². This finding shows that while churches possess theoretical capacity for child protection advocacy, practical implementation often occurs through specialized practical implementation rather than denominational systems.

Russell et al (³³) conducted focus group research with children and young people involved with two different Christian denominations in Australia. This qualitative study specifically examined young people's perceptions of safety within faith-based organizational contexts, providing crucial insights into the effectiveness of existing safeguarding measures from the recipients' perspectives. The study revealed that children and young people can identify various potentially unsafe situations within church contexts, assess their frequency, and evaluate their impact levels. Participants described four key themes affecting their sense of safety: concerning the behavior of adults and other young people, fear of judgment by others, sense of empowerment or lack thereof due to power dynamics, and the importance of familiarity within the church environment.

However, the research found differences in how children versus adults perceived the frequency and impact of potentially unsafe situations, suggesting that adult-designed safeguarding

³² Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

³³ Russell, Douglas H., Jacqueline Stewart, and Daryl J. Higgins. "Safeguarding in church: Children and young people's perceptions of safety in religious and other faith-based settings." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 38, no. 3-4 (2023): 4459-4485.

measures may not always align with children's actual safety concerns. The study also identified denominational differences in safety perceptions, indicating that specific theological and organizational contexts influence the effectiveness of child protection interventions. This research concluded that effective church-based child protection requires incorporating children's voices and perspectives rather than relying solely on adult assumptions about safety needs³⁴. However, the study focuses on children's perceptions rather than examining the specific interventions churches actually implement in response to these concerns.

The reviewed literature provides valuable insights from international policy frameworks (global denominational initiatives), United States-based multidisciplinary approaches, and Australian children's perspectives. However, there is a significant lack of empirical evidence examining practical church-based child protection interventions within the Kenyan context, particularly in semi-urban settings like AIC Kajiado Township. The reviewed studies primarily emerge from Western contexts with established child protection systems and legal frameworks that differ substantially from Kenya's socio-legal environment. Church-based interventions that prove effective in the United States or Australia may not translate effectively to Kenyan township contexts without empirical validation.

³⁴ Russell, Douglas H., Jacqueline Stewart, and Daryl J. Higgins. "Safeguarding in church: Children and young people's perceptions of safety in religious and other faith-based settings." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 38, no. 3-4 (2023): 4459-4485.

While the literature examines various Christian traditions, none specifically investigate the Africa Inland Church (AIC) tradition and its particular theological and organizational approach to child protection. The AIC's historical development, governance structures, and theological emphases create a distinct denominational context not addressed in existing research. The reviewed studies suggest denominational differences significantly influence child protection approaches, yet no research examines how AIC's specific theological framework and organizational culture shape practical interventions for child safeguarding. Further, the existing literature tends to focus on either policy recommendations³⁵³⁶ or perceptions and attitudes³⁷ rather than systematically documenting actual interventions currently being implemented by churches. This illustrates limited empirical evidence examining what churches are practically doing on the ground to safeguard children from abuse.

The multidisciplinary framework presented by Vieth et al (³⁸) provides theoretical guidance for church interventions but lacks systematic evaluation of how these recommendations translate into practice within specific church communities, particularly in non-Western contexts. None of

³⁵ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

³⁶ Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

³⁷ Russell, Douglas H., Jacqueline Stewart, and Daryl J. Higgins. "Safeguarding in church: Children and young people's perceptions of safety in religious and other faith-based settings." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 38, no. 3-4 (2023): 4459-4485

³⁸ Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

the reviewed studies examines child protection interventions within the specific context of AIC Kajiado Township. This represents a significant gap given that effective child protection interventions must be contextually appropriate, considering local cultural factors, community resources, and specific organizational capacities.

The reviewed literature establishes several important foundations: (1) churches worldwide possess theoretical capacity for child protection through their community resources and networks; (2) effective church-based interventions require multidisciplinary approaches combining prevention, treatment, and response components; (3) children's perspectives are crucial for designing effective safeguarding measures; and (4) denominational contexts significantly influence intervention approaches.

However, critical gaps remain in understanding what practical roles and interventions are currently undertaken by AIC Kajiado Township to safeguard children from abuse. The limited literature on Kenyan church-based interventions, particularly within AIC denominational contexts and township settings, represents a significant limitation in the global knowledge base. This study addresses these gaps by documenting and analyzing the actual practical interventions undertaken by AIC Kajiado Township, providing locally relevant evidence that can inform both denominational child protection strategies and broader understanding of contextually appropriate church-based safeguarding approaches in Kenyan township communities.

2.1.3 Assessing Barriers and Enabling Factors

McLeigh et al (³⁹) examined barriers and enabling factors that affect religious institutions' effectiveness in responding to child abuse across multiple international contexts. Their study identified the key barriers globally to include religious norms and expectations that discourage disclosure of abuse, institutional prioritization of reputation over child protection, and cultural practices within religious communities that may inadvertently enable abuse. The authors pointed out how across religious traditions, some faith leaders support practices like child marriage and corporal punishment while eschewing medical treatment, creating systemic barriers to effective child protection.

According to the study, enabling factors highlighted internationally include the expansive global reach of religious institutions, with 84% of the world's population holding religious beliefs. With religious institutions serving as integral community fabric providers, offering schools, health clinics, food banks, meeting spaces, children's activities, and support groups, these formal and informal resources is intended to create protective factors by helping families better care for their children and providing caregiver support systems. On the other hand, the study highlighted the power of denominational networks as enabling factors, citing successful initiatives like the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s Decade of the Child, the Episcopal Church's Children's Charter for the Church, and the World Council of Churches' mobilization of member organizations from 110

³⁹ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

countries⁴⁰. These networks demonstrate how religious institutions can leverage their organizational structures for child protection advocacy and resource sharing.

Furthermore, theological alignment emerges as a significant enabling factor, with major world religions recognizing children's inherent dignity and worth. Christianity and Judaism's foundational principle that all humankind is created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), combined with responsibilities to welcome and protect children (Mark 9:35-37), provides a theological foundation for child protection efforts.

Vieth et al (⁴¹) examine barriers and enabling factors through multidisciplinary analysis by Christian professionals across disciplines in the United States, with particular attention to international missions' organizations. Their comprehensive framework identifies specific cultural and institutional factors affecting church effectiveness in child abuse response. Cultural barriers in mission organizations include organizational cultures that prioritize institutional reputation over child protection, failure to appropriately treasure and value children, and belief in God-sanctioned power and control structures that create unchecked authority among mission workers. These cultural factors create environments where abuse can occur and be covered up rather than addressed.

⁴⁰ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

⁴¹ Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

In addition, institutional barriers identified include a lack of consultation with child protection experts, inadequate screening of child workers, and insufficient accountable supervision of children in church settings. The absence of evidence-based approaches in church responses represents another significant barrier to effectiveness. Enabling factors for effective church response include implementation of professional child protection policies, systematic screening procedures, and accountable supervision systems⁴². Moreover, integration of evidence-based treatment approaches, particularly Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) sensitively integrated with faith perspectives, represents a significant enabling factor for churches providing treatment services.

The study also highlights the collaborative approaches as crucial enabling factors, with the GRACE foundation representing a multidisciplinary Christian nonprofit organization that combines professional expertise with faith-based perspectives to protect and treat abused children. This demonstrates how churches can leverage external professional partnerships to enhance their effectiveness.

O'Neill et al (⁴³) conducted a qualitative investigation examining barriers and enabling factors in church-based child abuse response through interviews with 36 church leaders and social service providers representing various Christian congregations and specialties in the United States.

⁴² Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

⁴³ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

This study specifically focused on collaboration between churches and social service systems as both a barrier and potential enabling factor, and the study identified key institutional barriers to include the historic disconnect between churches and social service institutions concerning child abuse prevention efforts. The research documented that criticisms and mistrust characterize interactions between these two sectors, creating significant barriers to effective child protection collaboration.

The study also identified perceptual barriers that emerged from differing beliefs and values held by church leaders versus social service providers concerning child protection approaches. These philosophical and methodological differences created obstacles to developing effective collaborative relationships and coordinated responses to child abuse cases⁴⁴. Additionally, there were clear resource and capacity challenges: churches often lacked a thorough understanding of professional child protection protocols, while social service providers frequently undervalued the role that faith communities could play in child protection efforts.

The study findings indicated that church leaders and social service providers both demonstrated willingness to explore collaborative approaches when barriers to communication and understanding were addressed. The study revealed potential enabling factors in churches' existing

⁴⁴ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

programming and activities that could support child protection efforts, though these were often underutilized due to a lack of systematic coordination with professional child protection systems.

The literature provides valuable insights from international religious contexts⁴⁵, United States-based multidisciplinary perspectives⁴⁶, and US church-social service collaboration⁴⁷. However, there is a complete absence of empirical evidence examining barriers and enabling factors affecting church effectiveness in child abuse response within the Kenyan context, particularly in AIC Kajiado Township.

Based on the literature, cultural barriers are examined from a general perspective but do not examine how specific local cultural practices in Kenyan communities may create barriers or enabling factors for church-based child abuse response. The intersection of traditional Maasai cultural practices with AIC theological perspectives in Kajiado Township represents an unexplored cultural dynamic. Resource availability barriers and enabling factors are mentioned generally in literature but not examined within the specific economic and infrastructure context of Kajiado Township. The semi-urban setting's particular resource constraints and opportunities have not been systematically investigated.

⁴⁵ McLeigh, Jill D., and David Taylor. "The role of religious institutions in preventing, eradicating, and mitigating violence against children." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 110 (2020): 104313.

⁴⁶ Vieth, Victor I., Basyle J. Tchividjian, Donald F. Walker, and Katlin R. Knodel. "Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 40, no. 4 (2012): 323-335.

⁴⁷ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

O'Neill et al (⁴⁸) focus on church-social service collaboration in the United States, providing valuable insights into institutional barriers and enabling factors, but these findings cannot be generalized to Kenya's different governmental, legal, and social service institutional landscape. The specific challenges and opportunities for AIC Kajiado Township's collaboration with Kenyan child protection authorities, local government structures, and community organizations remain unexamined. None of the reviewed studies examines barriers and enabling factors affecting church effectiveness in child abuse response within the specific context of AIC Kajiado Township. This represents a significant gap given that effective child protection responses must account for local cultural dynamics, resource availability, and institutional collaboration patterns.

The reviewed literature establishes important foundational understanding: (1) cultural factors significantly influence church effectiveness in child protection; (2) institutional collaboration presents both barriers and enabling factors; (3) resource availability affects churches' capacity to respond effectively; (4) denominational contexts create specific challenges and opportunities; and (5) professional partnerships can enhance church effectiveness. However, critical gaps remain in understanding what specific barriers and enabling factors affect AIC Kajiado Township's effectiveness in responding to child abuse. The absence of Kenyan church-

⁴⁸ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

based research, particularly within AIC denominational contexts and township settings, represents a significant limitation in global knowledge.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the specific barriers and enabling factors affecting AIC Kajiado Township's effectiveness in child abuse response, providing locally relevant evidence that can inform both denominational child protection strategies and broader understanding of contextually appropriate church-based child protection approaches in Kenyan township communities.

2.1.4 Developing Contextually Grounded Strategies

Vieth et al (⁴⁹) present a comprehensive framework for strengthening church roles in child abuse prevention and response through multidisciplinary analysis by Christian professionals across disciplines in the United States. Their collaborative approach identifies specific strategies informed by professional expertise across theology, psychology, law, and social work. Prevention strategies emphasize the need for churches to consult with child protection experts rather than relying solely on internal knowledge. Key recommendations include implementing thorough screening procedures for all child workers and establishing accountable supervision systems for children in church settings. These strategies recognize that effective prevention requires professional guidance integrated with church operations.

⁴⁹ Vieth, V. I., Tchividjian, B. J., Walker, D. F., & Knodel, K. R. (2012). Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 40(4), 323-335.

Treatment strategies focus on evidence-based approaches, particularly implementing Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) while sensitively integrating faith perspectives. This represents a contextually grounded approach that maintains therapeutic integrity while honoring religious beliefs and practices. Response strategies include immediate suspension of church workers when allegations are made and mandatory reporting to law enforcement authorities. The framework emphasizes that effective response requires churches to balance pastoral care responsibilities with legal obligations and child safety priorities.

Organizational culture transformation emerges as a critical strategy, particularly addressing mission organizations that have prioritized institutional reputation over child protection. Recommended strategies include systematic evaluation of power structures, enhanced valuation of children within organizational priorities, and elimination of unchecked authority systems that enable abuse⁵⁰. The establishment of the GRACE foundation as a multidisciplinary Christian nonprofit organization demonstrates a strategic approach to strengthening church roles through professional partnerships that combine expertise with faith-based perspectives.

Hunt et al (⁵¹) conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty Christian religious leaders in Australia to explore strategies for strengthening safeguarding practices following the Australian

⁵⁰ Vieth, V. I., Tchividjian, B. J., Walker, D. F., & Knodel, K. R. (2012). Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 40(4), 323-335.

⁵¹ Hunt, Gabrielle R., Daryl J. Higgins, and Megan L. Willis. "'Just tick the box and move on': Australian Christian religious leaders reflect on safeguarding practices in their settings." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 167 (2025): 107591.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The qualitative study provides insights into contextually grounded strategies from church leadership perspectives and from the findings, leadership commitment strategies emerged as fundamental, with participants recognizing that effective safeguarding requires sustained commitment from church leadership rather than superficial compliance measures. The interviewed leaders also identified the need to position safeguarding as core to the mission rather than external regulation.

Based on the findings, cultural transformation strategies address resistance rooted in theological beliefs by developing contextually appropriate approaches that align safeguarding with religious values. This includes addressing gendered power dynamics within church structures and moving beyond compliance-focused approaches toward community-centered prevention strategies. Community-centered prevention strategies leverage existing church community strengths to create safer environments. These strategies recognize that effective prevention must be integrated into existing church operations rather than imposed as external requirements.

Furthermore, collaborative strategies emphasize the importance of collaboration between religious organizations and prioritizing the voices of children and victim-survivors in developing safeguarding approaches. This represents a shift from insular church-based approaches toward partnerships that enhance effectiveness. The study also highlighted that resource mobilization strategies address constraints by developing sustainable approaches to safeguarding that work within existing church resource limitations while maintaining effectiveness. The study identifies the importance of contextual prevention strategies that consider risks between peers and for

vulnerable adults, demonstrating that effective strengthening approaches must address the full spectrum of potential abuse situations within church contexts⁵².

O'Neill et al (⁵³) examined strategies for strengthening church roles through collaboration based on interviews with 36 church leaders and social service providers of varying Christian congregations and specialties in the United States. The study pointed out that relationship-building strategies address the historic disconnect between churches and social service institutions by developing systematic approaches to building trust and understanding between these sectors. This pointed to the need for structured dialogue processes that allow both sectors to understand each other's perspectives and capabilities.

Capacity-building strategies focus on enhancing the church understanding of professional child protection protocols while helping social service providers appreciate the potential contributions of faith communities. These strategies recognize that effective collaboration requires mutual education and skill development. Programming integration strategies involve developing church programming and activities that support child protection goals while maintaining religious authenticity. This includes identifying existing church resources and activities that could be enhanced to better support child protection efforts. Values alignment strategies address philosophical and methodological differences between church leaders and social service providers

⁵² Hunt, Gabrielle R., Daryl J. Higgins, and Megan L. Willis. "'Just tick the box and move on': Australian Christian religious leaders reflect on safeguarding practices in their settings." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 167 (2025): 107591

⁵³ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

by identifying shared goals and developing approaches that honor both professional standards and religious values⁵⁴.

Spaumer et al (⁵⁵) conducted interpretative phenomenological analysis with nineteen purposively selected leaders in Pentecostal churches in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng province, South Africa. This study provides insights into strategies for strengthening church roles within African contexts. Identification and assessment strategies focus on developing systematic approaches for proper identification of children in need of care and protection. Leaders emphasized the importance of training church workers to recognize signs of abuse and vulnerability rather than relying on informal observations.

Holistic support strategies address the physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs of vulnerable children through integrated church-based approaches. These strategies recognize that effective church response must address multiple dimensions of child wellbeing. Relationship-based collaboration strategies leverage individual relationships between church leaders and government institutions (police services, social workers) to enhance support effectiveness. However, the study identifies the limitation of relying on individual relationships rather than systematic collaboration processes.

⁵⁴ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

⁵⁵ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

Multidisciplinary awareness strategies emphasize the need for religious leaders to be well-informed about the roles of different team members, including social workers, psychologists, police officers, parents, and community structures. This represents a strategy for enhancing church effectiveness through professional knowledge integration. Formalized referral strategies address the need for structured collaboration and referral processes to ensure children's rights are not further violated during support provision⁵⁶.

This strategy moves beyond informal approaches toward systematic coordination with professional services.

The existing literature provides valuable strategies from United States multidisciplinary contexts⁵⁷, Australian post-Royal Commission contexts⁵⁸, US church-social service collaboration⁵⁹, and South African Pentecostal contexts⁶⁰. However, there is a significant absence of contextually grounded strategies developed within Kenyan church contexts, particularly in AIC Kajiado Township. The reviewed strategies emerge from different legal, cultural, and institutional contexts

⁵⁶ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

⁵⁷ Vieth, V. I., Tchividjian, B. J., Walker, D. F., & Knodel, K. R. (2012). Child abuse and the church: A call for prevention, treatment, and training. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 40(4), 323-335.

⁵⁸ Hunt, Gabrielle R., Daryl J. Higgins, and Megan L. Willis. "'Just tick the box and move on': Australian Christian religious leaders reflect on safeguarding practices in their settings." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 167 (2025): 107591.

⁵⁹ O'Neill, Erin Olson, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder. "Prevention of child abuse and neglect through church and social service collaboration." *Social Work & Christianity* 37 (2010): 381.

⁶⁰ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

that cannot be directly transferred to Kenyan settings without empirical validation and contextual adaptation. Strategies effective in post-Royal Commission Australia or established US social service systems may not be appropriate for Kenyan township contexts.

While the literature examines strategies across various denominational contexts (multidisciplinary US Christian, Australian Christian leaders, South African Pentecostal), none investigate strategies specific to the Africa Inland Church (AIC) denominational context and its particular theological, organizational, and community characteristics. The reviewed studies suggest denominational contexts significantly influence strategy effectiveness, yet no research examines how AIC's specific governance structures, theological emphases, and community relationships in Kajiado Township create unique opportunities and requirements for strategy development.

The existing literature includes church leadership perspectives from Western contexts (Australia, United States) and urban South African contexts, but lacks insights from Kenyan church leaders, particularly those serving in semi-urban township settings like Kajiado. Local leadership insights are crucial for developing contextually grounded strategies that align with community realities and cultural dynamics. None of the reviewed studies examines strategy development within the specific context of AIC Kajiado Township, where unique factors, including semi-urban characteristics, proximity to Nairobi, intersection of traditional Maasai and Christian cultures, and specific resource availability patterns, create distinct requirements for effective church-based child protection strategies.

The township setting presents unique opportunities and challenges for church-based child protection that have not been systematically examined to inform strategy development. The absence of research examining contextually grounded strategies for AIC Kajiado Township represents a significant gap in understanding how to effectively strengthen church roles in child abuse prevention and response within this specific setting. The township's unique characteristics require targeted strategy development that considers local cultural dynamics, resource patterns, and institutional relationships.

The reviewed literature establishes important foundational understanding: (1) effective strategies require integration of professional expertise with religious perspectives; (2) cultural transformation within churches is essential for sustainable safeguarding; (3) collaboration between churches and professional systems enhances effectiveness; (4) community-centered approaches leverage existing church strengths; and (5) leadership commitment and capacity-building are fundamental requirements.

However, critical gaps remain in understanding what contextually grounded strategies, informed by church leadership insights, would strengthen AIC Kajiado Township's role in preventing and responding to child abuse. The absence of Kenyan church-based strategy research, particularly within AIC denominational contexts and township settings, represents a significant limitation in developing effective local approaches. This study addresses these gaps by examining AIC Kajiado Township church leadership insights to develop contextually grounded strategies for strengthening the church's role in child abuse prevention and response, providing locally relevant

approaches that can inform both denominational practices and broader understanding of effective church-based child protection strategies in Kenyan township communities.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study examines church leadership perceptions on AIC Kajiado Township's role in addressing child abuse, which is grounded in three complementary theoretical perspectives that provide comprehensive analytical frameworks for understanding faith-based child protection approaches. These three theories collectively provide robust analytical frameworks for understanding church leadership perceptions across individual, interpersonal, and institutional levels. They support comprehensive examination of how AIC Kajiado Township leaders conceptualize their multi-dimensional role in child protection, offering theoretical justification for investigating faith-based approaches to addressing child abuse within specific cultural and geographical contexts. The study is supported by three interrelated theories that offer sociological and psychological lenses for understanding the church's role in child protection.

2.2.1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how church leadership at Africa Inland Church (AIC), Kajiado Township perceives their institution's role across multiple environmental systems affecting child welfare. Church leaders recognize their position within the mesosystem as vital intermediaries connecting children, families, and the broader community. Leadership perspectives emphasize how their institution

addresses socioeconomic stressors that contribute to child abuse, such as financial difficulties and unemployment, which often overwhelm families' coping mechanisms, leading to neglectful or abusive behaviors⁶¹.

At the microsystem level, “church leaders understand their direct influence on family dynamics through counseling services, mentorship programs, and faith-based teachings that shape parental behaviors and attitudes toward child protection”⁶². Leaders perceive their educational campaigns and sermons as crucial interventions that transform immediate family environments and create protective factors for vulnerable children. Furthermore, within the ecosystem, church leadership views their advocacy role as essential for influencing external policies and systemic issues contributing to child abuse. Leaders recognize their responsibility to liaise with government agencies, educational institutions, and social services to ensure comprehensive child welfare approaches⁶³. They perceive their institution as a bridge between community needs and formal protection systems.

At the macrosystem level, church leaders acknowledge their moral authority in challenging harmful cultural practices prevalent in pastoralist communities, including early marriage and female genital mutilation⁶⁴. Leadership perspectives emphasize their theological mandate to

⁶¹ Font, Sarah A., and Kathryn Maguire-Jack. "The Scope, Nature, and Causes of Child Abuse and Neglect." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 692 (2020): 26. Accessed April 2, 2025. Link

⁶² Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

⁶³ Hiebert, Paul G., R. Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou. *Understanding Folk Religion:: a christian response to Popular beliefs and practices*. Vol. 67. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2024.

⁶⁴ Hiebert, Paul G., R. Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou. *Understanding Folk Religion:: a christian response to Popular beliefs and practices*. Vol. 67. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2024.

advocate for child rights while respecting cultural sensitivities. They understand their role in reshaping societal norms and values that may perpetuate child abuse. The chronosystem dimension reveals how church leaders perceive their evolving role amid modernization and changing social dynamics. Leaders recognize that their approaches must adapt to contemporary challenges while maintaining core protective principles.

Church leadership articulates its multi-faceted approach through awareness-raising initiatives, integrating child protection teachings into worship services, conducting community workshops, and utilizing local media platforms⁶⁵. Leaders emphasize empowering women and youth groups within their congregation to create accountability mechanisms and advocacy networks. Leadership perspectives on victim support include establishing safe spaces, providing counseling services, and collaborating with non-governmental organizations to ensure comprehensive care, including medical treatment, education, and shelter. Leaders view their scholarship and mentorship programs as transformative investments in affected children's futures.

Church leaders evaluate their institutional impact through measurable outcomes, including improved school attendance, reduced child labor incidents, and enhanced caregiver capacity. This systematic assessment approach reflects leadership understanding of evidence-based practice importance in sustaining effective child protection interventions within their theological framework and community context.

⁶⁵ Spaumer, Andrew, and Azwihangwisi H. Mavhandu-Mudzusi. "Pentecostal church leaders' support to children in need of care and protection." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): 10173.

2.2.2 Social Learning Theory

This study is anchored in Social Learning Theory, which provides a comprehensive lens for understanding how church leaders conceptualize their institutional influence on community behaviors regarding child protection. Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura⁶⁶, posits that individuals learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and modeling within their social environments, making it particularly relevant for analyzing how church leadership perceives their role in shaping community attitudes toward child welfare⁶⁷.

From a church leadership perspective, Social Learning Theory explains how the church functions as a behavioral modeling institution within the community. This means that the church leaders understand their sermons, community workshops, and educational seminars as opportunities to demonstrate and reinforce positive child-rearing practices, believing that congregants and community members observe and subsequently adopt these modeled behaviors⁶⁸. Leadership perceptions suggest that their moral authority positions the church as a credible source for behavioral change, where positive parenting practices are observed, learned, and transmitted throughout the community.

⁶⁶ Bandura, Albert. *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977

⁶⁷ Rachmad, Yoesoep Edhie. "Social Learning Theory." *United Nations Economic and Social Council* (2025).

⁶⁸ Rotter, Julian B. "Social learning theory." In *Expectations and actions*, pp. 241-260. Routledge, 2021.

The theory's emphasis on environmental factors aligns with the church leadership's understanding of how societal norms influence child abuse prevalence. Leaders recognize that community environments tolerating violence against children require intentional intervention through positive behavioral modeling⁶⁹. Church leadership perceives their advocacy campaigns and counseling services as mechanisms for creating supportive learning environments where protective behaviors are reinforced and harmful practices are challenged.

Through Social Learning Theory, church leadership views their partnerships with child welfare organizations as expanding the observational learning opportunities within the community. Leaders believe that by consistently modeling child protection behaviors and providing platforms for positive behavior reinforcement, they create sustainable behavioral changes that extend beyond immediate church membership⁷⁰. This theoretical framework enables church leadership to articulate their understanding of institutional responsibility in fostering community-wide transformation regarding child abuse prevention and response.

2.2.3 Structural Functionalism

Structural Functionalism, as developed by Talcott Parsons, provides a theoretical lens for understanding church leadership perceptions of institutional roles in addressing societal issues such as child abuse. This theory conceptualizes society as an interconnected system of institutions

⁶⁹ Chuang, Szufang. "The applications of constructivist learning theory and social learning theory on adult continuous development." *Performance Improvement* 60, no. 3 (2021): 6-14.

⁷⁰ Rotter, Julian B. "Social learning theory." In *Expectations and actions*, pp. 241-260. Routledge, 2021.

that collaborate to maintain social stability and order⁷¹. Within this framework, churches function as vital social institutions contributing to community socialization, moral guidance, and collective cohesion.

From a Structural Functionalist perspective, “church leadership perceives their institution as fulfilling essential societal functions in child protection and leaders understand their role as maintaining social equilibrium by addressing dysfunction caused by child abuse through systematic institutional responses⁷². This theoretical approach illuminates how church leadership views their interventions as necessary for community stability and moral order restoration.

Church leaders perceive their awareness-raising initiatives, including workshops and sermons, as fulfilling the socialization function by transmitting protective values and norms to community members. Leadership understands these educational efforts as essential for maintaining social cohesion and preventing community dysfunction resulting from child abuse prevalence⁷³. The theory explains how church leaders view their institution as complementing other social systems—governmental agencies, educational institutions, and healthcare providers—in creating comprehensive child protection networks.

⁷¹ Egbochue, Thelma Chidera, and Obinna Chukwudalu Okeke. "Role of Child Support Policies in Mitigating Child Abuse in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria." *Unizik Journal of Gender Research* 3, no. 1 (2024).

⁷² King, Anthony. "Functionalism and structuralism." *The SAGE Handbook of the Philosophy of Social Sciences* (2011): 429-444.

⁷³ Soepeno, Bambang, and Bambang Suyadi. "Structural functionalism analysis on children labourers phenomena in Jember regency." *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)* 5, no. 09 (2017): 7129-7146.

Biblical foundations support this theoretical framework, as church leadership draws upon passages such as Romans 12:4-5, which emphasizes interconnected roles within the body of Christ, reflecting Structural Functionalism's emphasis on institutional interdependence. Leaders reference 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, highlighting community member interconnectedness and shared responsibility for collective well-being.

Through a Structural Functionalist lens, church leadership perceptions reveal their understanding of AIC Kajiado Township as a stabilizing force addressing social dysfunction through systematic interventions. Leaders view counseling services, advocacy campaigns, and victim support programs as essential institutional functions that restore community equilibrium and prevent societal breakdown. This framework explains how church leadership conceptualizes its role as integral to maintaining social order while addressing child abuse challenges within its community context.

At the same time, Empowerment Theory emphasizes enabling individuals and communities to gain control over their lives, build resilience, and develop agency. In AIC Kajiado Township, empowerment is reflected in scholarship programs, mentorship forums, and youth initiatives that equip children to resist abuse and pursue vocational clarity. This theory provides a lens for analyzing how church leaders perceive their role in strengthening children's self-efficacy and resilience, moving beyond institutional stability to individual transformation.

Together, these perspectives create a dual theoretical foundation:

Structural Functionalism: highlights the church's institutional role in maintaining social order and addressing dysfunction.

Empowerment Theory: emphasizes the church's role in equipping children and families with agency and resilience.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This study adopts the Theological Moral Dimension as its guiding framework because child protection within Christian contexts is fundamentally rooted in biblical imperatives that establish both the theological basis and moral urgency for safeguarding vulnerable populations. Scripture provides multiple layers of justification for child protection, beginning with the imago Dei principle established in Genesis 1:27, which declares that all humans, including children, are created in God's image and therefore possess inherent dignity and worth⁷⁴. This theological foundation creates an unassailable moral basis for protecting children from harm, as any abuse represents an assault on God's image itself.

The New Testament reinforces this foundation through Jesus' explicit teachings about children's value and protection. In Matthew 18:6, Jesus declares severe consequences for those who harm children: "If anyone causes one of these little ones, those who believe in me, to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in

⁷⁴Mawikere, Marde Christian Stenly, Sudiria Hura, Jean Calvin Riedel Mawikere, and Daniella Beauty Melanesia Mawikere. "The essence of the church and its presence for societal transformation." *Hospitalitas: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1-14

the depths of the sea." This passage establishes not merely a moral prohibition against child harm but positions child protection as a divine imperative with eternal consequences⁷⁵. Similarly, Mark 10:13-16 demonstrates Jesus' counter-cultural elevation of children's status, blessing them and declaring that "the kingdom of God belongs to such as these," thereby establishing children as theological exemplars rather than mere dependents.

The theological framework creates specific moral obligations for church leaders, who bear particular responsibility as spiritual shepherds. Ezekiel 34:2-4 condemns shepherds who fail to care for the vulnerable: "You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost." This passage establishes pastoral accountability for protecting those unable to protect themselves, making child protection not optional but morally obligatory for religious leadership⁷⁶.

The community engagement dimension highlights the critical importance of cultural integration within Maasai pastoralist contexts. The framework acknowledges that effective child protection requires navigation of traditional authority structures and cultural practices, necessitating culturally responsive approaches that respect local values while promoting child welfare⁷⁷.

⁷⁵ George, Versilee B. "God's Mission Through the Church to Transform a Community." Master's thesis, Regent University, 2024.

⁷⁶ Okonkwo, Peter. "Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults in the Nigerian Church: Canonical and Legal Perspectives." *AJAP-AMAMIHE Journal of Applied Philosophy* 23, no. 1 (2025).

⁷⁷ Haveman, Tammie Jean. "Emotional Health as a Preventive Measure to Reduce Abuse in Evangelical Ministries." (2025).

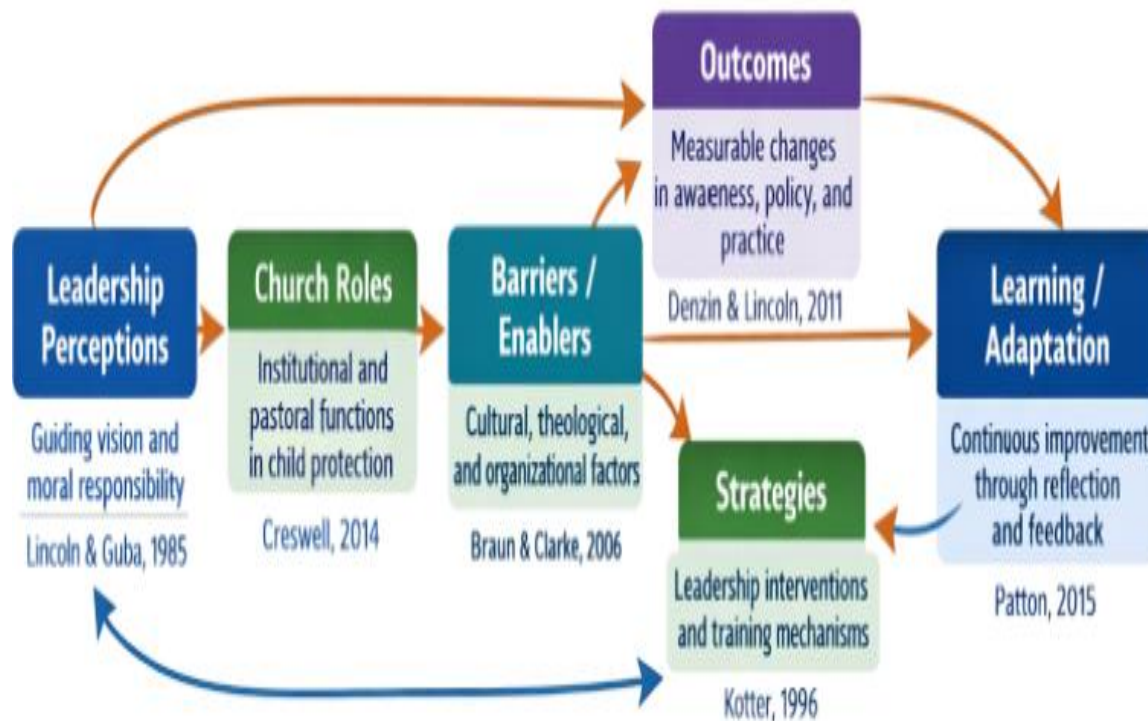


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: AIC Kajiado AIC Township

Narration of the Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the understanding that church leadership perceptions serve as the independent variable shaping the Africa Inland Church (AIC-K) Kajiado Township's role in child protection. These perceptions are expressed through four dimensions: theological beliefs that emphasize moral responsibility and scriptural grounding; practical views that highlight interventions such as counseling and safe spaces; legal awareness of child protection laws and

reporting obligations; and cultural attitudes shaped by Maasai traditions, stigma, and community norms. These perceptions are interpreted through the lenses of Empowerment Theory and Social Capital Theory, which together explain how leaders conceptualize their responsibilities both in terms of strengthening individual agency and leveraging community networks.

The church's roles in child protection function as mediating variables, translating leadership perceptions into concrete interventions. These roles include prevention and awareness through teaching, campaigns, and mentorship; response and counseling via chaplaincy and pastoral care; reporting and accountability through referrals and collaboration with statutory systems; and healing and support that foster resilience and spiritual restoration.

The framework acknowledges the influence of barriers and enablers as moderating factors. Barriers such as resource constraints, cultural resistance, and dependency risks limit effectiveness, while enablers such as community trust, chaplaincy structures, and institutional partnerships strengthen outcomes. Social Capital Theory is particularly relevant here, as it highlights the value of bonding capital within the congregation and bridging capital with external agencies, explaining how trust and partnerships enhance safeguarding effectiveness.

The dependent variable child protection outcomes is expressed through resilience and moral development, effective safeguarding practices, reduced abuse incidents, and stronger collaboration between church and state systems. Importantly, the framework incorporates a

feedback loop, where outcomes inform leadership perceptions through processes of learning and adaptation, ensuring continuous improvement of faith-based child protection models.

Finally, the framework emphasizes cultural sensitivity as a critical determinant of intervention success. Programs that fail to meaningfully engage with Maasai traditions face resistance and limited sustainability. By including moderating variables such as cultural context, resource availability, and external partnerships, the framework recognizes that identical interventions may yield different outcomes across contexts. This underscores the need for locally adapted strategies that respect community dynamics while maintaining core child protection principles.

Reknowned scholar puts, “Faith leaders are uniquely positioned to challenge harmful norms, promote child-friendly values, and foster safe spaces for children. Their counseling, advocacy, and support programs are not only spiritual duties but essential social functions. These interventions restore community balance, strengthen resilience, and protect the vulnerable. By mobilizing trust and partnerships, churches act as stabilizing forces against social dysfunction. In this way, faith leadership becomes integral to safeguarding children and sustaining social order.”⁷⁸.

⁷⁸ Mawikere, Marde Christian Stenly, Sudiria Hura, Jean Calvin Riedel Mawikere, and Daniella Beauty Melanesia Mawikere. "The essence of the church and its presence for societal transformation." *Hospitalitas: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (2025): 1-14.

Summary

Literature suggests that faith-based organizations in Africa often position themselves as critical actors in child protection, drawing on theological interpretations of social responsibility. Biblical mandates such as *James 1:27* (“look after orphans and widows in their distress”) and *Proverbs 31:8–9* (“speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves”) are frequently cited as motivating texts for advocacy and safeguarding. Scholars highlight that churches influence family dynamics and broader community transformation, as explained by Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, while also serving as environments where positive child protection practices are modeled, consistent with Social Learning Theory. Yet, empirical studies examining how leadership interprets and operationalizes these mandates within specific cultural contexts remain limited.

This study addresses that gap by anchoring its analysis on church leadership perceptions as the independent variable shaping Africa Inland Church (AIC-K) Kajiado Township’s role in child protection. These perceptions are expressed through theological beliefs, practical views, legal awareness, and cultural attitudes shaped by Maasai traditions and community norms. Interpreted through Empowerment Theory and Social Capital Theory, leadership perceptions are translated into mediating roles such as prevention and awareness, response and counseling, reporting and accountability, and healing and support. Moderating factors—barriers like resource constraints and cultural resistance, and enablers such as community trust and institutional partnerships—further influence outcomes.

The dependent variable, child protection outcomes, is expressed through resilience, moral development, effective safeguarding practices, reduced abuse incidents, and stronger church–state collaboration. Importantly, the framework incorporates a feedback loop, where outcomes inform leadership perceptions through learning and adaptation, ensuring continuous improvement. Cultural sensitivity emerges as a critical determinant of success, as interventions that fail to meaningfully engage with Maasai traditions face resistance and limited sustainability. As Mawikere observes, “Faith leaders are uniquely positioned to challenge harmful norms, promote child-friendly values, and foster safe spaces for children. Their counseling, advocacy, and support programs are not only spiritual duties but essential social functions... By mobilizing trust and partnerships, churches act as stabilizing forces against social dysfunction.”⁷⁹ This underscores the dual role of faith leadership in both safeguarding children and sustaining social order.

⁷⁹ *ibid*

Table 1: Measurement of Variables under Study

Variable	Indicator	Measurement Tool/Method	Unit of Analysis
Independent Variable: Church Leadership Perceptions	Advocacy and Awareness Creation – Leadership understanding of advocacy role and responsibilities	In-depth interviews with church leaders	Thematic patterns in responses
	Perceived effectiveness of sermons and workshops in raising awareness	Semi-structured interviews with pastoral staff	Leadership narratives and experiences
	Leadership views on community receptiveness to child protection messages	Focus group discussions with church leadership committee	Collective leadership perspectives
Support Services – Leadership perceptions of counseling service adequacy and impact	Key informant interviews with church leaders	Individual leadership viewpoints	
	Views on material support provision and beneficiary identification	In-depth interviews with pastoral care coordinators	Leadership decision-making processes
	Perceived barriers to	Focus group	Shared challenges and solutions
	service delivery	discussions with ministry leaders	

Variable	Indicator	Measurement Tool/Method	Unit of Analysis
Community Mobilization – Leadership perspectives on community engagement strategies	Semi-structured interviews with church leaders	Leadership mobilization approaches	
	Views on effectiveness of child protection committees	Focus group discussions with committee leaders	Collective leadership assessments
	Perceived community participation levels	In-depth interviews with outreach coordinators	Leadership observations and interpretations
Partnerships – Leadership attitudes toward collaboration with external organizations	Key informant interviews with church leadership	Partnership perspectives and experiences	
	Perceived benefits and challenges of partnerships	Focus group discussions with leadership team	Collective views on collaboration effectiveness
	Views on resource sharing and joint programming	Semi-structured interviews with partnership coordinators	Leadership collaboration experiences
Intervening Variables: Perceived Challenges and Success	Cultural Factors – Leadership perceptions of cultural barriers to child protection	In-depth interviews with church leaders	Cultural sensitivity and adaptation strategies
	Views on community resistance to change	Focus group discussions with cultural liaisons	Leadership cultural interpretation

Variable	Indicator	Measurement Tool/Method	Unit of Analysis
	Perceived influence of traditional practices on child welfare	Semi-structured interviews with elder church leaders	Historical and contemporary perspectives
Socioeconomic Conditions – Leadership understanding of poverty’s impact on child protection	Key informant interviews with church leaders	Leadership socioeconomic awareness	
	Views on economic barriers to intervention effectiveness	In-depth interviews with community outreach leaders	Leadership economic assessments
Institutional Capacity – Leadership self-assessment of church capacity and resources	Semi-structured interviews with church administrators	Leadership capacity perceptions	
	Views on training needs and personnel adequacy	Focus group discussions with ministry coordinators	Collective capacity evaluations
	Perceived infrastructure limitations and needs	In-depth interviews with facility managers	Leadership resource assessments

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework adopted to investigate church leadership perceptions of Africa Inland Church (AIC-K) Kajiado Township's role in addressing child abuse. "Methodology is the backbone of any study, providing the structure through which research questions are addressed and findings validated."⁸⁰ In qualitative inquiry, "rigor is not measured by statistical generalization but by the trustworthiness of the process, which includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability."⁸¹

The study adopted a qualitative and exploratory approach. "Such a design is particularly appropriate when the aim is to uncover meaning, context, and lived experiences that cannot be reduced to numerical data."⁸² By focusing on depth rather than breadth, qualitative research allows for the exploration of complex social phenomena such as child protection in faith-based contexts. This methodological choice was therefore aligned with the study's objectives of capturing nuanced leadership perceptions.

⁸⁰ Mugenda, Olive M., and Abel G. Mugenda. *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press, 1999, pp. 46–50.

⁸¹ Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, pp. 289–331.

⁸² *ibid*

Finally, the chapter outlines the research design, study area, target population, sample size determination, sampling method, data collection instruments, procedures, analytical steps, dissemination of findings, and ethical considerations. Each section is justified with reference to established methodological authorities, ensuring that the study meets the highest standards of qualitative inquiry.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design. “Creswell emphasizes that qualitative designs are most appropriate when the researcher seeks to understand meaning, context, and lived experiences.”⁸³ “Patton similarly argues that qualitative inquiry is particularly suited to exploring sensitive issues where cultural and theological interpretations intersect.”⁸⁴ In this case, child protection within a faith-based Maasai context required interpretive depth.

Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and document analysis were employed to capture diverse perspectives. “This triangulation of methods enhanced credibility by allowing findings to be corroborated across multiple sources.”⁸⁵ Such methodological rigor

⁸³ Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018, pp. 182–190.

⁸⁴ Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015, pp. 52–55, 115–120.

⁸⁵ Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, pp. 305–310.

ensured that the study reflected both individual and collective perspectives, thereby strengthening validity.

Moreover, qualitative design allowed for sensitivity to cultural dynamics. “Bryman notes that qualitative research is particularly effective in contexts where traditions and community norms shape behavior.”⁸⁶ By adopting this design, the study was able to uncover how church leaders interpret biblical mandates, cultural norms, and institutional responsibilities in safeguarding children.

3.2 Study Area

The research was conducted at AIC-K Kajiado Township, located in Kajiado County, Kenya. The site was purposively selected for its unique rural–peri-urban positioning, which provided a rich context for examining faith-based child protection models.

The church’s active chaplaincy, youth, and children’s ministries made it an ideal case for exploring leadership perceptions. Bryman emphasizes, “Case selection in qualitative research should maximize contextual richness.”⁸⁷ By situating the study in a culturally diverse pastoralist environment, the research was able to capture perspectives shaped by both rural traditions and urban influences.

⁸⁶ Bryman, Alan. *Social Research Methods*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 60–65.

⁸⁷ *ibid*

Furthermore, the Maasai cultural context required sensitivity to traditions and community dynamics. Qualitative inquiry, with its emphasis on open-ended dialogue, was particularly suited to addressing these complexities. This ensured that the study was not only methodologically sound but also culturally relevant.

3.3 Target Population

The target population consisted of 111 leaders actively engaged in child-related ministries and decision-making. “Mugenda and Mugenda define a population as the entire group sharing common observable characteristics.”⁸⁸ In this case, the defining characteristic was active involvement in ministries and leadership roles that influence child welfare interventions. The population was diverse, including pastors, ministry coordinators, lay leaders, deacons, and departmental heads. Diversity across gender, ministry roles, and leadership strata ensured balanced representation. “Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña argue that such diversity strengthens validity by ensuring that findings reflect the breadth of experiences within the population.”⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Mugenda, Olive M., and Abel G. Mugenda. *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press, 1999, pp. 37–38

⁸⁹ Miles, Matthew B., A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014, pp. 31–33.

Table 2: Demographic Spread of leadership categories and their numbers

Church Leadership Categories	Number of leaders in each category
Local Church Council excluding pastors	10
Pastors	3
Women's Committee	13
Christian Husbands Fellowship	15
Christian Wives Fellowship	15
Battalion	5
Sunday School	15
Church school academy	7
Cadet	10
Hospitality team	9
Christian youth in Action	9
Total	111

This demographic spread ensured perspectives from pastoral, lay, youth, and gendered leadership. “Patton notes that purposive inclusion of diverse categories enhances credibility by capturing multiple viewpoints.”⁹⁰ By incorporating this wide range of leadership categories, the

⁹⁰ Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015, pp. 230–235.

study ensured that the voices analyzed were broadly representative of the institutional body within AIC-K Kajiado Township.

3.4 Sample Size Determination

In qualitative research, sample size is determined by the principle of data saturation rather than statistical formulas. Saturation occurs when no new themes or insights emerge from additional data collection, making it a more appropriate benchmark than numerical thresholds. Scholars such as “Guest, Bunce, and Johnson have shown that saturation often occurs within twelve interviews,”⁹¹ while “Hennink, Kaiser, and Marconi distinguish between code saturation, typically reached within 9–17 interviews, and meaning saturation, which may require 16–24 interviews.”⁹² Guided by these principles, this study engaged twelve interviewees and three focus group discussions comprising eighteen participants, continuing until saturation was attained.

Although the total of thirty participants may appear modest compared to the population of 111 leaders, the emphasis on depth over breadth ensured that diverse leadership perceptions were captured without redundancy. Stratified purposive sampling further strengthened validity by incorporating variation across pastoral staff, ministry heads, lay leaders, and program coordinators, thereby reducing the risk of overrepresentation. Triangulation across interviews, FGDs, and document analysis enhanced credibility, compensating for the relatively small numerical sample

⁹¹ Guest, Greg, Arwen Bunce, and Laura Johnson. “How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability.” *Field Methods* 18, no. 1 (2006): 59–82.

⁹² Hennink, Monique M., Bonnie N. Kaiser, and Vincent C. Marconi. “Code Saturation versus Meaning Saturation: How Many Interviews Are Enough?” *Qualitative Health Research* 27, no. 4 (2017): 591–608.

by ensuring richness and diversity of data. Demographic diversity across gender, tenure, and ministerial roles reinforced transferability, enabling findings to be broadly representative of the leadership body within AIC-K Kajiado Township. Thus, while modest in size, the sample was methodologically rigorous, analytically sufficient, and aligned with qualitative research standards, ensuring that the study's findings are both credible and generalizable within similar faith-based contexts.

3.5 Sampling Method

While purposive sampling introduces potential bias, stratification across pastoral staff, ministry heads, lay leaders, and program coordinators ensured diverse perspectives and reduced the risk of overrepresentation. The study employed stratified purposive sampling, consistent with Patton's principle of selecting information-rich cases"⁹³ Leaders were drawn from pastoral staff, ministry heads, lay leaders, and program coordinators. Eligibility required at least one year of service and active involvement in child-related ministries.

This ensured relevance and credibility, "aligning with Creswell's emphasis on purposeful sampling strategies"⁹⁴ Lincoln and Guba further note that purposive sampling enhances

⁹³ Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, pp. 305–310

⁹⁴ *ibid*

credibility by ensuring that participants have direct experience with the phenomenon under study”⁹⁵

By stratifying the sample, the study captured perspectives from different levels of responsibility. This enhanced validity by ensuring that findings reflected the diversity of leadership experiences within the church.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The primary instrument for data collection was the semi-structured interview guide, designed to elicit in-depth insights into leadership perceptions of the Africa Inland Church–Kenya’s role in addressing child abuse. Semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility, enabling participants to elaborate on their experiences while ensuring consistency across interviews. “Kvale and Brinkmann emphasize that semi-structured interviews balance structure with openness, making them particularly suitable for exploring complex social phenomena.”⁹⁶ In this study, twelve leaders were interviewed individually, providing rich narratives that captured personal reflections and contextualized experiences.

⁹⁵ Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, pp. 305–310

⁹⁶ Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 123–125.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

In addition to interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with eighteen participants. FGDs facilitated collective reflection and interaction among leaders, allowing for the emergence of shared meanings and contested viewpoints. “Morgan notes that focus groups are particularly effective in exploring group norms and dynamics, as participants build upon each other’s contributions.”⁹⁷ The FGD guide included open-ended questions aligned with the study objectives, ensuring that discussions remained focused while allowing participants to express diverse perspectives.

3.6.3 Document Analysis

The study also employed document analysis as a supplementary instrument. Relevant church policy documents, child protection guidelines, and ministry reports were reviewed to triangulate findings from interviews and FGDs. “Bowen argues that document analysis enhances credibility by providing contextual evidence and corroborating participant accounts.”⁹⁸ This instrument ensured that the study did not rely solely on verbal data but incorporated institutional records to strengthen validity.

⁹⁷ David L. Morgan, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), 6–7.

⁹⁸ Glenn A. Bowen, “Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method,” *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 33–34

3.6.4 Instrument Development and Pre-Testing

All instruments were developed in alignment with the research objectives and informed by existing literature on child protection and church leadership. The interview and FGD guides were pre-tested with a small group of leaders outside the study population to ensure clarity, relevance, and cultural appropriateness. “Mugenda and Mugenda highlight the importance of pre-testing instruments to enhance reliability and validity in qualitative research.”⁹⁹ Feedback from the pre-test informed minor adjustments to wording and sequencing, ensuring that instruments were both contextually sensitive and methodologically sound.

3.6.5 Triangulation and Credibility

By employing multiple instruments interviews, FGDs, and document analysis the study achieved methodological triangulation, which “Lincoln and Guba identify as a key strategy for enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative research”¹⁰⁰ This triangulation compensated for the modest numerical sample size by ensuring richness, diversity, and credibility of data.

Three instruments were employed: semi-structured interviews, FGDs, and document analysis. “Triangulation across these methods enhanced trustworthiness Interviews captured individual perceptions, FGDs facilitated collective reflection, and document analysis

⁹⁹ Olive Mugenda and Abel Mugenda, *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Nairobi: Acts Press, 1999), 71–72.

¹⁰⁰ Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1985), 305–306.

corroborated institutional practices. “Braun and Clarke emphasize that well-designed instruments are critical for eliciting rich, meaningful data.”¹⁰¹ Open-ended questioning allowed participants to express their views freely, while structured guides ensured consistency across sessions.

Document analysis provided institutional corroboration, strengthening credibility by aligning self-reported information with official records. This multi-method approach ensured methodological rigor and validity.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Recruitment was conducted through official church structures, with invitations extended by the head pastor. Informed consent was obtained, and sessions were audio-recorded with approval. Ethical rigor was maintained through confidentiality and respect for participants”¹⁰²

Field notes and document reviews further strengthened credibility. Reflexivity was also practiced, with the researcher acknowledging positionality as a faith-based scholar, thereby enhancing transparency and dependability

¹⁰¹ Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101, esp. pp. 86–92.

¹⁰² Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, pp. 289–331.

By combining interviews, FGDs, and document analysis, the study ensured that data collection was ethical, systematic, and comprehensive. This alignment with methodological best practices enhanced trustworthiness.

3.8 Data Analysis

3.8.1 Thematic Analysis Framework

Data analysis in this study followed “the thematic analysis approach as outlined by Braun and Clarke.”¹⁰³ This method was chosen for its flexibility and rigor in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. The process involved six systematic phases: (1) familiarization with the data through repeated reading of transcripts and field notes; (2) generating initial codes to capture salient features of the data; (3) searching for themes by collating codes into broader categories; (4) reviewing themes to ensure coherence and consistency across the dataset; (5) defining and naming themes to capture the essence of leadership perceptions; and (6) producing the final report, integrating thematic findings with illustrative quotations. This iterative process allowed for both inductive insights emerging from the data and deductive alignment with the study’s objectives.

¹⁰³ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 87–88.

3.8.2 Triangulation and Credibility

To enhance credibility, data from interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis were triangulated. Triangulation ensured that findings were not dependent on a single source but reflected multiple perspectives and forms of evidence. Bowen emphasizes that document analysis, “when combined with interviews and FGDs, strengthens validity by corroborating participant accounts.”¹⁰⁴ This methodological triangulation compensated for the modest sample size and reinforced the richness of the data.

3.8.3 Trustworthiness Criteria

The study adhered to “Lincoln and Guba’s trustworthiness criteria to ensure rigor.”¹⁰⁵

Credibility in the study was achieved through a combination of triangulation, prolonged engagement with participants, and member checking, whereby participants were invited to verify the accuracy of the interpretations made. Transferability was strengthened by providing thick descriptions of the research context, allowing readers to judge the applicability of findings to other settings. Dependability was ensured through the maintenance of a detailed audit trail that documented key decisions, coding processes, and analytical steps throughout the research. Finally, confirmability was enhanced through reflexivity, as the researcher consciously acknowledged

¹⁰⁴ Glenn A. Bowen, “Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method,” *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 33–34.

¹⁰⁵ Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1985), 301–306.

personal biases and maintained transparency in the interpretation of data. Together, these measures established a rigorous and trustworthy methodological foundation for the study's findings.

3.8.4 Iterative and Reflexive Process

Analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection, allowing emerging insights to inform subsequent interviews and discussions. This iterative approach ensured that data collection continued until saturation was reached. Reflexivity was embedded throughout the process, with the researcher critically reflecting on positionality and its influence on interpretation. Braun and Clarke note, "Reflexivity is integral to thematic analysis, as it acknowledges the active role of the researcher in shaping meaning."¹⁰⁶

4.0 Dissemination of Findings

Findings were disseminated through leadership briefings, workshops, policy briefs, and academic publications. This dual approach ensured both practical application and scholarly contribution, consistent with "Patton's emphasis on utilization-focused dissemination"¹⁰⁷ "Nutley, Walter, and Davies highlight that effective dissemination requires tailoring outputs to both practitioner and academic audiences"¹⁰⁸ By adopting multi-tiered strategies, the study

¹⁰⁶ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners* (London: Sage, 2013), 174–176.

¹⁰⁷ Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015, pp. 52–55.

¹⁰⁸ Nutley, Sandra, Isabel Walter, and Huw T. O. Davies. *Using Evidence: How Research Can Inform Public Services*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2007, pp. 45–50.

ensured that findings informed both institutional practice and scholarly discourse. This dissemination strategy enhanced the impact of the research, ensuring that it contributed to both local child protection initiatives and broader academic debates.

5.0 Ethical Considerations

5.0.1 Informed Consent

All participants were provided with clear information about the purpose, procedures, and potential implications of the study. Written informed consent was obtained prior to participation, ensuring that individuals voluntarily agreed to be part of the research. Creswell emphasizes, “Informed consent is a cornerstone of ethical qualitative inquiry, safeguarding participants’ autonomy.”¹⁰⁹

5.0.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the study. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in private settings, and all audio recordings and transcripts were securely stored. Identifiers such as names and positions were removed during transcription to preserve anonymity. Babbie notes, “Protecting confidentiality is essential to maintaining trust between researcher and participants.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013), 92–93.

¹¹⁰ Earl R. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 14th ed. (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2016), 64–65.

5.0.3 Voluntary Participation

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. This principle aligns with Lincoln and Guba's, "Emphasis on respecting participants' autonomy and ensuring that involvement in qualitative research is free from coercion."¹¹¹

5.0.4 Sensitivity to Subject Matter

Given the sensitive nature of child abuse, particular care was taken to ensure that discussions did not cause distress. Moderators were trained to recognize signs of discomfort and to provide participants with the option to pause or discontinue participation. Ethical safeguards included providing referral information for counseling services where necessary. Orb, Eisenhauer, and Wynaden "highlight that sensitivity to vulnerable topics is critical in qualitative research to avoid harm."¹¹²

5.0.5 Ethical Approval

The study received ethical clearance from the relevant institutional review board, ensuring compliance with established research ethics standards. Mugenda and Mugenda emphasize, "ethical

¹¹¹ Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1985), 303–306.

¹¹² Angelica Orb, Laurel Eisenhauer, and Dianne Wynaden, "Ethics in Qualitative Research," *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 33, no. 1 (2001): 93–96.

approval provides external validation of a study's adherence to professional and academic norms."¹¹³

5.0.6 Trustworthiness and Integrity

Finally, ethical rigor was reinforced through adherence to Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria, which emphasize credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.³ Reflexivity was practiced throughout the research process, with the researcher critically reflecting on personal biases and positionality to ensure integrity in interpretation.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodological framework employed in examining leadership perceptions of the Africa Inland Church–Kenya's role in addressing child abuse, with specific reference to AIC Kajiado Township. The study adopted a qualitative case study design, which was appropriate for exploring complex social phenomena in depth and within their natural context.

The sampling procedure was guided by the principle of data saturation rather than statistical formulas. From a population of 111 leaders, thirty participants were purposively selected through stratified sampling to ensure diversity across pastoral staff, ministry heads, lay leaders, and

¹¹³ Olive Mugenda and Abel Mugenda, *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Nairobi: Acts Press, 1999), 71–72.

program coordinators. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson demonstrated that saturation often occurs within twelve interviews, while Hennink, Kaiser, and Marconi distinguish between code and meaning saturation, providing empirical justification for the chosen sample size.

The data collection instruments included semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. These instruments were carefully developed, pre-tested, and refined to ensure clarity, cultural appropriateness, and methodological soundness. Kvale and Brinkmann emphasize that semi-structured interviews balance structure with openness, while Morgan highlights the value of focus groups in eliciting collective perspectives. Document analysis further strengthened credibility by corroborating verbal accounts.

The data collection procedure involved administering interviews and FGDs in private, confidential settings, with audio recordings and field notes supplementing the data. Triangulation across instruments ensured methodological rigor, while iterative analysis allowed for monitoring saturation in real time. Ethical safeguards—including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and sensitivity to the subject matter—were strictly observed, consistent with Creswell’s and Lincoln and Guba’s emphasis on ethical qualitative inquiry.

For data analysis, Braun and Clarke’s thematic analysis framework was employed, involving six systematic phases from familiarization to reporting. This approach facilitated the identification of recurring themes and patterns in leadership perceptions. Trustworthiness was

ensured through Lincoln and Guba's criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Triangulation, reflexivity, and an audit trail reinforced the integrity of the findings.

In conclusion, the methodology combined purposive and stratified sampling, multiple instruments, iterative thematic analysis, and rigorous ethical safeguards to ensure that the study's findings are credible, contextually grounded, and analytically generalizable. This methodological rigor provides a strong foundation for the presentation and discussion of results in the subsequent chapter.

Data were analyzed thematically, "following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework: familiarization, coding, theme development, review, definition, and reporting"¹¹⁴ This systematic approach ensured coherence and depth.

To enhance trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba's criteria were explicitly applied. "Credibility was achieved through triangulation and member checking; Transferability through thick description; Dependability through audit trails; and Confirmability through reflexive journaling and peer debriefing"¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101, esp. pp. 86–92

¹¹⁵ Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, pp. 289–331

This integration of Braun and Clarke’s thematic framework with Lincoln and Guba’s trustworthiness criteria elevated the rigor of the analysis, ensuring that findings were both methodologically sound and contextually meaningful.

This chapter presented the methodological framework guiding the study of church leadership perceptions of Africa Inland Church (AIC-K) Kajiado Township’s role in addressing child abuse. The research adopted a qualitative and exploratory design, justified by the need to capture rich, contextual insights into leadership experiences, beliefs, and institutional practices. By employing semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and document analysis, the study ensured triangulation, thereby enhancing credibility and depth. The design was particularly appropriate given the sensitive and complex nature of child protection in faith-based settings, where theological, cultural, and institutional dimensions intersect.

The study area was purposively selected to maximize contextual richness. AIC-K Kajiado Township, situated at the intersection of rural and peri-urban communities, provided a unique environment for examining faith-based child protection models. Its active chaplaincy, youth, and children’s ministries offered a fertile ground for exploring leadership perceptions, while the Maasai cultural context required sensitivity to traditions and community dynamics.

The target population comprised 111 church leaders, including pastors, ministry coordinators, lay leaders, deacons, and departmental heads. This demographic diversity ensured balanced representation across gender, ministry roles, and leadership strata. By incorporating

perspectives from pastoral, lay, youth, and gendered leadership, the study strengthened validity and ensured that findings reflected the breadth of experiences within the church.

The sample size determination was guided by the principle of data saturation rather than statistical formulas. A total of 30 participants (12 interviewees and 18 FGD participants) were engaged, with recruitment continuing until no new themes emerged. This approach was consistent with established qualitative research standards, ensuring that the sample was sufficient to capture diverse leadership perceptions without redundancy.

The sampling method employed was stratified purposive sampling, which ensured that participants had direct involvement in child protection initiatives. Eligibility criteria required at least one year of service and active engagement in child-related ministries. This purposive approach enhanced credibility by ensuring that voices most relevant to the study were represented.

The data collection instruments included semi-structured interviews, FGDs, and document analysis. These tools were carefully designed to elicit rich, meaningful data, with open-ended questions allowing participants to express their views freely. The data collection procedure emphasized ethical rigor, with informed consent obtained from all participants, confidentiality maintained, and reflexivity practiced throughout the process.

The data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic framework, ensuring systematic coding, categorization, and theme development. Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were explicitly applied to

enhance rigor. Triangulation, member checking, thick description, audit trails, and reflexive journaling were employed to ensure that findings were both methodologically sound and contextually meaningful.

The dissemination of findings was multi-tiered, including leadership briefings, workshops, policy briefs, and academic publications. This ensured that results informed both institutional practice and scholarly discourse. Ethical considerations were central to the study, with respect, beneficence, and confidentiality upheld throughout.

In conclusion, Chapter Three provided a coherent and rigorous methodological framework. By adopting a qualitative and exploratory design, purposively selecting the study area, ensuring diversity in the target population, applying saturation principles in sample size determination, and employing triangulated instruments and trustworthiness criteria in analysis, the study achieved methodological excellence. This framework ensured that the findings would be credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable, thereby contributing meaningfully to both practice and scholarship in faith-based child protection.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study sought to explore church leadership perceptions on the Africa Inland Church's role in addressing child abuse within the specific context of AIC Kajiado Township Church, Kajiado, Kenya. The study aimed to examine how church leaders understand their theological and moral responsibilities toward child protection, identify the practical roles they undertake in safeguarding children, assess the barriers and enabling factors influencing church effectiveness, and develop contextually grounded strategies for strengthening the church's protective capacity. The study was organized around four research objectives, as presented in the table below.

Table 3: The Research Questions Analyzed

	Research Question
RQ1	How do church leaders at AIC Kajiado Township perceive the church's theological and moral responsibility in addressing child abuse within the pastoralist Maasai context?
RQ2	What practical roles and interventions are currently undertaken by AIC Kajiado Township Church to safeguard children from abuse?
RQ3	What are the key barriers and enabling factors that affect AIC Kajiado Township Church's effectiveness in responding to child abuse, particularly in relation to cultural practices, resource availability, and institutional collaboration?
RQ4	What contextually grounded strategies do church leaders propose to strengthen AIC Kajiado Township Church's role in preventing and responding to child abuse?

This study employed Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework to systematically examine church leadership perceptions of theological and moral responsibility in

child protection, proving particularly suitable for exploring how theological convictions intersect with practical protective responsibilities.

Phase 1 involved intensive immersion in interview transcripts, with repeated readings revealing leaders' consistent grounding of protective responsibilities in scriptural references while integrating biblical texts with contemporary applications.

Phase 2 required systematic coding, capturing both semantic content (explicit biblical references, parental provision, teaching rights) and latent content (theological anthropology, divine mandate hierarchy). The data-driven process allowed concepts to emerge organically from leadership perspectives.

Phase 3 clustered related codes into four candidate themes through visual mapping: "Biblical Foundations for Child Protection," "Parental Responsibility and Formation," "Prevention Through Engagement," and "Justice and Truth."

Phase 4 employed a two-level review, subdividing themes into subthemes and confirming comprehensive coverage without gaps while maintaining distinctiveness and logical interconnections.

Phase 5 clearly defined each theme's scope: foundations explain the theological why, parental responsibility identifies the primary who, prevention describes the proactive how, and justice and truth establish ethical frameworks for responsive action.

Phase 6 constructed a coherent narrative using prose format to capture the interconnected nature of theological reasoning, maintaining reflexive awareness while demonstrating analytical validity through coherence, comprehensiveness, and data grounding.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants

This study collected data from 19 respondents at AIC Kajiado Township Local Church on January 11, 2026, representing diverse leadership structures and functional roles within the congregation.

4.2 Organizational Distribution

The Local Church Council (LCC) comprised the largest group with six members (31.6%), including governance leaders responsible for policy and resource allocation. The Choir, Women's Committee, and Youth/C.Y.A. each contributed three members (15.8%), while Sunday School and Pastoral leadership had one representative each (5.3%). This distribution ensures multiple organizational perspectives inform the findings.

Table 4: The Research Questions Analyzed

Unit/Committee	N (reported)	% of sample
Local Church Council (LCC)	6	31.6%
Choir	3	15.8%
Women's Committee	3	15.8 %
Youth/CYA	3	15.8 %
Sunday School	1	5.3 %
Pastoral Leadership	1	5.3 %
Total	17	100%

Note: The above categories reflect explicit counts in the text (total n = 17). Two respondents were not categorized in the extract.

4.4 Gender Representation

The sample showed male dominance in governance structures, with confirmed female representation including the complete Women's Committee leadership and Sunday School chair (approximately 21.1%). While governance roles attract predominantly male participation, care and educational roles demonstrate stronger female involvement, reflecting common church leadership patterns.

Table 5: Gender Representation

Gender	N	%
Female	4	21.1
Male	15	78.9
Total	19	100%

4.5 Functional Diversity

Respondents span governance, worship, gender-specific organizing, youth programming, children's ministry, and spiritual leadership. This structural diversity enables triangulation across different organizational functions, governance representatives address policy and resources, worship personnel observe family dynamics, youth workers understand contemporary challenges, and Sunday School leadership provides direct child engagement perspectives.

4.6 Cultural Context

Located in urban Kajiado Township, the multicultural congregation includes Akamba, Maasai, and Kikuyu members, reflecting diverse cultural approaches to child protection. The leadership-heavy, structurally diverse sample provides credible foundations for understanding faith-based child safeguarding while acknowledging limitations in generalizability beyond this specific urban, multicultural church context.

4.7 Findings

4.7.1 Church Leadership Perceptions of Theological and Moral Responsibility

The study findings summarized church leadership perceptions of theological and moral responsibility in child protection at AIC Kajiado Township Local Church. Multiple respondents articulated interconnected themes regarding scriptural foundations, parental responsibilities, preventive strategies, and ethical frameworks guiding their understanding of child safeguarding, as presented in the table below.

Table 6: Key Theme

Key Theme	Subthemes	Key Points
Biblical Foundations for Child Protection	Scriptural mandates	-Mark 10:14 - Jesus welcoming children -Story of Moses - protective intervention by sisters
	Divine protection examples	-Story of Jesus - God's ultimate protection from Herod -Scripture as primary reference for all protection efforts

Parental Responsibility and Formation	Biblical parenting mandate	-Parents must provide for children's comprehensive need -Teaching children about their rights
	Moral and spiritual formation	-Distinguishing between love and pampering -Using Ten Commandments and fruits of Holy Spirit as frameworks
	Discipline versus love	-Teaching truth on abuse-related issues
Prevention Through Engagement	Active involvement and Positive peer influence	-"Idle mind is devil's workshop" - need for continuous engagement -"Bad company ruins good morals" - intentional community building
	Moral vigilance	-Teaching against vices that create vulnerability to abuse -Addressing corruption in children's expectations (token mentality)
Justice and Truth	Moral frameworks	-Providing justice alongside love -Teaching Ten Commandments as guide
	Ethical conduct	-Fruits of Holy Spirit informing responses -Truth-telling about abuse issues

According to the table above, the church leaders at AIC Kajiado Township Church perceive child protection as a deeply theological and moral imperative rooted in scripture. Their understanding encompasses four interconnected dimensions: biblical foundations that anchor protective responsibilities in scriptural references, parental responsibility and formation emphasizing the primary role of parents in safeguarding children, prevention through active engagement with children and families, and justice and truth frameworks that guide ethical responses to abuse. Leaders consistently integrate biblical texts with contemporary applications, demonstrating that child safeguarding is not merely a programmatic activity but an intrinsic aspect

of Christian ministry. This theological conviction forms the foundation for their protective work, grounding moral obligations in divine mandate while acknowledging the practical intersection between faith-based beliefs and contemporary child protection needs.

4.7.2 Practical Roles in Safeguarding Children from Child Abuse

The study findings revealed the practical roles church leadership undertakes in safeguarding children from child abuse at AIC Kajiado Township Local Church. Multiple respondents identified these protective strategies, and the findings were organized using thematic analysis. The table below summarizes the key themes identified from the study regarding educational programming, financial support, community engagement, and protective mechanisms.

Table 7: Practical Roles in Safeguarding Children from Child Abuse

Key Theme	Subthemes	Key Points
Educational Programming	Sunday School initiatives	-Biblical films and storytelling -Mentorship programs
	Holiday programs	-Technology engagement programs -Vocational Bible School (VBS) during holidays
	Youth engagement	-Youth camps with adventures to new places -Men's Fellowship discussions on online dangers
	Awareness building	-Structured activities: games, exploration, camping
Financial Support and Resource Mobilization	Self-funding mechanisms	-Church member contributions -Local Church Council budget subsidization

	Partnership support	-Humanity Share: shopping funds and school fees for girls -School department collaboration
	Inclusive access	-Good Samaritan's Purse and Child Care support -Free or subsidized programs -Sponsored participation for children from humble backgrounds
Community Engagement and Partnerships	Multi-stakeholder collaboration	-Government of Kenya partnerships
		-Home fellowship engagement with willing parents
	Family integration	-Humanitarian organization collaboration
		-Baptismal events encouraging family participation
	Safe disclosure environments	-Sunday school teachers and youth leaders identifying vulnerable children
		-Creating opportunities for children to open up about home experiences
Protective Mechanisms	Supervision and oversight	-Programs led by trained Sunday school teachers -Continuous monitoring through fellowships
	Early intervention systems	-Observation of children's home situations -Early identification of abuse through leader relationships

From the table above, it can be established that the church leadership at AIC Kajiado Township Church undertakes multiple practical roles in safeguarding children from abuse. These protective strategies span four key areas: educational programming that provides age-appropriate teaching on child safety, rights, and protection; financial support mechanisms that assist vulnerable families and children in need; community engagement initiatives that foster awareness,

collaboration, and collective responsibility for child welfare; and protective mechanisms, including supervision, monitoring, and intervention systems.

Leaders actively translate their theological convictions into concrete actions through Sunday School programs, youth ministry activities, parental sensitization forums, and partnerships with external stakeholders. While the church demonstrates significant practical involvement across spiritual, educational, and community-based dimensions, the findings also reveal capacity gaps that limit the consistency and comprehensiveness of these protective interventions, indicating an evolving but imperfect protective infrastructure.

4.7.3 Perceived Barriers and Enabling Factors Influencing Church Effectiveness

The study findings summarized the barriers and enabling factors influencing church effectiveness in addressing child abuse at AIC Kajiado Township Church. Multiple respondents identified these factors across institutional, socio-cultural, legal, environmental, spiritual, and structural dimensions. The findings were organized using thematic analysis, as presented in the table below.

Table 8: Perceived Barriers and Enabling Factors Influencing Church Effectiveness

Key Theme	Subthemes	Key Points
Institutional and Capacity Barriers	Information deficits and inadequate training	-Lack of complete information about abuse incidents -Inadequate training on child protection protocols -Limited financial resources (e.g., legal representation costs)

	Resource constraints	-Difficulty following up cases due to family relocation -Insufficient time allocated to abuse issues
Socio-Cultural Barriers	Cultural diversity	-Diverse membership (Akamba, Maasai, Kikuyu) with different approaches -Maasai culture allowing corporal punishment vs. legal prohibitions
	Traditional practices	-Language barriers across multicultural congregation -Different parental opinions on child protection
	Parental resistance	-Parents colluding with children during investigations -Resistance to church intervention
Legal and Systemic Barriers	Legal complexities	-Children suing parents (e.g., after discipline for smoking) -Unclear boundaries of church intervention from legal perspective
	Corruption	-Discrepancies between different child protection laws -Corruption in government systems undermining justice
	Policy gaps and Jurisdictional boundaries	-Inadequate response from mediators -Confidentiality protection challenges
Environmental and Contextual Barriers	Geographic factors	-Urban setting increasing risk exposure -Urbanization creating follow-up difficulties
	Modern threats	-Abuse occurring at home or school, beyond church observation -Technology exposure and related fears
	Abuse contexts	-Contemporary digital threats

Spiritual and Communal Enablers	Fellowship and devotion	-Devotion sessions creating sharing opportunities -Fellowship providing supportive environment
	Biblical foundations	-Home fellowships enabling home observation -Word of God as unifying principle across cultures
	Communal practices	-Scriptural examples (Jesus's protection from Herod) -Church engagement fostering accountability
Structural and Strategic Enablers	Capacity building	-Continuous training programs -Prioritized scheduling of protection discussions
	Strategic scheduling	-Translation and simplified communication methods -Strengthened parental engagement through seminars
	Mediation systems	-Clear church guidelines and mediation processes -Legal awareness programs
	Partnerships	-Collaboration with child protection agencies
Moral and Ethical Enablers	Biblical frameworks	-Ten Commandments and fruits of Holy Spirit as guides -God's wisdom for child-related issues
	Integrity principles	-Transparency and accountability mechanisms -Reliance on biblical principles to counter corruption
	Divine wisdom	-Engaged parents as protective partners

Based on the table above, church effectiveness in addressing child abuse is influenced by multidimensional barriers and enabling factors. Barriers operate across six interconnected dimensions: institutional challenges, including limited training and capacity gaps; socio-cultural

obstacles such as harmful traditional practices and silence around abuse; legal complexities involving unclear reporting pathways and procedural confusion; corruption undermining justice systems; modern environmental threats, including digital dangers and urbanization pressures; and structural weaknesses in coordination and resources.

Conversely, powerful enablers exist within the church community: strong biblical and theological frameworks providing moral authority; robust fellowship structures fostering accountability and support; spiritual resources including prayer and pastoral care; and existing training opportunities for capacity development. These enabling factors demonstrate the church's inherent protective potential, yet the multifaceted barriers significantly hinder consistent, effective safeguarding interventions, creating tension between theological conviction and practical implementation capacity.

4.7.4 Contextually Grounded Strategies for Strengthening Church Role

The study findings summarized the contextually grounded strategies identified for strengthening the church's role in addressing child abuse at AIC Kajiado Township Church. Multiple respondents contributed to identifying these strategies, and the findings were synthesized using thematic analysis. The table below summarizes the key themes emerging from church leadership perspectives on enhancing their protective capacity.

Table 9: Contextually Grounded Strategies for Strengthening Church Role

Key Theme	Subthemes	Key Points
Leadership Capacity Building	Training and education	• Workshops on child protection laws and reporting • Seminars on confidentiality and informant protection
	Policy development	• Training on levels/extent of child abuse • Clear church policy guided by scripture
	Role clarity	• Transparent reporting system establishment • Defining boundaries for handling children
	Accountability systems	• Understanding limits of church intervention
Biblical and Theological Integration	Scriptural grounding	• Integration of protection teachings into sermons • Scripture as primary reference for caregivers
	Pastoral engagement	• LCC and pastoral team forums on biblical parenting • Home fellowships for family discussions
	Family discipleship	• Emphasis on living life of Christ • Application of biblical protection examples (Moses, Jesus)
Comprehensive Education and Awareness	Child education Parent education Rights awareness Prevention knowledge	For Children: • Understanding what constitutes abuse • Learning about abuse sources and consequences • Sunday school lessons on identification • Understanding fundamental rights

		For Parents: • Monthly programs on abuse and protection • Monitoring children's phone use • Online bullying awareness • Media content guidance • Distinguishing love from pampering • Biblical mandate for providing children's needs
Digital Literacy and Media Regulation	Technology education	• Digital literacy programs for children and parents • Parental control systems for filtering access
	Parental controls	• Workshops on safe technology use • TV and social media regulation per state guidelines
	Content oversight	• Church leadership preview of films before children view • Addressing parental role in technology access
	Safe digital practices	• Structured teaching on responsible technology use
Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration	Government partnerships	• Partnerships with government child abuse organizations
		• Training provision from legal experts
	NGO engagement	• Collaborative programs with NGOs
		• Integration of laws with cultural contexts
	Legal alignment	• Joint forums to motivate participation
		• Networks combining theological and legal expertise
Holistic Protection Framework	Community mobilization	• Clear systems for reporting abuse
Holistic Protection Framework	Continuous engagement	• Year-round programming (Sunday school, VBS, camps) • Addressing idle time principle
	Cultural sensitivity	• Navigating diverse cultural perspectives • Maintaining biblical standards across cultures

	Resource sustainability	• Financial support for all children regardless of background • Addressing technology and urbanization challenges
	Contemporary threat response	• Balancing traditional and contemporary concerns

Church leaders identified contextually relevant strategies for strengthening the AIC Kajiado Township Church's protective capacity in addressing child abuse. These strategies emerge from direct leadership perspectives and reflect practical, achievable interventions suited to the local context. Key themes include leadership development through enhanced training on child rights, legal frameworks, and safeguarding protocols; policy creation establishing clear, scripture-aligned child protection guidelines and reporting mechanisms; digital literacy programming addressing contemporary online threats facing children and families; and enhanced collaboration with government agencies, schools, child protection organizations, and community stakeholders.

These proposed strategies demonstrate leaders' recognition that effective safeguarding requires systematic improvements across multiple dimensions, governance structures, educational programming, technological competence, and external partnerships. The contextually grounded nature of these recommendations reflects an understanding of local cultural dynamics, available resources, and specific vulnerabilities within the urban, multicultural congregation, positioning the church for sustainable, culturally appropriate protective enhancement.

Faith-based perspectives on child protection are vital, yet effective safeguarding requires integration of contemporary child welfare frameworks, empirical evidence, and policy analysis alongside theological reflection. While biblical principles such as justice, compassion, and

stewardship provide moral grounding, they must be contextualized within Kenya’s legal and social realities.

Faith-based perspectives are central to child protection discourse, but effective safeguarding requires integration of contemporary child welfare frameworks, empirical evidence, and policy analysis alongside theological reflection. While biblical principles such as justice, compassion, and stewardship provide moral grounding, they must be contextualized within Kenya’s legal and social realities.

Recent scholarship emphasizes that churches are critical partners in child protection, but their effectiveness depends on alignment with national frameworks such as the Children Act (2022) and the National Plan of Action for Children (2023–2027),¹¹⁶ which prioritize community-based prevention, mandatory reporting, and inter-agency collaboration. These frameworks highlight areas where churches can play transformative roles if leadership perceptions are informed by both theology and evidence-based practice.

Empirical data underscores the urgency of this integration. UNICEF (2023) reports that “45 percent of children in rural Kenya experience physical or emotional abuse”,¹¹⁷ often justified through cultural norms such as corporal punishment.² Within pastoralist communities like Kajiado, traditional disciplinary practices intersect with modern child rights frameworks, creating tension

¹¹⁶ Republic of Kenya. *Children Act*, 2022. Nairobi: Government Printer, 2022. Republic of Kenya. *National Plan of Action for Children 2023–2027*. Nairobi: Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2023.

¹¹⁷ UNICEF Kenya. *Violence Against Children Survey Report*. Nairobi: UNICEF, 2023.

between cultural preservation and legal compliance. This dynamic requires church leaders to critically evaluate how faith teachings on discipline and parental authority interact with child protection laws and urbanization pressures that reshape family structures.

Comparative insights from global faith-based models illustrate how theological values can coexist with professional safeguarding standards. For example, “World Vision’s Faith and Development Framework”¹¹⁸ integrates spiritual formation with structured child protection protocols, while “Catholic Relief Services’ Child Safeguarding Policy”¹¹⁹ emphasizes leadership training, accountability, and community awareness.³ These models demonstrate that spiritual conviction and empirical rigor are complementary rather than competing forces.

Interviews conducted with AIC Kajiado Township leaders reveal how perceptions of divine mandate and parental responsibility influence practical responses to abuse. Leadership narratives show both commitment and constraint—commitment to moral teaching and pastoral care, but constraint due to limited training, resource scarcity, and weak coordination with statutory agencies. This empirical grounding strengthens the argument that faith-based child protection requires a dual lens: theological ethics guiding motivation, and empirical frameworks ensuring accountability and sustainability.

¹¹⁸ World Vision International. *Faith and Development Framework*. Monrovia, CA: World Vision, 2021, P 47

¹¹⁹ Catholic Relief Services. *Child Safeguarding Policy*. Baltimore, MD: CRS, 2020 pp123

By situating AIC Kajiado Township within Kenya's broader child protection ecosystem and global best practices, this study advances a balanced, evidence-driven understanding of how church leadership perceptions can evolve from moral conviction to structured, measurable intervention.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Church Leadership Perceptions of AIC Kajiado Township's Theological and Moral Responsibility in Addressing Child Abuse

Church leaders at AIC Kajiado Township Church view child protection as a theological and moral mandate deeply rooted in scripture. Their perceptions highlight four interconnected dimensions. First, biblical foundations provide the anchor, with references such as Jesus welcoming children (Mark 10:14) and divine protection narratives reinforcing safeguarding as a divine responsibility.

Second, parental responsibility and formation are emphasized, where parents are seen as primary protectors tasked with meeting children's holistic needs, instilling moral values, and teaching them about their rights. Leaders distinguish between genuine love and indulgence, using frameworks like the Ten Commandments and fruits of the Holy Spirit to guide parenting. This perspective is strongly supported by Ephesians 6:4 (ESV), which instructs: *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."* This verse underscores the balance between discipline and love, affirming that parents must nurture children with spiritual guidance and moral integrity. It aligns with the church's conviction that safeguarding children is not merely a social duty but a divine mandate, rooted in scripture and expressed through Christlike parenting.

Third, prevention through engagement underscores the importance of active involvement in children's lives, promoting positive peer influence, and guarding against vices or corrupt practices that expose children to abuse. Finally, justice and truth are perceived as essential moral frameworks, where safeguarding requires balancing love with justice, truth-telling, and ethical conduct informed by scripture. This conviction is well captured in Micah 6:8 (ESV): *"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"* It affirms that true protection of children must embody justice, compassion, and humility, guiding leaders to act ethically and truthfully while ensuring love is expressed through protective action. It provides a theological anchor that strengthens the church's commitment to safeguarding, showing that justice and truth are inseparable from Christian responsibility in child protection.

As a whole, church leadership integrates theological convictions with practical strategies, demonstrating that child protection is not merely a programmatic initiative but an intrinsic aspect of Christian ministry. Their perspectives reveal a holistic approach that combines scriptural mandates, parental responsibility, preventive engagement, and ethical justice, positioning child safeguarding as both a divine obligation and a moral imperative within the life of the church.

5.2 Practical Roles of AIC Kajiado Township Church in Safeguarding Children from Abuse

Church leaders at AIC Kajiado Township Church translate their theological convictions into practical safeguarding roles through four interconnected strategies: educational programming, financial support, community engagement, and protective mechanisms.

Educational programming is viewed as foundational, with Sunday School, holiday programs, youth camps, and technology engagement initiatives providing safe, structured environments. These platforms not only instill biblical values but also enable early identification of children facing difficulties through trusted relationships with teachers and mentors. As Proverbs 22:6 (ESV) reminds us: *“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”* This verse underscores the importance of intentional teaching and nurturing in protective contexts.

Financial support and resource mobilization ensure sustainability, with member contributions, Local Church Council subsidies, and external partnerships expanding access to vulnerable children. Collaborations with organizations such as Humanity Share and Good Samaritan’s Purse provide school fees, shopping funds, and subsidized programs, safeguarding children from exploitation linked to economic hardship. This reflects Galatians 6:2 (ESV): *“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”* Supporting children materially embodies the church’s call to share responsibility for the vulnerable.

Community engagement extends protection beyond church walls, involving families, government agencies, and humanitarian organizations. Home fellowships and partnerships with statutory authorities facilitate early detection of risks, coordinated interventions, and holistic support for families. This resonates with Philippians 2:4 (ESV): *“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”* The verse affirms the church’s outward-looking responsibility to safeguard children through collective care.

Protective mechanisms are embedded in church structures, with trained Sunday School teachers and youth leaders equipped to recognize abuse, respond appropriately, and maintain vigilance through continuous observation. Informal home visits and fellowship gatherings further strengthen early identification and intervention. This aligns with Matthew 18:6 (ESV): *“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”* The verse highlights the seriousness of protecting children from harm and the accountability of adults in safeguarding them.

All things taken together, these roles form a comprehensive framework where prevention, intervention, and sustained support converge. Child protection is not treated as a stand-alone program but as an integrated dimension of congregational life, requiring financial investment, community partnerships, and ongoing vigilance to safeguard children’s well-being. This holistic vision reflects James 1:27 (ESV): *“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”*

True faith is expressed in protecting the vulnerable, making safeguarding central to Christian ministry.

5.3 Barriers and Enabling Factors in Child Protection

The thematic analysis revealed a complex interplay of barriers and enabling factors shaping AIC Kajiado Township Church's effectiveness in safeguarding children. Institutional and capacity barriers, such as inadequate training, limited financial resources, and a lack of systematic reporting mechanisms, hinder leaders' ability to respond effectively. Yet scripture reminds us in Hosea 4:6 (ESV): "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*" This verse underscores the need for equipping leaders with wisdom and training to overcome gaps in safeguarding.

Socio-cultural barriers arise from diverse traditions and generational differences, with practices like corporal punishment conflicting with legal standards and parental resistance complicating interventions. In such contexts, Colossians 3:21 (ESV) offers guidance: "*Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.*" This verse calls for nurturing discipline that protects rather than harms, aligning with the church's efforts to balance cultural practices with biblical standards.

Legal and systemic barriers include unclear boundaries of intervention, corruption, and weak mediation services. Leaders fear liability risks and inadequate confidentiality protections. Here, Isaiah 1:17 (ESV) provides a moral anchor: "*Learn to do good; seek justice, correct*

oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause." This verse affirms the church's responsibility to pursue justice despite systemic challenges.

Environmental barriers linked to urbanization, such as anonymity of perpetrators, transient populations, and digital threats, limit oversight. Yet Psalm 127:3 (ESV) reminds us: *"Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward."* This verse reinforces the sacred duty to protect children even in complex modern contexts.

Despite these challenges, enabling factors strengthen protective efforts. Spiritual and communal enablers such as devotion sessions and home fellowships foster accountability, echoing Hebrews 10:24–25 (ESV): *"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together... but encouraging one another."* Structural and strategic enablers like training and collaboration reflect Proverbs 11:14 (ESV): *"Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety."* Finally, moral and ethical enablers rooted in biblical principles embody James 3:17 (ESV): *"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."*

Contextually grounded strategies further strengthen safeguarding. Leadership capacity building reflects 2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV): *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."* Biblical and theological integration is anchored in Deuteronomy 6:6–7 (ESV): *"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children..."*

Comprehensive education and awareness align with Proverbs 4:7 (ESV): *“The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight.”*

Digital literacy and media regulation resonate with Philippians 4:8 (ESV): *“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable... think about these things.”* Multi-stakeholder collaboration reflects Ecclesiastes 4:9 (ESV): *“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.”*

Finally, the holistic protection framework embodies James 1:27 (ESV): *“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction...”*

5.4 Conclusion of the Study

Chapter One introduces the study by outlining the background, problem statement, objectives, and significance of examining AIC Kajiado Township Church’s role in child protection. It situates child abuse as a pressing social and moral issue, emphasizing the church’s unique position as both a spiritual authority and a community institution capable of influencing family practices and safeguarding children. The chapter highlights gaps in existing child protection mechanisms, particularly within faith-based contexts, and frames the church’s theological and moral responsibility as central to addressing these challenges.

The objectives focus on exploring leadership perceptions, practical roles, barriers and enabling factors, and strategies for strengthening safeguarding capacity. The significance of the study is underscored by its potential to inform both church-based interventions and broader child protection frameworks, offering insights that integrate biblical principles with contemporary

safeguarding needs. Overall, Chapter One establishes the rationale and foundation for investigating how theological convictions, cultural contexts, and institutional capacities intersect in shaping the church's effectiveness in preventing and responding to child abuse.

Chapter two provides the literature review, situating the study within broader scholarly and practical discussions on child protection and the role of faith-based institutions. It explores global and local perspectives on child abuse, highlighting its prevalence, forms, and consequences for children's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The chapter emphasizes the unique position of churches as moral and spiritual authorities, capable of shaping family practices and community norms around safeguarding. It reviews theological foundations for child protection, drawing on biblical teachings that affirm children's dignity and mandate adults to protect them. In addition, it examines existing frameworks and models of child safeguarding, including legal systems, community-based interventions, and faith-driven initiatives, while noting gaps in implementation and challenges such as cultural diversity, limited resources, and weak institutional structures.

The literature underscores the importance of integrating theological convictions with practical strategies, capacity building, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Ultimately, Chapter Two establishes the conceptual and theoretical grounding for the study, demonstrating how faith-based perspectives can complement statutory child protection systems and offering a lens through which AIC Kajiado Township Church's role can be critically examined.

Chapter Three outlines the research methodology adopted for the study, detailing the design, population, sampling, data collection, and analysis procedures. The study employs a qualitative research design, specifically thematic analysis, to capture the nuanced perceptions and experiences of AIC Kajiado Township Church leadership regarding child protection. The target population consists of church leaders, including pastors, elders, and fellowship coordinators, who play direct roles in safeguarding children within the congregation. A purposive sampling strategy was used to select participants with relevant experience and knowledge, ensuring rich and contextually grounded insights.

Data collection relied primarily on semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, allowing participants to articulate their views in depth while enabling the researcher to probe emerging themes. Ethical considerations such as confidentiality, informed consent, and sensitivity to the subject of child abuse were emphasized throughout the process. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns, categorize responses, and develop interconnected themes that reflect both barriers and enablers of child protection.

Taken together, Chapter Three establishes the methodological foundation of the study, ensuring that the research process was systematic, ethically sound, and aligned with the study's objectives. It demonstrates how the chosen design and methods provided a robust framework for exploring church leadership perceptions and strategies in addressing child abuse.

Chapter Four presents the research findings and thematic analysis, capturing church leadership perceptions, practical roles, barriers, enabling factors, and strategies for strengthening child protection at AIC Kajiado Township Church. The findings reveal that leaders perceive safeguarding children as a deeply theological and moral responsibility, rooted in scripture and expressed through parental guidance, preventive engagement, and justice frameworks. Practical roles identified include educational programming through Sunday School and holiday activities, resource mobilization to support vulnerable children, community engagement with families and external partners, and protective mechanisms such as training and monitoring.

The chapter also highlights barriers institutional limitations, socio-cultural tensions, legal ambiguities, and environmental challenges that hinder effective safeguarding. At the same time, leaders recognize enabling factors such as spiritual resources, communal accountability, structural strategies, and ethical frameworks that strengthen resilience. Finally, the analysis outlines contextually grounded strategies for enhancing child protection, including leadership capacity building, theological integration, comprehensive education, digital literacy, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and holistic frameworks that balance cultural diversity with biblical standards.

In general, Chapter Four demonstrates that child protection within the church is multifaceted, requiring integration of faith, community, and institutional capacity. It underscores both the challenges and opportunities in embedding safeguarding as a central aspect of ministry, positioning the church as a vital actor in preventing and responding to child abuse.

Chapter Five presents the discussion, conclusion, and recommendations of the study, synthesizing findings across all objectives. The discussion highlights that AIC Kajiado Township Church leadership perceives child protection as a theological and moral imperative, deeply rooted in scripture and expressed through practical roles such as educational programming, resource mobilization, community engagement, and protective mechanisms. It emphasizes that safeguarding is not viewed as an optional program but as an intrinsic aspect of Christian ministry.

The chapter acknowledges significant barriers, institutional limitations, socio-cultural tensions, legal ambiguities, and environmental challenges that hinder effective safeguarding. However, it also underscores the presence of enabling factors such as spiritual resources, communal accountability, structural strategies, and ethical frameworks that strengthen resilience and effectiveness.

The conclusion affirms that child protection within the church is multidimensional, requiring integration of faith, community, and institutional capacity. Leaders envision contextually grounded strategies, including capacity building, theological integration, comprehensive education, digital literacy, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and holistic frameworks to enhance safeguarding efforts.

Finally, the chapter offers recommendations for strengthening child protection: investing in leadership training, developing clear church policies, embedding safeguarding into theological teaching, expanding parental and child education, addressing digital threats, and fostering

partnerships with government and NGOs. These recommendations highlight the need for both spiritual conviction and practical structures to ensure sustainable, culturally sensitive, and biblically anchored child protection.

In summary, Chapter Five consolidates the study's findings, demonstrating that effective safeguarding requires navigating barriers while leveraging enablers, and positioning the church as a vital actor in preventing and responding to child abuse.

5.5 Recommendation for Future Research

Comparative Studies Across Churches and Denominations

Future research could expand beyond AIC Kajiado Township to include other churches and denominations within Kenya or across Africa. Comparative studies would highlight similarities and differences in theological interpretations, cultural influences, and institutional capacities in child protection. This would provide a broader understanding of how faith-based institutions collectively contribute to safeguarding children and identify best practices transferable across contexts. As 1 Corinthians 12:12 (ESV) reminds us: *“For just as the body is one and has many members... so it is with Christ.”* This verse affirms the value of diverse churches working together as one body to protect children.

Longitudinal Research on the Impact of Church Safeguarding Programs

A longitudinal approach would allow researchers to track the effectiveness of church-led child protection initiatives over time. By following children, families, and church leaders for several years, scholars could assess whether interventions such as Sunday School programs, parental seminars, and digital literacy workshops lead to measurable reductions in abuse cases and improvements in child well-being. This aligns with Galatians 6:9 (ESV): “*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*” Long-term commitment to safeguarding reflects the biblical call to perseverance in protecting the vulnerable.

Integration of Children’s Voices in Research

Most studies, including this one, focus on leadership perspectives. Future research should incorporate children’s voices to understand their lived experiences, perceptions of safety, and views on church interventions. Including children as active participants would provide a more holistic picture of safeguarding effectiveness and ensure that protective strategies are responsive to their actual needs. Matthew 19:14 (ESV) affirms this: “*Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.*” Listening to children honors their dignity and ensures their voices shape protective action.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter and Consent

I am Justin Kiprono Chebor, a student at Scott Christian University, registration number-MT/10/14. I am requesting you to take part in this study with a title, **“EXPLORING LEADERSHIP PERCEPTIONS ON AFRICA INLAND CHURCH’S ROLE IN ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE: A CASE STUDY OF AFRICA INLAND CHURCH-KENYA, KAJIADO TOWNSHIP”**

The study will take two months to accomplish. Your bio data will not be made public otherwise, it will be treated with utmost confidentiality. There will be no direct advantage other than the sense of assisting the stakeholders by knowledge contribution that will be utilized in enhancing child welfare.

Thanks in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Justin Kiprono Chebor

Appendix II: Informed Consent-In Both English and Kiswahili format

Title of Study

“Exploring Leadership Perceptions on Africa Inland Church’s Role In Addressing Child Abuse: A Case Study of Africa Inland Church-Kenya, Kajiado Township

Principal Investigator: Rev. Justin Kiprono Chebor

Institution: Scott Christian University

Study Period: January – July 2026

Approval Reference: 1. NACOSTI/P/25/4174918

2. Scott Christian university Approval letter dated

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Rev. Justin Kiprono Chebor. Before agreeing to participate, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study, what your involvement will entail, and your rights as a participant.

Purpose of the Study

This research aims to: **“Exploring Leadership Perceptions on Africa Inland Church’s Role In Addressing Child Abuse: A Case Study of Africa Inland Church-Kenya, Kajiado Township”**

The study seeks to assess church interventions, challenges faced, and their impact on child welfare.

Participation and Procedures

If you agree to participate, you may be asked to:

- a. Participate in an interview or focus group discussion.
- b. Share insights related to child protection practices and church activities.

c. Allow the researcher to observe relevant church programs or review documents related to child welfare.

Participation will take approximately 30 to 60 minutes per session and may be audio-recorded with your permission.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have the right to:

- a. Refuse to answer any question.
- b. Withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality

All information collected will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your name and personal identifiers will not be used in any reports or publications. Data will be securely stored and accessed only by authorized research personnel.

Risks and Benefits

There are no known risks associated with your participation. The study may benefit you and your community by strengthening child protection frameworks and empowering church-led interventions.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact Rev. Justin Kiprono Chebor

Email:kipronochebor@gmail.com

Phone number: 0728685539

Consent Statement

I have read and understood the information above. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____

Principal Investigator's Signature _____

Date 11/01/2026

Interview Guide

Objective 1:

To examine church leadership perceptions of AIC Kajiado Township's theological and moral responsibility in addressing child abuse

How do you understand the church's theological responsibility in protecting children from abuse?

In your view, what moral obligations does the church have when it comes to responding to child abuse within the community?

How do biblical teachings or church doctrines influence your approach to child protection?

Objective 2:

To explore the practical roles currently undertaken by AIC Kajiado Township Church in safeguarding children from child abuse

What specific programs or activities does the church currently run to protect children from abuse?

How does the church support children and families who have experienced or are at risk of abuse?

Can you describe any partnerships or collaborations the church has with other organizations to promote child safety?

Objective 3:

To assess the perceived barriers and enabling factors that influence the church's effectiveness in responding to child abuse

What challenges does the church face in addressing child abuse effectively?

What factors or resources have helped the church respond positively to child protection needs?

How do church leaders and members typically respond when cases of child abuse are reported or suspected?

Objective 4:

To develop contextually grounded strategies for strengthening the church's role in child protection

What changes or improvements would you suggest to strengthen the church's role in preventing child abuse?

How can church leadership be better equipped to identify and respond to child abuse cases?

What kind of support or training do you think is needed to enhance the church's child protection efforts?

Data Management Plan: Interview Transcripts

To ensure compliance with ethical and data protection standards, the following measures will be implemented for managing interview transcripts and related qualitative data:

Storage Method

All interview transcripts will be digitally recorded, transcribed, and stored in encrypted password-protected folders on a secure external hard drive and a backup cloud storage platform, for example, OneDrive or Google Drive with two-factor authentication.

Physical notes or printed transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet accessible only to the principal investigator.

Access control

Access to digital and physical data will be restricted exclusively to the principal investigator and authorized research assistants who have signed confidentiality agreements. Each assistant will be assigned individual login credentials and will be trained on the ethical handling of sensitive data. No data will be shared with third parties without explicit participant consent and ethical clearance.

Duration of retention

Interview transcripts and related data will be retained for a period of five years following the completion of the study, in accordance with institutional and national research ethics guidelines. After the retention period, all digital files will be permanently deleted, and physical documents will be shredded to ensure complete disposal.

Anonymization and Confidentiality

All transcripts will be anonymized during transcription by removing names, titles, and any identifying information. Participants will be assigned coded identifiers to protect their identities in all reports and publications.

Conclusion

The purpose of the management plan of the interview is to ensure that all collected information is handled with the highest level of confidentiality, integrity, and compliance with ethical standards outlined by the Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (ISERC).

Appendix III: Fomu ya Idhini ya Kushiriki katika Mradi

Jina la Mradi: “Kuchunguza Mitazamo ya Uongozi Kuhusu Jukumu la Kanisa la Africa Inland Church katika Kukabiliana na Unyanyasaji wa Watoto: Utafiti wa Kesi ya Africa Inland Church-Kenya, Kajiado Township”

Mahali: Kanisa La AIC Kajiado Mjini

Tarehe:

1. Madhumuni ya Mradi

Mradi huu unalenga [eleza madhumuni ya jumla ya mradi, mfano: kuboresha huduma za afya/kutoa mafunzo ya ujuzi wa maisha/kusaidia jamii kwa njia ya kiroho na kijamii]. Washiriki watahusika kwa njia ya [eleza jinsi washiriki watahusika].

2. Maelezo ya Ushiriki

Kushiriki ni hiari kabisa. Hakutakuwa na adhabu au hasara yoyote kwa kuchagua kutoshiriki. Washiriki wanaweza kujiondoa wakati wowote bila kutoa maelezo.

3. Faragha na Usiri

Taarifa zote za kibinafsi zitahifadhiwa kwa usiri na hazitatolewa kwa mtu mwingine bila idhini ya maandishi ya mshiriki.

4. Faida na Hatari

Faida zinazotarajiwa ni pamoja na faida kama: kuboresha afya, kupata mafunzo, kuimarisha usalama wa kijamii n.k. Hakuna hatari kubwa zinazotarajiwa, lakini mshiriki ataelezwa ikiwa zipo.

Kwa kuweka sahihi hapa chini, ninathibitisha kuwa nimeelewa maelezo ya mradi na ninakubali kushiriki kwa hiari.

Jina la Mshiriki: _____

Sahihi: _____

Tarehe: _____

Appendix IV: NACOSTI License

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 121268	Date of Issue: 12/November/2025
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Rev. Justin Njiragu Cheboi of Scott Christian University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kajiado on the topic: EXPLORING CHURCH LEADERSHIP PERCEPTIONS ON AFRICA INLAND CHURCH'S ROLE IN ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE: A CASE STUDY OF A.I.C KAJIADO TOWNSHIP CHURCH, KAJIADO, KENYA for the period ending 12/November/2026.	
License No: NACOSTI/25/4174898	
121268	
Applicant Identification Number	Ag. Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	
See overleaf for conditions	

Appendix V: AIC Kijabe Hospital IRB Approval Letter



KIJABE HOSPITAL INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

PO Box 20 Kijabe 00220, Kenya

Tel: 0709728032

Fax: 020-3246335

E-mail: researchcoord@kijabehospital.org

Website: www.kijabehospital.org

15th October, 2025

KH/ISERC/0094/2025

Approval No: KH/ISERC/02718/0080/2025

Dear Justin Kiprono Chebor,

RE: EXPLORING CHURCH LEADERSHIP PERCEPTIONS ON AFRICA INLAND CHURCH'S ROLE IN ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE: A CASE STUDY OF A.I.C KAJIADO TOWNSHIP CHURCH, KAJIADO, KENYA

Many thanks for your submission to KH ISERC.

I am pleased to inform you that KH ISERC has reviewed and **approved** your research protocol as presented. You have a reference number assigned which should be used on all further communication. Also, your approval reference is **KH/ISERC/02718/0080/2025**. **The approval period is starting from October 15, 2025 to October 14, 2026** with annual renewal as may be necessary. This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (Informed consent, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by KH ISERC.
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to KH ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to KH ISERC within 72 hours.
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.

GENERAL INQUIRIES - MAIN HOSPITAL
T: 0709 728 200

NAIVASHA MEDICAL CENTER
T: 0733 422 346

MARIRA CLINIC
T: 0735 118 527

NAIROBI CLINIC
T: 0703 133 233

P.O.Box 20 Kijabe 00220, Kenya
E: info@kijabehospital.org | W: www.kijabehospital.org | Twitter: @KijabeHospital

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- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
Failure to renew the study in due time will attract a penalty of Kes 5,000.
 - vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to KH ISERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://aris.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Please do not hesitate to contact the AIC Kijabe Hospital ISERC Coordinator (researchcoord@kijabehospital.org) for any clarification or query.
Thank you,



Peter M Nthumba
MBChB, MMed; PRS Fellowship; Hand Fellowship; MSc (Epid), FCS(ECSA)
Ag Chair AIC Kijabe Hospital ISERC

Appendix VI: Data Protection



Appendix VII: University Clearance Letter

 **Scott Christian
UNIVERSITY**
A Dynamic Centre of Academic Excellence

OFFICE OF THE DEAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

TO:

The Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)
P.O. Box 30623-00100
Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH PERMIT FOR – JUSTIN KIPRONO CHEBOR
(MT/10/14)**

This is to introduce **Justin Chebor**, a master's student in the School of Theology and Social Sciences at Scott Christian University. The student is undertaking a research project titled: "The Role of Africa Inland Church in Addressing Child Neglect and Abuse:" as part of the requirements for the award of the Master of Arts in Theology.

I am requesting your office to facilitate the processing of a **research permit** to enable the student to carry out this academic research. We affirm that the research will be conducted in accordance with all ethical and regulatory standards set by NACOSTI and other relevant authorities.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Agnes Makau. PhD.
Dean, School of Theology and Social Sciences

P.O. Box 49-90100, Machakos, KENYA Phone: +254713745404 / +254734833832 Email: info@scott.ac.ke Website: www.scott.ac.ke
Building Leadership | Challenging Minds | Growing Faith