

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

**Young People and Full-Time Pastoral Ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.**

A Thesis Project Submitted to  
the Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Ministry

By

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## THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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The shortage of young pastors to replace the aging and retiring pastorate is an alarming reality confronting Christian churches regardless of location, size, and denomination. This research project's primary objective was to explore the factors discouraging young Christian adults born in the United States of America from responding obediently to God's call into full-time pastoral ministry and create corporate awareness of the holistic nature of the problem and seek a collaborative solution plan to motivate young Christian adults to obey God's call into full-time pastoral ministry. The project focuses on young American-born adults in the ministry context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc in the State of New York.

The data collection method was an interview with purposeful, selected, and diversified participants from The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. It utilized Grounded theory to analyze the data collected through the interviews. The research engaged in collaboration with all key stakeholders with the research findings to identify key themes that describe the factors discouraging young adults from accepting God's call into full-time pastoral ministry. The research will help other Christian churches and leaders address the issue of the shortage of young pastors. It will also enhance churches' strategy of attracting young people's participation and a sense of ownership in fulfilling God's mission through the church's missions.

*Keywords:* presbytery, grassroots leadership, ordination, missionary, full-time pastoral ministry, institutionalization.

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## Abbreviations

DMIN        *Doctor of Ministry*

LUSOD      *Liberty University School of Divinity*

COP         *The Church Of Pentecost*

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The dynamics of the youth in Christianity and their enthusiastic participation and acceptance of the leadership baton from the older generation calls for holistic examination. Their willingness and readiness to assume leadership with the older generation to prepare them to carry the leadership baton in leading their generation are needed. They are critical for the unquenching flames of the Christian fire in the church for generations to come.

Encouragingly, there have been many studies and strategies in addressing the issue of youth and their preparation and participation in Christian leadership. This chapter articulates the problem of youth and pastoral leadership in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc., which is commonly called C.O.P by the members. The ministry context of the church is discussed thoroughly. It is followed by the presentation of the statement of the problem and the purpose. An effort has been made to address the vital basic assumptions, definitions, delimitations, and limitations of this thesis project. The chapter ends with a concise and meaningful thesis statement that governs the research project.

### **Ministry Context**

The ministry context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. focuses on the key elements concerning the problem of the youth in the church and their response to full-time pastoral ministry. A holistic effort has been made to provide comprehensive information about the ministry context of the church to birth appreciation, interest, and understanding of readers of this thesis project. The ministry context articulated the church's initial formation background, the leadership structure and operation, the ethnographical dynamics, and the key practices of the church.

## Initial Formation Background

The formational background of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc., could not be limited to its inception in the soil of the United States of America without tracing its historical birth in the soil of Africa. Therefore, it is essential for the purpose of the statement of the problem in this thesis project to discuss the historical birth in Ghana, West Africa, and its transition and inception in the United States of America.

### *Historical Birth in Ghana*

The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc is part of the Church of Pentecost, which has its headquarters in Ghana, West Africa. It is an international Pentecostal church with branches in over one hundred countries. The church is found in all the principle five continents of the world. It began in Ghana in “1937 through the ministry of an Irish Missionary sent by the Apostolic Church, Bradford UK.”<sup>1</sup> This generational thinker, an Irish missionary, is Late Pastor James Mckeown and his wife, Sophia McKeown.

They founded the church on a solid biblical foundation with holistic indigenous church planting principles that “build community and social cohesion churches that harness authenticity, possess emotional intelligence, and display ethical and cultural uniqueness.”<sup>2</sup> The church adopted the Ghanaian cultural leadership structure in alignment with Pauline's leadership in the New Testament for local-based leadership capability building. It depended mainly on the development of indigenous leaders to grow and expand the church in Ghana. Therefore, it is

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Noble-Atsu, *Ministers' New Member Handbook* (Wayne, NJ: Pentecost Bible Seminary Printing Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>2</sup> Rachel Wolfgramm, Chellie Spiller, and Cora Voyageur, “Special Issue: Indigenous Leadership-Editor’s Introduction,” *Leadership* 12, no. 3 (2016): 267.

essential to note that the grassroots and self-governance leadership principles are paramount in the church's operation and administration. The church began its Great Commission mandate right from its inception, focusing on possessing neighboring nations of Ghana. In 1984, Ghana experienced a great famine and hardship that births the exodus of Ghanaians to other nations. This remarkable migration of Ghanaians from 1984 brought the Pentecostal fire of the church to touch the soil of the United States of America.

### ***Formation in the United States of America***

The migration waves began in Ghana in 1984. It was due to a great recession and famine and brought some members of the church to the United States of America. In April 1985, two of these members came from Ghana and resided in New York. Their passion and zeal for their Lord Jesus did not grow cold in their new environment. They carried their Christian faith to the United States of America and engaged in evangelism as the saints did in Acts 8:4 “those *who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.*” They invited some of the Ghanaian immigrants in their neighborhood in the Bronx and began prayer meetings in their apartment. The exponential growth of the fellowship caused them to rent a space in Harlem to start church service officially in 1988. The church became a “place to be at home, a sense of belonging, identity, and source of support in their new society.”<sup>3</sup>

The members officially informed the mother church in Ghana about the formation of the church in the United States of America. The church in Ghana then sent resident missionaries periodically to support the grounding and expansion of the church in the United States of

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<sup>3</sup> Edmond Akwasi Agyeman, “Religion, Race and Migrants Integration in Italy: The Case of Ghanaian Migrant Churches in the Province of Vicenza, Italy,” *Deusto Journal of Human Rights* 8 (Dec 2017): 105.

America. In 1989, the church officially registered to operate in New York City with the name The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc, popularly known within the membership as COPUSA. The church continuous with its Ghanaian cultural flavor, grassroots, and local leadership capacity building to lead the expansion of the church within the United States of America, attracting predominately Ghanaians in the United States.

### Leadership Structure and Operation

The leadership structure and operation of the church depict traces of the indigenous leadership structure and principles from its inception in Ghana. The structure and principles that navigate the leadership and governance of the church share the contributing element of the youth born in the United States and their response to acceptance to full-time pastoral leadership of the church.

Structurally, the church operates with a presbytery system of leadership. It entails local presbytery, district presbytery, area presbytery, and national presbytery. It is a representative style of leadership and the highest governance body for the local church. It comprises a pastor, presiding elders, elders, deacons, and deaconesses. The local presbytery makes the selection and appointment of these leaders with confirmation from the entire church congregation. The combination of two or three local churches forms the district leadership structure. The pastor is the head of leadership. All the local presbyters of the local churches that comprise the district become the district presbytery. The district presbytery becomes the highest governances' body for the body. The same principles form the area and national level leadership with an Area Head and National Head, respectively, an Apostle, Evangelist, or Prophet. The composition of the leaders is mostly elderly people born and raised in Ghana. They unconsciously allow their

cultural perspectives to influence policies to depict a strong African culture and style of leadership.

Interestingly, the leadership structure and composition significantly influence the implementation of policies and administration of the church. The critical component of leadership principles of the church depicts a strong apostolic foundation on godly character, Holy Spirit Baptism, biblical and theological knowledge, humility, sacrificial lifestyle, and Bible-based family life. Another element of leadership principle is grassroots leadership capacity building, which discourages hiring leaders outside the church. The church operates with grassroots leadership as “it is able to influence change and achieve positive organizational outcomes by carefully adopting specific strategies”<sup>4</sup> with the uniqueness of each local context and setting. It is more internally focused on identifying, equipping, selecting, and calling into full-time pastoral leadership. The grassroots principle that the founding fathers adopted shares the mission of winning the indigenous into membership, preparing them to take over the affairs of the leadership of the church. It has placed a burden on the leadership, birthing a strong strategy of promoting youth in leadership. The strategy mainly attracted youth born in Africa and migrated to the United States of America through education or family sponsorship. The impact on youth born and raised in the United States of America is not encouraging. The church practices transfer of the full-time pastors that call for a complete relocation of the pastor and his family. This operational principle discourages the church from getting women into full-time pastoral leadership. It makes full-time pastoral leadership in the church made up of all men,

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<sup>4</sup> Andrea R. Borregard, “Grassroots Leadership: Organizing for Ethical Changes,” *New Directions for Community Colleges* 2017, no. 85 (Spring, 2019):107.



which does not reflect the demographical picture of the church.

### Ethnographic Dynamics of the Ministry

The ethnographic picture of the church is encouraging and calls for urgency in promoting the agenda of getting youth into the various levels of leadership, most essential full-time pastoral ministry. According to the church's 2019 annual report, the church's total membership comprises 27 percent youth and 24 percent children, with a yearly birthrate of 4.5 percent. Therefore, it is a youthful church with a high possibility of youth and children becoming the majority in the next five years. The overall female population of the church is 56 percent, and male membership is 44 percent.

The presence of the youth and children population has brought about both opportunities and challenges. They depict a church with a hopeful and sustainable future with elements of “cultural and generational conflicts due to difference in views and perspectives.”<sup>5</sup> The church continues to manage cohesion with all generations through dialogue and participation. Both the young American-born and their African parents enjoy sharing information, mentorship, and resources. The challenges are the clashes of cultures and needs. Each group has a unique spiritual perspective and needs during church service. The adult service is characterized by an African style of worship, songs, and loud prayers, mainly in an African dialect with an English interpretation during the preaching time. The children and youth ministries' administration and operation utilized western ministry models with African elements of culture. The teaching of African culture is an essential element in these ministries. It calls for an intentional “model of

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<sup>5</sup> Sarah Goranson, Maria Wong, and Joey Fung, “The Influence of Cultural and Generational Difference on the Ministry of Chinese American Church Leader,” *Pastoral Psychology* 69 (2020): 14.

holistically for the continuity of the church's mission-making disciples of all nations (Matt. Christian walk mentorship”<sup>6</sup> to harness the youth population's opportunities and impact them 28:18-20, Acts 1:8).

The ethnicity dynamic depicts that 88 percent of the total membership are people of Ghanaian descent. The 12 percent are people of African descent, Americans, and Europeans. The ethnicity picture reflects on the composition of the leadership of the church, which is about 92 percent Ghanaians. The youth representation in the leadership of the church could be less than 10 percent, even though they are technically becoming the majority in the nearest future. Interestingly, the youth in leadership are predominantly born and had their elementary education in Ghana. It is not a great representation of the youth as the majority of the youth are American-born.

#### Pictorial Church Practices

The worship style of the church is full of congregational singing and dancing with the playing of various kinds of musical instruments, both from Africa and western cultures. Prayer is one visible trait of the church. It provides a “strong focus for understanding the core dimension of the church’s ecclesial identity and missional outlook.”<sup>7</sup> During prayer service, Members are encouraged to pray louder, and leaders lay hands on members for impartation. Most of the members prefer praying in public worship by speaking in tongues. The ordination of leaders is according to the Apostolic tradition exhibited in Acts 6:6; 13:1-3. It is done by the “competent

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<sup>6</sup>Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2019). 134.

<sup>7</sup>Stain Sorlie Erikson, “Changing the World through Prayer: Prayer as Mission Strategy Among Migrant Churches in Norway,” *Mission Studies* 35 (2018): 127.

authority of Apostles and Prophets by means of the laying-on of hands ”<sup>8</sup>, and it is “considered irrevocable.”<sup>9</sup> Holiness, godly relationships among members regardless of background, missionary engagement activities globally, and respect for authority are critical elements of the church. As a church's senior pastor, high spiritual life, godly public, private lives, modesty, and faithfulness are the church's key expectations. Tithes and offerings by church members are the primary sources of income for funding the church’s operation and administration.

Furthermore, the seating arrangement is another typical pictorial identification of the church. The seating reflects two essential elements of the church leadership and gender. First, leaders of the church sit on a high-rise platform facing the entrance of the church. It is believed to serve as honor and give the leaders better oversight during church service. On the platform, the senior pastor always sits in the center seat among the other leaders. Pastors’ wives and female leaders in the church also sit on the right side of the executive leadership platform. Secondly, all-male congregants sit together on the right side in the auditorium facing the executive leadership platform. All-female congregants sit together on the left side in the auditorium facing the executive leadership platform. However, it is not a strict rule. There are instances where couples sit together in the male seating area.

### **Problem Presented**

The problem this project will address is that young adults born in America in the Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. in the State of New York, are not responding obediently to the call into the full-time pastoral ministry of the church.

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<sup>8</sup> Mark Hill and Norman Doe, “Principles of Christian Law,” *Ecclesiastical Law Society* 19 (2017):143.

<sup>9</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Work and Worship: Minority Ordination, Covenant and Canon* (Cambridge, UK: James Clark & Co., 2014), 43.

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this DMIN action research thesis is to develop a holistic strategy to motivate young adults born in America in the State of New York to respond obediently to the call into ministry by the Lord as most of the current pastoral leadership retire in the next ten years. The research project helps all stakeholders understand the complex nature of the problem for the holistic formulation of solutions that motivate the youth's response to God's calling into ministry. In addition, it enhances the church effort of the rebranding of its pastoral ministry to become biblical, cultural, and generational relevant, thereby creating a holistic ministry environment for anyone who accepts the call of God into pastoral ministry in the COP ministry context.

## **Basic Assumptions**

The holistic examination for the formulation of solutions that address the discouraging response of the young people born in the United States of American in the church cannot be accomplished without the following basic assumptions. The first basic assumption was the excellent accessibility of participants for this thesis project. The reason is that young people discouraging response to full-time pastoral ministry is a general discussion among both the older and young generation in the church. The popularity of the problem is not limited to its public discussion. Still, it fuels the high expectation of every church member for the continued existence of the church and the preservation of its uniqueness in fulfilling the Great Commission globally. Therefore, it attracted a higher number of passionate and interested people to participate in the project.

The astounding number of exciting people interested in the participation of the project contributed to the selection of quality and a representative sample of participants. The quality of

the sample for research shares a high connection to the size of the population. The population size “estimation is of critical importance in understanding and formulation of solutions that could impact the general population.”<sup>10</sup> Secondly, it was assumed that this thesis project's selected participants would provide honest and comprehensive answers. The participant's honesty and holistic response are critical for a better understanding of the issue from a diverse perspective.

The following measures were implemented to promote honesty and truthfulness from the participants. First, the research utilized the concept of anonymity and confidentiality positively. The participants had to respond to the questions without identifying themselves. The assurance and establishment of privacy to the participants and the vivid confidentiality traits of the thesis project were essential to establish credibility to promote participation as “people have a reasonable expectation of it.”<sup>11</sup> Participants were informed and assured of their privacy to harness their confidence in the project that produces honesty and comprehensiveness.

Moreover, the absence of the younger generation of American-born citizens in the church's full-time ministry has been a heartfelt burden and a passionate desire in the church. The research capitalized on the participants' collective interest in promoting young people's interest and getting them into the full-time pastoral ministry. The study hosted a collaborative meeting with the participants to discuss the need for honesty and comprehensiveness to understand the issue and formulate workable and suitable solutions.

The last assumption was that the selected participant would be a comprehensive

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<sup>10</sup> Mark S. Handcock, Krista J. Gile, and Corine M. Mar, “Estimating the Size of Population at High Risk for HIV Using Respondent- Drive Sampling Data,” *The International Biometric Society* 71, no. 1 (2015): 258.

<sup>11</sup> Paul Stanley, *The Law of Confidentiality: A Restatement* (Glidden, WI: Hart Publishing, 2008), 6.

representation of the totality of the church. First, young people and full-time pastoral ministry is a pressing challenge for the entire membership. Second, there is a great interest in addressing it. Therefore, many people were passionate and willing to participate in the research project, selecting a diversified and representative sample. The participants' selection covered every local church, age range, and diversity of family and cultural backgrounds to birth representative participants.

### **Definitions**

The thesis project's readers' comprehension is critical to promote appreciation and implementation of the formulated and collaborative strategy to address the youth's discouraging response to the church's call to full-time pastoral ministry. Therefore, the following terminologies are defined to reflect on their usage in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. These are *Full-Time Pastoral Ministry*, *Missionary*, *Ordination*, *grassroots leadership*, and *Presbytery*.

*Full-time Pastoral Ministry* is a term used to describe paid clergy members of the leadership of the church. They are not allowed to work other paid jobs outside the church and their pastoral duties. It is a permanent position until retirement or involvement in open sin, which calls for their termination. They are vital contributors to the operation, expansion, and sustainability of the church. Their response to the call to full-time pastoral ministry is non-negotiable essential “for the continued existence of the church.”<sup>12</sup>

*A missionary* is a full-time pastor of the church sent by the church in the United States of

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<sup>12</sup> Shaun Joynt, “Exodus of Clergy: Responding to, Reinterpreting or Relinquishing the Call,” *Verbum Et Ecclesia* 38, no. 1 (2017): 2.

America to another country to support existing church ministry or plant new churches in the nation he has been sent to minister. Missionaries are expected to focus on serving God among local people by evangelizing the unsaved, discipling the believers, training local leaders, and planting churches.”<sup>13</sup> Missionaries are eventually recalled back to the United States of America. Still, they are not informed of the number of years they will spend in the mission field.

*Ordination* is the term used to describe the appointing and commissioning ceremony of leaders of the church. It is a sacred day of the church for the public “dedication and commission of full-time pastors of the church for the work of ministry.”<sup>14</sup> Yet, it is done quietly and straightforwardly. Laying of hands with prayers from the Apostles and Prophets of the church on the newly called pastors is the ordination method.

*Grassroots Leadership* is the leadership development strategy of the church. It operates with a holistic understanding and purpose of “equipping regular church members at the locality of the church into the position of leadership to lead their local churches in their own setting and context.”<sup>15</sup> It has helped in the planting and growth of the local churches. Their ability to start new churches, shepherding of the believers, and strong fellowship in the church as it “fosters engagement and articulation of contextualized solutions.”<sup>16</sup>

*Presbytery* is the governance system of the church. It is the highest ruling body of

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<sup>13</sup> Evelyn Hibbert, and Richard Hibbert, *Training Missionaries: Principles and Possibilities* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Publishing, 2016), 11.

<sup>14</sup> David E. Thorton, “How Useful are Episcopal Ordination lists as a Source for Medieval English Monastic,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 69, no. 3 (July 2018): 494.

<sup>15</sup> Jim Keddy, “Human Dignity and Grassroots Leadership Development,” *Social Policy* 31, no. 4 (2001): 49.

<sup>16</sup> Jaimie Laster and Adrianna J. Kezer, “Understanding the Formation, Functions, and Challenges of Grassroots Leadership Teams,” *Higher Education* 37 (2012): 106.

leadership “in charge of the affairs of the church.”<sup>17</sup> It comprises all ordained leaders of the church. It is the “ruling assembly that has a responsibility for various leadership duties”<sup>18</sup> to ensure church discipline, policymaking, and pastoral care. It is a typical hierarchical in structure and operation. Members of this ruling body are called presbyters.

### **Limitations**

The contextualized nature of the thesis project and other factors subject the research to limitations. The first fundamental limitation is the contextualized nature of the research. It restricts the population of the thesis project solely on selecting the participants from The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc., State of New York jurisdiction. The limitation is because the church is in the State of New York. It, therefore, becomes impossible to select participants outside the context and setting of the church.

Moreover, “availability and sufficiency of resources are critical for an effective and comprehensive research project.”<sup>19</sup> However, financial resources and logistics are insufficient and limited for this thesis project. The thesis project must be accomplished within the set timeframe prescribed by Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity. The researcher does not have the authority to extend research beyond the prescribed timeframe.

Furthermore, the selection of the participants is limited solely to the members of the church since they are available and easily accessible. Therefore, this population element shares the issue of the

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<sup>17</sup> John M. Mackenzie, “Presbyterianism and Scottish Identity in Global Context,” *Britain and World* 10, no. 1 (2017): 91.

<sup>18</sup> Graham A. Duncan, “To Unite or not to Unite? A Case Study of Presbyterianism in South Africa, 1897-1923,” *Acta Theologica* 38, no. 1 (2018): 40.

<sup>19</sup> Bethany L. Hedt et al., “Research Capacity Building Integrated into PHIT Projects: Leveraging Research and Research Funding,” *BMC Health Services Research* 17, no. 3 (2017): 18-20.



target group. The participants' openness and truthfulness in addressing young people's roadblocks to getting into full-time pastoral ministry were limited. The church culture of the respect of leadership and the prestigious regard for the elderly has a significant influence on the participants. This culture has a great tendency to affect the participants' honest responses if the leadership of the church and their policies are contributing factors to the problem.

Moreover, the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic is a limitation to this thesis. It limited the ease of movement and accessibility of people in the situation where face to face interview was needed. The participants' fear of the virus and health department restrictions in the State of New York various counties did impose restrictions on the research directly and indirectly. It affected options in the selection of methods for the research project. It limited the choice of the process of gathering information. It made virtual and phone calls the safe and practical methods for the gathering of information.

Furthermore, pastoral ministry in COP, like periodic transferring of pastors, calls for a complete relocation, and pastors overseeing multiple local churches, have a diverse impact on pastors. A holistic and historical examination of these pastoral nature elements in the COP reviewed that they have negatively impacted family and marriage. It explained why the call to full-time pastoral ministry is limited to only males in the COP ministry context. Therefore, the thesis project excluded the female pastoral ministry aspect and focused predominately on young males born in America responding to full-time pastoral ministry in the church. Nevertheless, the data gathering included the view of young American-born females and parents of young people as family and marriage play a non-negotiable role in males' lives in the church. The view of young American-born females is essential as they become wives of these young men, and the church seeks their consent for the call of their husbands into pastoral ministry. It is even the

policy of the church to accept only married young people into the pastoral ministry.

Consequently, the willingness of the participants to engage in interactive in-person engagement was influenced. The deadly and contagious nature of this disease has instilled fear in people. People do not want to do in-person meetings and interviews. It imposed limitations for comprehensive engagement and information gathering. It made the virtual method the best available and applicable strategy for the thesis project.

### **Delimitations**

The thesis project aims to understand and address the contributing factors discouraging the American-born youth in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc from responding obediently to the call into full-time pastoral ministry. Therefore, the researcher collaborated with the church's executive leadership to formulate a comprehensive action plan to motivate the youth to consider ministry a full-time vocation. The contextualized and local-oriented nature of the thesis project imposes some delimitations. First, the focus of the thesis project itself becomes a delimitation. It confines the research to young people's response and impediments to full-time pastoral ministry within the church's context. Therefore, young people become the primary target group. Furthermore, these young people must be born in the United States of America and reside in the State of New York. They must be members of the church who understands the doctrines and practices of the church. They must not be recent converts in the Lord. The participant must be a member of the church for not less than two years. The age group to concentrate on were young people between the age of eighteen to thirty. They are gradually becoming the majority group in the church's demography. They would have the spiritual, cultural, and generational qualifications and ability to become effective church ministers. They would be able to understand and relate better as they share the same culture.

Moreover, the thesis project patronized a selection of parents of young people in the church for a comprehensive and diversified investigation of the problem. They must be members of the church. They must be conversant with selecting, training, and commissioning pastoral ministers of the church. Culturally, parents play a vital role and influence in the decision-making process of their children. It becomes impossible to address the problem of young people born in American and full-time pastoral ministry without parents' understanding and support.

The church's nature and style of operation ascribe the executive leadership as the principal custodian of the church's decision-making. They are the final authority in the process of selection and commissioning of ministers in the church. They are held in high esteem, and their decisions are respected and implemented without resistance by the church. They were engaged in collaborative meetings with the research findings to formulate a holistic action plan to motivate young people born in America to accept the call into full-time pastoral ministry.

### **Thesis Statement**

If most of the current pastoral leadership in the State of New York retires in the next ten years, American-born young people must be encouraged and recruited into full-time ministry. The rate and number of current pastors of the church approaching retirement in the next ten years are high. However, the young adult's response to the call into full-time pastoral ministry is discouraging. It has become a concern for the leadership of the church. The inflow of young adults from Ghana and other African countries through immigration to the United States of America has been the source of the few young people in full-time pastoral ministry. They are mostly members of the mother church in Ghana who come to the United States of America to further their education, and they ended up responding to God's call into pastoral ministry. Also, some of them were brought to the United States of America through the sponsorship of their

families. As a result, they have already grown and accustomed to the African culture, making it easier for them to relate and minister among the adult membership.

The current global immigration policies, most specifically in the United States of America, are discouraging. There is a system shift. According to Pew Research Center, May 17, 2019 report, “proposals have sought to shift the United States of America immigration system away from its current emphasis on family reunification and employment-based migration to a point-based system.”<sup>20</sup> These immigration policies tend to limit the admission of foreigners into the nation. It will, directly and indirectly, affect the coming of young adult church members in Africa to the United States of America. Therefore, it is time; the church aggressively and urgently formulates strategies and policies to address the hindrances discouraging American-born youth from surrendering to a call to pastor in COP ministry context as “the number of people who immigrate to the United States of America is reducing due to the shift in the immigration policy changes.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Jens Manuel Krostad and Ana Gonzales-Barrera, “Key Facts about U.S Immigration Policies and Proposed Changes,” Pew Research Center, May 17, 2019, Accessed November 18, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/17/key-facts-about-u-s-immigration-policies-and-proposed-changes>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.,

## **Chapter 2**

### **Conceptual Framework**

The attempt to address the contributing factors for the young people's discouraging responses to the call into full-time pastoral ministry cannot be appreciated without understanding this thesis project's driving forces. These driving forces were depicted through discourse on the literature review, theological foundation, and theoretical foundation on the problem.

Interestingly, the problem of young people and the pastoral ministry has attracted intensive academic dialogue and works. This chapter starts with a comprehensive analysis of some scholarly literature on the topic. It then dialogues on the theological foundations that mandate the church to pursue holistic approaches in recruiting more young people into pastoral ministry. It finally addresses the theoretical foundations of young people and the pastoral ministry and its contribution to the existing works.

The attempt to address the contributing factors for the young people's discouraging responses to the call into full-time pastoral ministry cannot be appreciated without understanding this thesis project's driving forces. These driving forces have been depicted through discourse on the literature review, theological foundation, and theoretical foundation on the problem.

### **Literature Review**

The holistic examination and analysis of the literature's treasures are essential for a comprehensive understanding of the thesis project's various dimensions. The literature review focuses on analyzing and synthesizing the diversity of literature on the shortage of young adult full-time pastors through various authors' diverse views. This literature review has examined the following factors contributing to the shortage of young adult pastors in Christian denominations. Second, the current leadership development strategy. Three, the scope of the problem of scarcity

of young adult full-time pastors. Four, the nature of pastoral ministry and the comprehensive strategic solutions to the shortage of Young adult full-time Pastors.

### Shortage of Young Adult Pastors in Christian Denominations

The factors contributing to the shortage or discouraging young adult pastors in the Christian denominations comes from many sources. In this literature review, the key areas focused on are the church's internal and individual issues. Steve Lambert described the duality of the problem and placed the responsibility to address them on "the church and individuals."<sup>22</sup>

#### ***The Church***

The prevailing culture of the church plays a paramount role in the internal factors contributing to the shortage of young adults or discouraging young adults from considering full-time pastoral ministry. Joynt Shaun attributes the "lack of good leadership"<sup>23</sup> in the churches who are "divinely mandated of God to prepare the next generation of shepherds for his church"<sup>24</sup> as a significant factor. Vanderbloemen and Ortberg agree with Shaun and Croft, and Mohler by calling this negligence of training the next generation of shepherds as "unmistakably blind spot"<sup>25</sup> in the church. They acknowledge the issue of the inadequate good leaders who are intentional and dedicate to the training of young ministers to step into the place of leadership as "annual numbers of leaders reaching the retiring age of sixty-five keep rising."<sup>26</sup> Elliston Edgar sees the problem as not necessarily a factor of poor and negligent leadership. He contributes it to

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<sup>24</sup> Brain Croft, and Albert Jr. Mohler, *Prepare them to Shepherd: Test, Train, Affirm and Send the Next Generation of Pastors* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 13.

<sup>25</sup> William Vanderbloemen, Warren Bird, and John Ortberg, *Next: Pastoral Succession that Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 22.

<sup>26</sup> Karl Basel and Charlotte Lewellen Williams, *Passing the Torch: Planning for the Next Generation of Leaders in Public Service* (Fayetteville, AK: University of Arkansas Press, 2016), 5.

the "weakness in the strategies and principles of the church."<sup>27</sup> Edgar's assessment is indirectly a leadership issue as strategic leadership principles and development rest upon leadership. Rachel Bergen looks at the problem as the product of the "weak discipleship of young adults"<sup>28</sup> to prepare them, directly and indirectly, to cultivate their interest in pastoral ministry.

However, Kunjufu Jawanza ascertains the problem as a phenomenon that is beyond leadership. He contributes it to the "exodus of teenagers"<sup>29</sup> from the Christian churches. The literature gap in the internal factor of the church culture is the area of doctrine and practices. The literature on the connection of church doctrine and spiritual formation to young adult full-time minister in churches is scanty and not easy to find.

### ***The Young Adult***

Young adults who could consider full-time pastoral ministry are confronted with diverse personal challenges. It ranges from their perspective and understanding of full-time pastoral ministry to their family worldviews. According to Chang and Lawton, young people see the ecclesiastical ministry profession as a "ministry with few attractive positions and chances for promotion."<sup>30</sup> The negative view of young adults shares an economic outlook component. The economic factor is about salaries, promotion, and prestige. Joynt agrees with Chang and Lawton's economic factors assessment introduced another essential economic factor faced by

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<sup>27</sup> Edgar J Elliston and Evangelical Missiological Society Staff, *Teaching them Obedience in All Things: Equipping for the 21st Century* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Publishing, 2013), 115.

<sup>28</sup> Rachel Bergen, "Growing Young Pastors," *Canadian Mennonites* 16, no.19 (Oct 2012):6.

<sup>29</sup> Jawanza Kunjufu, *What is the Role of Teens in Your Church?* (Chicago, IL: Africa American Images, 2011), 138.

<sup>30</sup> Patricia Mei Yin Chang, and Posey Lawton, "Pulpit Supply," *The Christian Century* 120, no. 24 (Nov. 2003):28.

pastor wives: the "lack of gainful employment."<sup>31</sup> It is a result of the nature of the pastoral ministry where their husbands are busy, and they have to opt to stay at home to take care of their children or the frequent movement of their husbands. These factors make it extremely difficult for some pastors' wives to engage in gainful employment.

The family worldview of the young adult plays a critical role in their pursuit of full-time pastoral ministry as "they value family life over work."<sup>32</sup> David Thomas Rittgers agrees on the role of the family as a determining factor for pastoral ministry. He addresses it from the positive perspective of the "parental role in the young people willingness"<sup>33</sup> to consider full-time pastoral ministry. Richard Pitt and Stephen Behnke share the position of Rittgers on the significant influence of parental role in the decision of young people. They believe that a pastoral lineage background of a young person has a tremendously "positive influence on his willingness and passion for full-time ministry."<sup>34</sup> Edgar presented the negative aspect of parental influence in the situation when parents desire a "more economic reward for their expenditure on their children college."<sup>35</sup> The paltry salary characterization of pastoral ministry discourages parents from encouraging their children to pursue it.

Amy C. Luedtke and Katti J Sneed presented another aspect of the young adult's family

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<sup>31</sup> Shaun Joynt, "Exodus of Clergy: The Role of Leadership in Responding to the Call," *Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (Aug. 2017):3.

<sup>32</sup> Steve Lambert, *Leading the Future*, (Newcastle, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2014), 29.

<sup>33</sup> David Thomas Rittgers, "The Young Clergy Crisis in the United Methodist Church," (PhD diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2013):5.

<sup>34</sup> Richard N Pitt, and Stephen A. Behnke, *Divine Calling: Understanding the Call to Ministry in Black Pentecostalism*. (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2012), 45.

<sup>35</sup> Elliston and Evangelical Missiological Society Staff, *Obedience in All Things*, 153.



worldview in their career pursuit: their spouses' voice, mostly the wives' voice. They argued that “little attention has been given to pastor’s spouses who often carry the weight of stress”<sup>36</sup> due to the nature of their husbands' careers, coupled with the duty of caring for the children.

Kara Chan and Miranda Wong agreed that “pastors' wives are more affected by financial, privacy and personal stressors than pastors themselves.”<sup>37</sup> The overwhelming evidence and story of the church's failure to address pastors’ wives' challenges discourage most women from becoming pastor’s wives. It, directly and indirectly, hinders some young adults from accepting God's call into full-time pastoral ministry, thereby contributing to the shortage of young pastors in denominational and institutional churches.

#### The Current Leadership Development Strategy in the Church

The literature review investigates the church's current leadership development strategy amid the present pressing need for young pastors as a high percentage of current ministers will be retiring in the next ten years. Raymond Brown calls for “intentionality and urgency in the congregation”<sup>38</sup> in addressing the shortage of young ministers. Rittgers agrees with Brown on creating the opportunity for young people to develop their leadership skills through the "creation of events, consultation, and resources that facilitate young adults' spiritual formation and leadership development.”<sup>39</sup> William Rottwell believes that the creation of space for young people

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<sup>36</sup> Amy C. Luedtke and Katti K. Sneed, “Voice of the Clergy Wife: A Phenomenological Study,” *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* 72, no. 1 (2018):63.

<sup>37</sup> Kara Chan and Miranda Wong, “Experience of Stress and Coping Strategies Among Pastors’ Wives in China,” *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* 72, no. 3 (2018): 164-165.

<sup>38</sup> Raymond Brown, "Encouraging Tomorrow's Ministers," *Baptist Quarterly* 44, no.7 (Nov 2014):402-419.

<sup>39</sup> Rittgers, "The Young Clergy Crisis," 5.

to develop their talents and skills becomes a possibility when church leadership thinks "anew outside their current principle and organizational context."<sup>40</sup>

The new thinking calls for intentional mentorship. LiRenzo Marvos, Christy H. Weer, and Franklin Linnehan; see mentorship as a significant influence that has impressive and "lasting effects on proteges career identity, motivation, and ambition."<sup>41</sup> Forman Rowland, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Miller, and Raymond Brown have the same view that leadership development by mentorship must be intentional and deliberate in identification and training. Mentorship, according to Rottwell, is confronted with the "problem of developmental dilemma."<sup>42</sup>

The prime foundation of leadership development strategy is the holistic design and implementation of succession planning in the church. First, Vanderbloemen classifies it "as biblical and the most significant leadership task for both the church and the leaders."<sup>43</sup> He affirms the prayer of Moses in Numbers 27:16-17 as a portrait of succession planning. Loveth Cyril agrees with Vanderbloemen on succession planning as biblical with the example of Apostle Paul's leadership development. He said that Apostle Paul intentionally "spent enough time in each community to identify and train leaders"<sup>44</sup> to take over the churches' leadership. Forman Rowland at el; affirm Jesus' example as the ultimate example of biblical succession planning.

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<sup>40</sup> William J. Rottwell, *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent Within*, (San Francisco, CA: AMACOM Publishers, 2015), 220.

<sup>41</sup> Marvos LiRenzo, Christy H. Weer, and Franklin Linnehan, "Protégé Career Aspirations: The Influence of Formal E-Networks and Family-Based Role Models," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 83 (2013):42.

<sup>42</sup> Rottwell, *Effective Succession Planning*, 313.

<sup>43</sup> Vanderbloemen, Bird, and Ortberg, *Pastoral Succession*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> Lovett Cyril, "Tomorrow Priests- A New Vision of Ministry," *The Furrow* 61, no. 71 (Aug 2010): 418.

Moreover, one essential puzzle to resolve is who is responsible for the training of young adults? Is it the responsibility of the local church or the traditional seminaries? Chang and Lawton ascertain that ministry leaders must not always be "nurtured in the traditional seminary program."<sup>45</sup> Edgar balanced the argument of who is responsible with the statement, "Christian university remains a viable alternative and must partner with the church of Jesus for the training of leaders."<sup>46</sup> Though the practical apprenticeship form of training plays a critical role in pastoral training; it will help when there is a strong partnership between the seminaries and churches to address this pressing need for more young adult full-time pastors.

Another aspect of leadership development is the issue of contextualization and quality form of training. Lambert believes that leadership development needs to be "contextualized within the framework of the organization and its talent management."<sup>47</sup> Rottwell agrees that it will cultivate the "culture of retention of valuable institutional culture and memory"<sup>48</sup> of the church fulfilling its mission. The challenge is the availability of data to support the best method of training young pastors. Whether it be in the local church's context, the seminaries, or the partnership of the church and the seminaries? Anne-Masters et al; presents a unique dimension of young adult pastor's training with the introduction of storytelling by young pastors. According to them, "the sharing of pastoral ministry stories from young people awakes and encourages the

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<sup>45</sup> Chang and Lawton, "Pulpit Supply," 31.

<sup>46</sup> Elliston and Evangelical Missiological Society Staff, *Obedience in All Things*, 112.

<sup>47</sup> Lambert, *Leading the Future*, 90.

<sup>48</sup> Rottwell, *Effective Succession Planning*, 189.

generation of young clergy."<sup>49</sup> Berly Whippe agrees with Anne-Masters, at el; that is an antidote to ageism that discourages young pastors in the church.

The current leadership development strategy discussion has addressed the need for urgency in creating the opportunity for young people to develop their leadership skills. It must be done under the church's leadership to provide space, resources, and mentorship. In addition, it addressed the critical need for partnership between the traditional seminary and the local churches to train the next generation of young pastors biblically and professionally.

#### The Scope of the Problem of Shortage of Young Pastors in Christian Denominations

The scope of the problem of the shortage of young pastors is not only a Catholic church issue. It is even a problem for almost all mainstream denominations. Pitt and Behnke, and Joynt agree that it is even "a problem for protestant denominations."<sup>50</sup> Pitt and Behnke believe that the spread of the shortage behind Catholicism has prompted a new scholarly examination of the pastoral ministry. Shaun Joynt and Yolanda Dreyer introduced another element of the shortage of young pastors. They believed that in protestant denominations, the issue is more of a "distribution challenge than shortage due to the lack of adequate compensation for pastors and the undesirable geographical location of a number of churches as perceived by pastors."<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, the literature examination depicts the urgency of the shortage of young pastors in Christian denominations. Steve Lambert ascertained that "a higher percentage of the

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<sup>49</sup> Ashley Anne-Masters, Stacy Smith, and Anna Carter Florence, *Bless Her Heart: Life as a Young Clergy Woman*. (St Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2011), 23.

<sup>50</sup> Pitt, and Behnke, *Divine Calling*, 6.

<sup>51</sup> Shaun Joynt and Yolanda Dreyer, Exodus of Clergy: A Practical Theological Grounded Theory Exploration of Hatfield Training Center Trained Pastor," *Theological Studies* 69, no.1 (2013): 2.

baby boomers' generation is now approaching retirement."<sup>52</sup> The fast pace and the volume of leaders proceeding to retirement for the next ten years assessment by Lambert is in alignment with Basel Karl and Charlotte Lewellen William's position on the issue. They concluded that according to Census Bureau, Population Division (2012), "the rate at which leaders are reaching to the retirement age of sixty -five is rising, and about 4 million would retire in the year 2020."<sup>53</sup> These agreements are consistent with Larry William's claim that "50 percent of active clergy are at least 50 years and above."<sup>54</sup> It makes the development of young leaders to replace the aging and retiring leaders an urgent and pressing task to sustain American Christianity. William Vanderbloemen at el; believes that as "fifty-five is the average age in the 100 largest U.S. churches, succession in pastoral ministry is more urgent than you think and probably more important than you can imagine."<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, the rate of development of qualified and passionate young ministers by the church is not matching the pace at which current clergy are proceeding to retirement. There is a gap in data for the number of young ministers trained and the availability of vacancies. The culture and attitude of the church are worsening the problem. Raymond Brown explains that most leaders have unjustified anxiety about young pastors. They believed that "young pastors are premature and inexperienced."<sup>56</sup> He agrees with Bergen's assessment that Churches prefer to hire

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<sup>52</sup> Lambert, *Leading the Future*, 29

<sup>53</sup> Basel, and Williams, *Passing the Torch*, 5.

<sup>54</sup> Larry Witham, *Who Shall Lead Them? The Future of Ministry in America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 8.

<sup>55</sup> Vanderbloemen, Bird, and Ortberg, *Pastoral Succession*, 21.

<sup>56</sup> Brown, "Tomorrow's Ministers," 402-412.

"ready-made experienced pastors than raising pastors within their congregation."<sup>57</sup> Could it be that Churches are being pressured by the number of vacancies that propel them to recruit outsiders. Therefore, Forman Rowland at el call for assessing the "current church culture of developing and empowering new leaders."<sup>58</sup> Croft and Mohler see the local church as the "best and most proper place for the education and preparation of pastors."<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the local church's weakness and inability to be proactive in succession planning to address the shortage due to retirement become complex issues to investigate further.

Lovett assesses the scope of the problem from a positive perspective, "as priesthood vocations are increasing in some few parts of the world."<sup>60</sup> He, therefore, projects the issue of locations, ethnicity, and culture in discussing the problem's scope. Why some places like Africa and Latin America are experiencing growth in the number of young pastors, and Europe and America are profoundly affected by the pastoral shortage crisis? It depicts some dimensions of the uniqueness of the pastoral ministry.

### The Nature of Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral ministry is holistic. It shares both spirituality and professionalism in practices, yet its' spiritual dynamics call for holistic examination through various authors' lenses. The first aspect of the nature of pastoral ministry is the spirituality of it. It is a partnership between God and humanity in fulfilling his mission on earth. William Vanderbloemen at el; said, pastoral

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<sup>57</sup> Bergen, "Young Pastors," 8.

<sup>58</sup> Forman Rowland, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Miller, *The Leadership Baton: An Intentional Strategy for Developing Leadership in Your Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 85.

<sup>59</sup> Croft, and Mohler, *Prepare them to Shepherd*, 13.

<sup>60</sup> Cyril, " Tomorrow Priests," 417.

succession is a profoundly spiritual process that calls for prayer and recognition of God's leading."<sup>61</sup> Mei Yin Chang and Lawton agree with Vanderbloemen's pastoral ministry's spiritual identity. They added another element that the local church and its leaders must execute their divine mandate of selecting and training pastors. It is a profound spiritual partnership with God. Larry Witham, therefore, classifies the identification and equipping of pastors as a call by God and the people."<sup>62</sup> Croft agrees with Vanderbloemen, at el and Cheng, at el; on God's biblical commissioning of the church for the resting, training, affirming, and sending of pastors."<sup>63</sup>

Another element of the nature of pastoral ministry is the settings and communities of Christian churches. First, a "high percentage of churches are in rural and isolated geographical areas."<sup>64</sup> Brown affirmed Christian churches' rural and isolated settings and added that they are "historically in the agricultural community."<sup>65</sup> The rural and agricultural settings and communities birth the traits of low pay profession. Joynt said the pastoral ministry is characterized by "inadequate remuneration and sudden relocation, which mostly denied the pastor's wives the employment opportunity."<sup>66</sup> The sudden relocation in pastoral ministry, according to Ann-Masters, at el, imposes challenges to young ministers. It contributes to the loss

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<sup>61</sup> Vanderbloemen, Bird, and Ortberg, *Pastoral Succession*, 10.

<sup>62</sup> Witham, *Who Shall Lead Them?*, 10.

<sup>63</sup> Croft, and Mohler, *Prepare them to Shepherd*, 13.

<sup>64</sup> Chang, and Lawton, "Pulpit Supply," 30.

<sup>65</sup> Brown, "Tomorrow's Ministers," 403.

<sup>66</sup> Joynt, "Exodus of Clergy," 2.

of status as a promising career. It lost its attraction "perks, whether social status or good pay."<sup>67</sup>

Furthermore, the nature of pastoral ministry is experiencing revolutionary changes that influence the portrait of the pastor. First, Pope Benedict XVI, on June 16, 2009, said, "the church has come to the end of the year for priests."<sup>68</sup> The reason is that the pastoral ministry has lost its prestigious recognition accorded to it by the community. Pastoral ministry is rooted in the nature of God himself, but the post-modern era's tendency to challenge every reality and perception is affecting the pastoral ministry. Elliston sees it through the lenses of the generational changes in the worldview of "young people who are not characterized by sacrificial obedience to God."<sup>69</sup> The works of literature tend to bias against the post-modern generation regarding their obedience to pastoral ministry. However, Beryl Whipper interjects "that there are many young full-time pastors who have planted their own churches."<sup>70</sup>

Comprehensive Strategic Solutions to the Shortage of Young Adult Full-time Pastors

The authors' diversity acknowledges the pastoral ministry's uniqueness and the need for localizing and collaborative solutions based on the ministry context and mission. The first element is the acknowledgment of the problem. Mei Yin Chang and Lawton concur with Witham and others on the urgency of the situation. Many churches have acknowledged, intentionally identify, and create the needed awareness of the problem. Mei Yin Chang and Lawton said, "bishops and seminaries have realized the need to start recruiting younger people to fill the

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<sup>67</sup> Witham, *Who Shall Lead Them?* 9.

<sup>68</sup> Cyril, "Tomorrow Priests," 417.

<sup>69</sup> Elliston and Evangelical Missiological Society Staff, *Obedience in All Things*, 199.

<sup>70</sup> Beryl M. Whippe, "We Got Next: Making Room for Young Clergy Leadership in 21st Century: How Five Young Clergy have Prepared for Ministry," (PhD diss., The Wesley Theological Seminary, 2014): 13.



ranks."<sup>71</sup> Bergen agrees with them and provided an example from a "Mennonite church in Stouffville, Ontario, which has hired an enrichment coordinator purposeful for engaging youth-adults for outreach."<sup>72</sup>

Acknowledging the problem has intentionally prompted strategic action plans to give youth opportunities and space for participation and development. First, it calls for strategic designing and implementation of succession planning that focuses on "internal identification and equipping."<sup>73</sup> Basel and Lewellen and Steve Lambert agree with Vanderbloemen on succession planning. Succession planning hones the development of leadership skills and gifts of young people. Raymond Brown believes the creation of space for young people must be "intentional and a collective agenda of the entire church."<sup>74</sup> Kyu Hyeong Kim believes that churches must "target and train young professionals for leadership"<sup>75</sup> in the church. Marvos et al., Kyu Hyeong Kim and William Rottwell agree that it must be done through mentorship, stewardship, and apprenticeship.

Secondly, it calls for promotion and partnership between the seminary and the local church in the rapid training of young pastors to fill the retiring clergy's space. Croft and Mohler said, "the confusion between the seminaries and the local churches"<sup>76</sup> about selecting, testing, and

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<sup>71</sup> Chang, and Lawton, "Pulpit Supply," 30.

<sup>72</sup> Bergen, "Young Pastors," 6.

<sup>73</sup> Vanderbloemen, Bird, and Ortberg, *Pastoral Succession*, 9.

<sup>74</sup> Brown, "Tomorrow's Ministers," 413.

<sup>75</sup> Kyu Hyeong Kim, "A Study on the Development of Professional Young Adult Pastors for Korean Churches." (Ph.D. diss., Liberty University, 2016): xxvi.

<sup>76</sup> Croft, and Mohler, *Prepare them to Shepherd*, 13.

affirming ministerial callings must be addressed. According to Anne-Masters, at el, many professional pastors' road to ordination starts in a seminary."<sup>77</sup> They agree with Croft and Mohler on the essential role of seminaries in developing a young pastor. However, Cheng and fellow authors tend to debunk the non-negotiable importance of traditional seminaries in the pursuit of developing more young adult pastors. They believe pastoral ministry does not "need traditional seminaries in the training of the pastor."<sup>78</sup>

The literature review has holistically examined young pastors' shortage in Christian denominations in North America. The discourse examined issues in the church and important personal issues in young people's lives that contribute to the church's shortage of young ministers. It articulated the problem of church culture and the worldview of a young person on pastoral ministry. The discussion continued with the current leadership development strategies like mentorship, participation, and intentionality through contextualized succession planning. The spiritual, rural, and inadequate remuneration of the pastoral ministry were adequately examined. The discussion incorporated the intentional and contextualized strategic action plan through the wheel of succession planning in partnership with God. A holistic analysis of the literature reveals an essential element that calls for attention: young people's desire and passion concerning full-time pastoral ministry in an established Christian denomination. Furthermore, most of the literature focuses on external impediments without direct attention to the internal issue discouraging young people from considering full-time pastoral ministry. It is time to tackle young people's passion, intimate relationship with God, and biblical

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<sup>77</sup> Anne-Masters, Smith, and Florence, *Young Clergy Woman*, 23.

<sup>78</sup> Chang, and Lawton, "Pulpit Supply," 31.

understanding the Christian faith to improve their obedience to God's call to full-time pastoral ministry, though it is an embodiment of suffering and sacrifice.

### **Theological Foundations**

The portrait of generational impartation for succession into leadership is vividly seen throughout the Holy Scriptures. The older generation's need to identify, select, and nurture the next generation to make them ready to take the leadership's baton is paramount. God is multi-generational in his dealings, purpose, and plan for every person and group of people throughout the Scriptures. Therefore, the generational mentality must be reflected in the church's operation- which is his body (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor.12:27). The church is not exempted from this biblical perspective and mandate of preparing the next generation and making them ready to step into the leader's position. Therefore, an attempt has been made to portray a comprehensive discourse of theological and biblical perspectives for this thesis project. It was done by discussing Abraham's leadership succession mentality and actions, the Old Testament's prophets, the kingship in the Old Testament, the Ministry of Jesus Christ, Apostle Paul's Ministry, and his leadership succession strategy. The discussion was executed on the premise that God calls people into leadership and that people are responsible for responding by surrendering to God.

#### **Abraham's Leadership Succession Mentality and Actions**

The narration of the call of Abraham by God established God as the caller of people into his leadership position and assignment. It is an essential foundational principle of Christian leadership. Mark Sheridan describes it as a "model"<sup>79</sup> that the church should hold in high esteem

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<sup>79</sup> Mark Sheridan, *Ancient Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament II- Genesis 12-50* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 65.

and affirm it with an obedient response to the call of God. John Saihamer said the call of Abraham by God and Abraham's immediate response depicts “the urgency of God’s gift of salvation for humanity and a portrait of succession agenda of God for all his people.”<sup>80</sup>

Furthermore, Abraham's life and practices reflect a portrait of the urgency and intentionality of training people into leadership vividly throughout the Old and the New Testaments. The call and life of Abraham echo the generational mandate of succession, and God recommended it. The call and commission of God for Abraham, as seen in Genesis 12:1-3 (NKJV), portray a generational element with the statement “*in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*” It depicts God’s nature and intent for succession and how he expected his people to reflect this very nature. Therefore, God's non-negotiable expectation for Abraham was to become an agent of training successors to fulfill his purpose for all nations.

The succession element of God’s mandate for him is seen in his prayer to God in Genesis 15:2. He was concerned about his successor as he was childless. Abraham's willingness to fulfill the generational mandate of his calling was attested by God in Genesis 18:19, “*For I have known him, so that he may command his children and his household after him.*” Kenneth Matthew asserts that “God elected Abraham because of his ability to instruct his household after him and God in the midst of a competitive world of Sodom.”<sup>81</sup> Gerhard von Rad agrees that Abraham’s strong reflective character of succession “strengthens theologically pragmatic significance.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> John H. Saihamer, *The Pentateuch As Narrative: A Biblical Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 137-138.

<sup>81</sup> Kenneth D. Matthew, *The New American Commentary: Genesis* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2005), 223.

<sup>82</sup> Gerhard Von Rod, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Publishing Co., 1972), 209.

The church has a generational mandate of making all nations (people groups) disciples of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20) as Abraham (Gen.12:1-3). Therefore, the church must understand its mandate of birthing successors to continue fulfilling God's plan for all nations. Secondly, the church ought to be passionate and burdened, as Abraham exhibited in his prayers and activities, preparing generation after generation to fulfill God's purpose.

### Prophets in the Old Testament

The principle and necessity for leadership succession were essential in the prophets' lives and operations, most specifically in the Old Testament. They demonstrated it as a reflection of God's nature and mandate for them and how they responded obediently. The discussion of leadership succession in the Old Testament prophets' era focused on Moses and Joshua and Elijah and Elisha. It shared the initiation of the call into leadership by God and the essential role of obedient responses in the selection, training, and commissioning of the successors.

#### *Moses and Joshua*

The life and ministry of Moses have impacted the Christian faith. One principal influence of the life of Moses is his response to leadership succession as commanded by God. He understood and reflected on the principle of leadership succession through identification and mentoring. The burden for the suitable successor is depicted in his prayer to God, as recorded in Numbers 27:16-23. God directed him to pick Joshua as his successor. Moses has, directly and indirectly, mentored Joshua. Walvoord and Zuck believe that God's response was immediate, as "Joshua had already demonstrated his qualities and capabilities"<sup>83</sup> through the journey on the

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<sup>83</sup> John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 2002), 249.

wilderness. Mentees must be allowed to practice their capabilities and skills in the presence of their mentors. Dennis Core supports, “the selection of a new leader to succeed an individual of a spiritual and charismatic character of Moses should come from among those of proven character and integrity.”<sup>84</sup> The training of successors demands time, effort, and intentionality. Therefore, churches must become more intentional in their leadership succession plan helping young people to release and accept God’s calling upon their lives. It will enhance their commitment to leadership development to make them holistically ready and equipped to effectively function in their pastoral calling.

Furthermore, Moses' understanding and demonstration of leadership succession suggest that he is a product of mentorship. He, directly and indirectly, became a mentee Jethro, the priest of Median, who was also his father-in-law (Exodus 3:1; 4:18). It played an essential role in his development and understanding of leadership development. Most essentially, the need to give young people the opportunity, space, and time to develop their God-given abilities into maturity. It was not surprising that God called Joshua to succeed Moses. Wenham said, “Joshua was ideally suited to the job, having been Moses' assistant for many years.”<sup>85</sup>

### ***Elijah and Elisha***

The calling, training, and commissioning of Elisha by Elijah (1 Kings 19:15-20, 2 Kings 2:1-13) demonstrate his obedience to God’s will and mandate for leadership succession. Paul House described Elijah's immediate response to anoint Elisha as “a symbol of biblical leadership

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<sup>84</sup> Dennis R. Cole, *The New American Commentary: Numbers* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2000), 468.

<sup>85</sup> Gordon S. Wenham, *Numbers: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1981), 217.

transfer.”<sup>86</sup> It depicts that intentional leadership succession with pure intentional transferring of power is paramount and biblical. Warren Wiersbe describes Elijah's throwing of cloak unto Elisha as “symbolized the fact that Elisha would now be a prophet with the same power and authority of Elijah.”<sup>87</sup> Therefore, it is paramount that the church's current leadership intentionally and willingly respond to God’s mandate of calling young leaders. They should grant them some authority level while they are around for the ultimate leadership transition at their retirement.

Furthermore, it demonstrates that the calling, training, and Commissioning in Christian leadership succession must respond to God's initiation. God initiated the calling of Elisha by mentioning his name to Elijah. It depicts that God is the originator of callings into Christian leadership. Elisha’s quick response to God’s calling by forfeiting all and followed Elijah (1 Kings 19:20-21) projects the responsibility of those who receive the call of God to respond by surrendering all to him. Secondly, it is for the continuation of the ministry of God assigned to each Christian ministry. Donald Wiseman ascribed Elijah's response to the anointing of Elisha as a “fulfillment of his task.”<sup>88</sup> Therefore, leadership succession is a task that must be fulfilled by the current church leadership for the next generation of leaders through a partnership with God.

### The Kingship in the Old Testament

The kingship of Israel depicts the portrait of the concept of leadership succession. The succession of David by Solomon is the focus of this discourse. In 1 Chronicle 28:6-9, David

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<sup>86</sup> Paul House, *The New American Commentary: 1 & 2 Kings* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), 225.

<sup>87</sup> Warren Wiersbe, *Expository Outline on the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), 185.

<sup>88</sup> Donald J. Wiseman, *1 & 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 186.

publicly announced Solomon as his successor. He did that according to the guidance of God. David foresaw the need to select and prepare Solomon as his successor while alive. He precludes the possibility that rivals would take the throne upon his death. He wisely asserted that “Solomonic succession fulfilled the precise intention of God.”<sup>89</sup> Another critical execution strategy in David's leadership succession plan is his ability to satisfy the people. Matthew Henry ascertains, “David declared the settlement of the succession in the presence and to the satisfaction of those that were the representatives of the people.”<sup>90</sup>

### Jesus' Leadership Succession Plan

The leadership strategy of Jesus Christ reveals the theological and biblical portrait of the need for the next generation's intentional leadership preparation. It affirms the urgency and intentionality for a church's succession plan of leadership that focuses on the young generation. It also projects God's role in calling people into leaders. Finally, it calls on such people to respond to God's call obediently.

#### ***The Calling of His Disciples***

The calling, training, and commissioning of the twelve disciples by Jesus shares the same principles and features as leaders' calling in the Old Testament by God. It affirms the Triune God's principle and model for calling leaders that his church must practice. First, the disciples' calling occurred after forty days and nights of fasting (Matt.4:1-11). In verse 18, Jesus called his first disciples Peter and his brother Andrew. It demonstrates the partnership nature of

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<sup>89</sup> John A. Thompson, *The New American Commentary: 1,2 Chronicles* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 1994), 190.

<sup>90</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary in the Whole Bible* (Peabody, TN Hendrickson, 1994), 578-579.



God and man in the calling of leadership. Jesus' prayers, as recorded in John 17:6, affirm that the disciples were given to him by the Father. D.A. Carson affirms that "the disciples for whom Jesus now lifts his voice in prayer are those who the Father has given to the son."<sup>91</sup> It is the partnership between divinity and humanity.

### ***Jesus' Leadership Development***

The apprenticeship succession plan of Jesus is seen in his calling of the disciples (Matt.4:19), their responses, and training (Luke 9:1-3). His goal of making them "fishers of men" reveals that Jesus was passionate and intentional in identifying, preparing, and commissioning his followers to continue his ministry. John Nolland called the leadership strategy of Jesus an apprenticeship. He said, "it prepares his disciples for carrying out the same activities as Jesus himself."<sup>92</sup> The development of the disciples starts with their calling. Jesus then spent the time to train them and allowed them to practice while he was with them. Finally, in Mark 6:7, he empowered them and sent them. He also developed their leadership abilities through his lifestyle and even commanded them to teach others what he taught them (Matt.28:18-20).

### ***Commissioning of the Disciples***

The leadership succession plan of Jesus addresses all the essential elements needed to transfer Christian leadership and authority effectively. The following biblical passages (Mark 16:15, Luke 24:48, John 15:27, and Acts 1:8) described the disciples' commissioning by Jesus. It addresses the mission and purpose of God for leadership succession in the church – "fulfilling the mission of becoming a light for the Gentiles so that God's salvation might reach to the ends

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<sup>91</sup> D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1991), 558.

<sup>92</sup> John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2005), 179.

of the earth.”<sup>93</sup> Therefore, it is essential that the church partner with God to have a leadership succession plan for the continued fulfilling of making all nations disciples of Christ.

### Leadership Succession Plan of Apostle Paul

The divine mandate of training people, primarily young people, to take over leadership is not limited to the life and ministry of Abraham, David, Elijah, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, Paul did exhibit the essential portrait of leadership succession principles in his ministry. He championed and promoted the concept of a succession plan that focused on the next generation extensively, as demonstrated in his appointment of leaders and, most profoundly, his relationship with Timothy (Acts 16:1-3; Rom.16:21; 1 Cor. 4:17, 1 Tim. 1:18).

First, Apostle Paul acknowledged that it is God who calls and appoints leaders in the church. He experienced God's calling on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19), and God confirmed it again openly in Antioch (Acts 13:1-3). He publicly expressed his calling by God into leadership and his immediate responses by surrendering to the call of God (1 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:15-16). In his farewell message to the leaders in Ephesus in Acts 20:13-38, he confirmed God as the one who calls and appoints leaders in his church with the statement in verse 28, “*Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.*”

Howard Marshall said, “Apostle Paul's statement conveys that leaders in God’s church-owned their appointment to God’s choice of them by the Spirit.”<sup>94</sup>

Apostle Paul developed a habit of appointing leaders for the churches he planted to shepherd them for maturity (Acts 14:23; 20:28; 2 Cor. 8:19; 1 Thess. 5:12). John Polhill said,

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<sup>93</sup> John B. Polhill, *The New American Commentary: Acts* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 1992), 85-86.

<sup>94</sup> Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 352.

“the appointment of leadership is their ministry, and it was needed to established solid leadership over those so recently converted.”<sup>95</sup> The availability of qualified and trained leaders promotes evangelism and planting of churches that are key to the Great Commission mandate. Howard Marshall described Paul’s leadership for the churches as a “futuristic leadership ideology for the continuation of ministry.”<sup>96</sup> Polhill continued to ascertain that Paul exhibited his acknowledgment of leadership succession by “equipping a successor to carry on the gospel message after his life and ministry are over.”<sup>97</sup>

Furthermore, Apostle Paul was intentional and strategic in mentoring Timothy. He considered Timothy a son (2 Tim.1:2) and a co-worker (Rom.16:21; 1 Thes 3:2). Aida Besancon Spencer ascertained that “Paul and Timothy had a father and son relationship, and they served together as father and son in the same business-ministry.”<sup>98</sup> It depicts the cordial and trusted relationship that must be established between the older generation and the new generation in the mentorship. Additionally, it suggests that it is essential to show respect and recognition to young people who aspired and respond to the call to Christian ministry. It also affirms the need to prepare the next generation of leadership before the current leadership retired. Finally, Timothy's recognition as a son and co-worker, even though Timothy was a young person, addresses the need to create a sense of worth for young people as they are mentoring into leadership.

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<sup>95</sup> Polhill, *Acts*, 319.

<sup>96</sup> Marshall, *Acts*, 254.

<sup>97</sup> Polhill, *Acts*, 320.

<sup>98</sup> Aida Besancon Spencer, *1 Timothy: A New Covenant Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), 22.

Moreover, Apostle Paul demonstrated the essence and importance of helping people respond to God's call into leadership before his retirement or death by practicing it and recommending it. He recommended this critical concept of leadership to his mentees Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1-7) and Titus (Titus 1:5). It suggests that training successors to assume leadership should be the duty of every generation of leaders as it is God's mandate so that the church of God will always have leaders after the heart of God. Donald Guthrie agreed with Pauline's tradition of mentoring people called by God into leadership and making it a church tradition. He said, "it is essential for Christian churches to possess some orderly scheme of government and the Apostle saw the need to impress this on his close associates."<sup>99</sup>

The theological discussion affirms the urgency and needs for getting successors for Christian ministry to continue the gospel. It has holistically traced the concept and mandate of leadership succession from both the Old Testament and the New Testament as God's initiative that demands people's responses. It depicts God's role in leadership succession and the responsibility of the people who received the call of God into leadership. It also projected the clarion call for current leaders to intentionally partner with God to select, train, and commission the next generation of leaders. The discussion focused on the succession plan of Abraham, Moses, King David, and Prophet Elijah. Their response and partnership with God in successors revealed God's desire and role in calling each generation's leaders. The calling of people by God for succession in leadership for his people permeate in the New Testament. The succession plan of Jesus Christ and Apostle Paul shares similar traits as in the Old Testament. It affirms God's

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<sup>99</sup> Donald Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 205.

role in calling people into leadership, the responsibility of the current leadership, and the people God calls into leadership to respond obediently. Therefore, The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc must become aggressive in motivating the younger generation, born in America in the church, to respond to God's call to ministry. Also, young adults are responsible for responding to God's leading by surrendering themselves to the ministry.

### **Theoretical Foundations**

The presence and availability of scholarships for young people and pastoral ministry contribute significantly to the topic's continuous study. They provide a platform to cultivate focus, specifications, principles, and theories applicable to the issue's constant research. This theoretical foundation discussion has examined the scholarship of Stacy E. Hoel, Lawrence A. Young, and George K. Brushaber on the decline and shortage of pastoral ministers.

Stacy E. Hoel's work *The Mentor Relationship: An Exploration of Paul as Loving Mentor to Timothy and the Application of this Relationship to Contemporary Leadership Challenges* shares critical elements and themes on young people's issues and pastoral ministry. First, Stacy demonstrates the paramount need for intentional mentorship to prepare the younger generation for pastoral ministry. According to her, "mentoring relationships have received an increasing amount of attention from organizational leadership researchers and leadership practitioners alike."<sup>100</sup> It is essential that intentional mentoring become a crucial element in pursuing a solution for young people's discouraging response to pastoral ministry.

The effectiveness of the mentoring concept is not just a matter of identification, selection,

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<sup>100</sup> Stacy E. Hoel, "The Mentor Relationship: An Exploration of Paul as Loving Mentor to Timothy and the Application of this Relationship to Contemporary Leadership Challenges," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 34.

and training. It must be done with intentionality in the atmosphere of treasured relationships from the mentors to the mentees. Mentors in the church must exhibit genuine interest in the young people generation and accord them the needed respect to promote the mentees' confidence and dignity. Apostle Paul revealed, “his value and respect for Timothy by identifying him as a brother and fellow worker for the kingdom of God.”<sup>101</sup> The principle of mentoring is one essential element that has been fully exploited. Yet, its application in the context of this generation could be improved for significant results in the identification and training of young people in leadership.

Furthermore, Stacy addressed the concept of inclusion to generate pastoral ministry interest among young people. The idea of inclusion is built upon mentorship. It is about the co-sharing and participation of mentees in the actual ministry work. It is driven by allowing mentees to put their competence to the test as “Paul did when he recognized Timothy's empowered nature.”<sup>102</sup> The mentoring in the atmosphere of treasured relationships and inclusion promotes excellent communication, and interaction is needed for effective mentorship. The treasured relationships established between the mentor and the mentee help cultivate and sustain trust needs for impactful mentorship.

However, Stacy expresses the concept of mentorship and inclusion as the sole responsibility of the mentor. The commitment and readiness of mentees are essential in utilizing the full benefit of mentorship and inclusion. The mandate is on both the mentors and mentees to address the shortage of young pastors in Christian churches.

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<sup>101</sup> Hoel, “The Mentor Relationship,” 45.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

Lawrence A. Young's work *Assessing and Updating the Schoenheor -Young Projections of Clergy Decline in the United States Roman Catholic Church* shares dynamic perspectives on the issue of young people and pastoral ministry. First, it addresses the principle of the internal economy of churches. Christian ministry has been projected as a sacrificial enterprise. However, Young observed that the church's internal economy plays a vital role in the “selection and retention of professional clergy.”<sup>103</sup> The weaknesses in the internal economic strength negatively affect its ability to engage in effective recruitment and succession plan. The economic factor in attracting young people into full-time pastoral ministry is a reality, and Young acknowledged it as Apostle Paul admonished Timothy (1Tim. 5:18). The financial strength of churches to support pastors sufficiently could serve as a motivation. An intensive examination was engaged in the concept of finance and economy in addressing the discouraging response from the young people in accepting the call to pastoral ministry. However, Young’s recommendations on how churches can improve their financial strength and health were not vividly articulated.

Moreover, Young addressed another concept of exclusivity in ministry significantly. Pastoral ministry is already being confronted directly from “the consequences of the confluence of socio-economic forces.”<sup>104</sup> The Catholic church celibacy exclusivity plays a significant role in the decline of clergy in the church. The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc., also practices a full-time pastoral ministry exclusivity. First, the pastoral ministry in the church is exclusively for males. Also, pastors are not allowed to work outside their pastoral ministry. The pastoral ministry's exclusivity elements were examined holistically for understanding and how they can

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<sup>103</sup> Lawrence A. Young, “Assessing and Updating the Schoenheor- Young Projections of Clergy Decline in the United States Roman Catholic Church,” *Sociology of Religion* 59, no. 1 (Spring, 1998): 8.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

be transformed to promote young people's high recruitment into pastoral ministry. Young treatment of exclusivity and pastoral ministry failed to establish that pastoral ministry will always have some exclusivity in its nature and operation. Therefore, people who accept God's call into it must understand and willing to live with some element of exclusivity.

Young implored “quantitative theory in gathering the social demographic data of the research and apply qualitative models”<sup>105</sup> for the analysis of the data. The availability and access to quantitative and quality information enhance a holistic understanding of the issue. They promote quality and effective decision-making that produce transformational results. The topic of young people and the pastoral ministry did utilize quantitative and qualitative models to gather and analyze it. They helped discover insightful and diversified perspectives of the problem that fostered quality and collaborative solutions applicable to the church's context.

George K. Brushaber's work *The Coming Clergy Dearth* highlighted vital principles applicable to young people and pastoral ministry. First, he introduces the concept of sustainability. He argues, “the church needs a new generation of evangelists, church planters and skilled pastors to sustain the evangelical expansion of the last thirty years.”<sup>106</sup> The continuous availability of leaders called by God in the Christian ministries plays a crucial role in their sustainability. God is able and will sustain his church. Yet, the people of God have a role to play in God’s mission of sustaining his church. Brusher effectively addressed the role of God in the calling of people into leadership regardless of generation.

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<sup>105</sup> Young, “Projections of Clergy Decline,” 11.

<sup>106</sup> George K. Brushaber, “The Coming Clergy Dearth,” *Christianity Today* 35, no. 2 (Feb.1991):14.



Furthermore, he attests to the divine authority and ability of God in sustaining his church with leaders. It depicts the divine nature of pastoral ministry and pushes the dialogue into its proper perspective. Pastoral ministry is God's ministry and calls for an obedient partnership of humanity with God. Therefore, the solution to address the shortage of young pastors starts with "seminaries and church partnerships in helping young people recognize God's call upon their lives as God is always calling people."<sup>107</sup> The thesis project did explore the concept of sustainability of God's church through the availability of leaders called by God and their willingness to surrender to him.

Moreover, Brushaber interjects the concept of parental partnership in reversing the decline of clergy in Christian ministries. He calls on Christian churches to partner with Christian parents in addressing this issue of the shortage of clergy in the church. The concept of parental partnership emphasizes the divine mandate of parents in providing God's servants. He said, "In years past, parents often dedicate their children to Christian service and encourage them toward ministry or mission. But now, with surprising frequency, seminary applicants speak of parental opposition."<sup>108</sup> His discussion affirms the critical role parents can play in addressing young adults' discouraging response to the call by God into full-time pastoral ministry. The project sought parents' views on young adults and pastoral ministry and participated in developing the collaborative solution within the church's context.

Each of the researchers recognizes the shortage of clergy and encourages the continuous effort in addressing it for the progressive and generational nature of the Christian God and

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<sup>107</sup> Brushaber, "Clergy Dearth," 14-15.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*,

Christian ministry. The church is aggressive in implementing the concept of leadership succession, focusing on young people in general. This thesis project concentrates exclusively on young American-born adults in the church and how to motivate them through mentorship, inclusion, parental partnership, economic improvement, and anti-exclusivity on their response to God's calling into full-time pastoral ministry.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

Identifying and understanding a research methodology applicable to a specific ministry context and acceptable by the key stakeholders is critical to effectively investigating the focused issue of the research. The “perceived value of the selected methodology”<sup>109</sup> should earn the stakeholders' confidence and trust to promote high participation, enhance data collection, and collaborate with all primary stakeholders for the collective formulation of contextualized solutions. This thesis project's nature and purpose call for a holistic methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques. This chapter discussion starts with the intervention plan design as a holistic and collaborative strategy to motivate young adults born in America in the State of New York to respond obediently to the call into ministry by the Lord as most of the current pastoral leadership retire in the next ten years. It continues with a comprehensive reflection on the systematic process of identifying and selecting the participants for the research and the materials used to facilitate the project. It concludes with the intervention plan's implementation and the analysis of its outcome.

#### Intervention Design

##### *Ministry Context*

The ministry context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc contributes significantly to this research project's problem. The church was started in 1985 by a group of immigrants from Ghana. It was formed primarily for the Ghanaian immigrant community in New York to have a

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<sup>109</sup> Courtney A. Mckim, “The Value of Mixed Methods Research: A Mixed Methods Study,” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 1, no. 2 (2017): 202.

place to worship God within the context of their culture. It also serves as a place of home for the immigrant Christian community with the ultimate goal of establishing responsible and self-sustaining churches filled with committed, Spirit-filled Christians of character who impact their communities. It shared the mother church's vision in Ghana to become a global Pentecostal church that is “culturally relevant in vibrant evangelism, church planting, discipleship, global missionary activities, discipleship, and holistic ministry.”<sup>110</sup> The church's evangelistic outreach at its formation stage focused on African immigrants, especially Ghanaians living in New York City. The growth of adult membership brought about the growth of the youth and children membership through birth, community, and college campus evangelistic outreaches. The church's missional concept has refocused its target to all people with the understanding of possessing people of all nations as disciples of Christ. The church continuously revisits its strategy and operation to align with the cultural and generational diversity within the church and the communities it operates. The inclusion of young people into leadership has been a major strategic shift for the past twenty years.

Nevertheless, getting American-born young adults into pastoral ministry through their obedient response to God's call remains challenging. For the past thirty-six years, the church has been in the United States of America yet does not have a pastor born in America in its pastorate. This research project examined the absence of American-born pastors at The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. It will holistically identify the factors contributing to the absence of young adult American-born pastors. Then, the researcher collaborates with the church's executive

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<sup>110</sup> Literature Committee, *The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc – Constitution* (Wayne, NJ: Pentecost Biblical Seminary Printing Press, 2021), ii.

leadership in formulating intentional and holistic strategies to address these factors, thereby motivating the young American adults to respond to God's call to pastoral ministry.

### ***The Setting of the Research Project***

The research project occurred within The Church of Pentecost U.S.A. Inc., State of New York churches, specifically - The Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Long Island. The church is now sharing some elements of multi-cultural and generational in membership and leadership. The seminar is one of the practical methods that are familiar in the setting of the church. It was done collaboratively to address the perception, interest, and factors affecting the rate of young people's acceptance of God's call into ministry. The plan did have two execution methods: interviews and meetings with key stakeholders on God and humanity's role on the call into pastoral ministry. The researcher hopes that these plans originate a holistic transformation in the perception of full-time pastoral ministry. The transformation of perception will start intentional personal and corporate modification to encourage young people to respond obediently to God's call into full-time pastoral ministry.

### **Intervention Process**

The intervention plan's comprehensive execution addresses the young people's discouraging response to God's call to full-time pastoral ministry. It will be executed through interviews and seminars. First, permission was sought to meet the church's executive leaders to have an interactive briefing on the intervention plan. An official email request was sent to the executive leadership for an appointment for a meeting through the executive leadership's official administrative secretariat. It was followed by a personal phone call and email to the church's executive leaders. Also, efforts were made to talk to them individually at the end of our regular

church meetings. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the meeting time and venue were held virtually on November 25, 2020. A comprehensive and interactive presentation of the research project was discussed with the church's executive leadership during the meeting. The goal was to receive their permission, participation, and commitment. The executive leadership officially granted permission to research with a permission letter dated December 02, 2020, and signed by Apostle Michael Agyemang- Amoako.

Furthermore, the research utilized holistic observation and readings to verify the official and non-official key primary stakeholders' and made a representative selection of participants. With the executive leaders' permission and involvement, the participants' contact information will be collected from the church's membership register at the administrative office. It will concentrate on parents who have youth born in America and that youth are in the church. The parents must be active members with good standing. The youth ministry department will also be contacted to get the data on young adults who are active participants in the youth ministry. They should be at the age of 18 to 35 and active members of the church. The researcher envisioned having a combined total of sixty participants of both parents and youth for the research, with a higher percentage of youth participants.

### ***Recruitment of Participants***

The interactive meeting with the general church and continuous consultation of the executive leadership will play a critical role in forming focus groups. The goal is to ensure the project becomes all-inclusive for better representative participation and a holistic understanding of the problem's features and partners that the research has focused on addressing. The identification and selection of all-inclusive focus groups will be made intentionally and prayerfully. The groups will entail executive leadership, parents, and youth. Due to the church's

intense cultural sensitiveness, family heads will be essential in the non-official group. The following are the mechanisms to use to meet each group.

The first group to meet is the executive leadership. A request will be made to the executive leadership for an appointment for a meeting. During the meeting, there will be a comprehensive presentation of the research with them. An intentional effort will be made to seek permission to conduct the research in the church. Also, their participation and support will be a crucial component of the discussion during the meeting. The findings through the interviews conducted will be discussed with them. It will foster a collaborative formulation of corporate and contextualized reforms that address the factors hindering young adults born in America from responding obediently to the call of God into ministry.

Secondly, parents who have children within the age group of eighteen to thirty-five will be selected from the church's register at the administrator's office. The majority of the parents that would be selected will be the head of the household. They are principal influencers on the decision of their children. Phone calls and text messages will be made to recruit those interested in participating in the research. The individuals who accept participating in the research project will be gathered and later contacted via phone calls and emails. They will be contacted to set up the schedule for an interview. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions, it will be held virtually. Another essential task to execute is seeking their permission and consent.

The last group to meet is the youth. The established protocol will be followed to contact the youth ministry to collect information of young adults born in America and active in the ministry. He or she must be eighteen to thirty-five and an active member of the church. The information of those who agree to participate in the research will be gathered. Finally, a virtual interview will be scheduled with the interested individuals.

## Intervention Plan

The intervention plan will be executed in three phases for four months. The first phase is a dialogue on the issues to seek the views of the stakeholders. It will be done with interviews and apply the qualitative technique to identify key themes, concepts, and perspectives. Their opinions and answers will be analyzed through quantitative analysis techniques of charts and diagrams to determine rates, trends, and sequences. The quality gathering of data is a vital process of the intervention plan. The following are specific tools and processes to use to collect the data.

### *Methods and Materials*

The consent of participants is an essential part of the intervention plan. The researcher will host a briefing session with the participants and discuss the purpose of the research, participants' responsibilities, and consent. Participants will be informed of their options during the call to set up the interview. The researcher will read the consent to the participants virtually before the interview, and they affirm their agreement and grant their consent with a yes answer. The researcher will also send the consent form via email to those who opt to read and sign the consent form. They will then email back the signed copy.

The interview will be done virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its physical contact and association restriction. The interview will be for about 15 minutes virtually on the phone or Zoom. It involves two sets of questions—one for the parents and one for the young adults. Each of the parents will answer a set of seven questions arranging from personal background to their view on young adults born in America and full-time pastoral ministry in the church. Each young adult will respond to nine questions, comprising background questions, pastoral ministry questions, and hindrances to pastoral ministry questions.



The gathering and analysis of the data will utilize the following materials. All the interviews will be recorded with a phone and computer audio recorders for the quality gathering of the information. In the situation where participants are comfortable, the recording can be in the form of a video. Note pad is another tool used to write answers, observations, and participants' comments. A laptop computer is a key piece of equipment for writing the thesis research project and storing data securely. Microsoft Excel software will be utilized to analyze the interview data and evaluate the intervention's effects. Grounded theory methodology will be “utilized to conceptualize the data to identify consistent themes”<sup>111</sup> to aid in the formation of strategies to motivate young people to accept the call of God into pastoral ministry. Finally, money is a critical resource needed to finance the research project.

Consequently, the researcher will host a collaborative seminar with the key stakeholders to discuss the research findings. The first meeting will be with the church's executive leadership since they are top policymakers and custodians of the church's operation and administration. Also, the church holds them in high esteem and respects their decisions. The researcher will seek permission to meet them, and they will decide the time, date, and venue of the meeting. The outcome of the meeting with the executive leadership will help formulate the collaborative action plan to address the issues that hinder young adults from surrendering to God's call into pastoral ministry. The executive leadership's acceptance and participation in designing the strategic plan will help make it part of the church's seminar, retreat, and teaching programs. The goal of the strategic plan is to create a corporate awareness of factors contributing to the American-born

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<sup>111</sup> Shahid Khan, “Qualitative Research Method: Grounded Theory,” *International Journal of Business and Management* 9, no. 11 (Oct. 2014): 230-231.

young adults' discouraging response to God's call into pastoral ministry, thereby creating personal, family, and corporate reforms to address the factors to motivate young American adults to surrender to the call by God into full-time pastoral ministry.

On January 21, 2021, the Institutional Review Board granted permission to conduct the research project. See Appendix I for the IRB approval. A request was sent to the church's administrative secretariat for the adult membership register on January 26, 2021, and was received on February 1, 2021. On January 26, 2021, the researcher contacted the youth department via email and followed up with a phone call on January 27, 2021, for the youth membership register. The youth ministry secretariat sent the researcher the youth membership on January 28, 2021. Table 1 is a detailed schedule for each of the elements of the research.

Table 1. Research Schedule

| <b>Timeline</b>             | <b>Specific Task to Accomplish</b>                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 2, 2021            | Holistic observation and studying the Adult and Youth Membership Registers                                            |
| February 3-13, 2021         | Contact the adult and the youth membership for interested participants                                                |
| February 14, 2021           | Compile a register of all the interested participants                                                                 |
| February 15-21, 2021        | Follow up call, text, or email to all interested participants to schedule interview day and time for each participant |
| February 22- March 14, 2021 | Conduct Interviews                                                                                                    |
| March 15-30, 2021           | Analysis of the Interview data                                                                                        |
| April 1-14, 2021            | Completion of the Final Report                                                                                        |

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| April 15, 2021 | Submission of Final Report |
|----------------|----------------------------|

### *Ethical Issues*

The research project is confronted with diversified ethical issues. Nevertheless, comprehensive and intentional strategies have been implemented to enhance the study's quality and credibility. The first ethical issue is ensuring the participants' confidentiality and privacy to foster “participants’ confidence.”<sup>112</sup> The assurance of participant privacy and confidentiality is paramount in this context as all the participants are church members. Therefore, the researcher will utilize the concept of anonymity in the gathering and analysis of data. The participant's privacy will be ensured by conducting the interview individually at the location and setting that ensures privacy. In addition, the researcher will ensure safe storage with a password for all the data collected in this project, and only the researcher will have access to it.

Furthermore, the free will of the participants will be respected and promoted. Their participation will be promoted solely on their free will, the consent of the research will be read to each participant, and their approval will be sought without compulsion but out of their own free will. The researcher will deliberately ensure that participants answer the questions during the interview out of their own will and ensure they have the right to refuse to answer questions they feel compromise their free will. They will have the free will to opt-out of the research at any given time.

A comprehensive plan will be implemented to promote the participants' safety amid this

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<sup>112</sup> Khan, “Grounded Theory,” 231.

COVID-19 pandemic to “ensure minimal risks and reduce harm.”<sup>113</sup> First, the COVID-19 protocol will be followed diligently. Almost all of the interviews will be conducted virtually, except a participant prefers in-person settings. In that case, social distance will be applied with all the other precautions needed to ensure both the interviewer's and the interviewee's health safety. The “well-being of the participants is the primary concern”<sup>114</sup> and is an ultimate priority.

Lastly, the researcher's relationship to the participants and the research setting is a critical issue that calls for intentionality and comprehensive safeguards to ensure a credible and honest research project. The researcher is a member and a pastor of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. He understands the setting, protocol, and culture of the venue of the research. This relationship carries the potency of helping the research and can also compromise the research. The researcher's familiarity with the setting, protocol and culture would enhance and speed the leadership's permission and foster participants' recruitment. It will help apply “chain sampling”<sup>115</sup> in the recruitment as people will have the confidence and willingness to recommend other people who could be interested in this particular research project. Henceforth, creating the opportunity to have a higher participation rate to ensure “maximum variation sampling.”<sup>116</sup> These will also foster quality verification and analysis of the data.

Nevertheless, the researcher's relationship with the researcher's setting and participants

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<sup>113</sup> Peter Stoles and Tony Wall, *Research Methods* (London, MacMillian, 2014), 113-114.

<sup>114</sup> Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Method Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry These*, (Wipe & Stock Publisher: Eugene, OR, 2011), 33.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*,

creates the possibility of bias that jeopardizes “confidence and accuracy in research outcome”<sup>117</sup> and undue pressure in recruiting participants, collecting, and analyzing data. The researcher will utilize dialogue, a comprehensive explanation of the research goal, promotion of privacy, and the collective benefits of the research for the church to help enhance the understanding of the participants. The participants’ understanding of the research's corporate and missiological motives would motivate their participation and promote integrity in their responses. The researcher will patiently address the participants' questions to reduce the researcher's negative tendencies with the setting and the participants. The researcher has the assumption that the church leadership is intentional and eagerly seeking strategies to address the retention of American-born young adults in the church. It thereby creates the right atmosphere to address the roadblocks to motivate them to respond to God's call for pastoral ministry.

### **Implementation of the Intervention Design**

The implementation of the intervention design was executed holistically and systematically. It discusses the sequences of gathering the data comprehensively, explaining the methods, processes, and procedures applied in the data analysis. It was done with intentional and practical techniques in ensuring the accuracy of the data collection. The data collection's accuracy did aid the continuous procedure in maintaining accuracy and credibility in the analysis stage of the process to authenticity.

The accuracy of a research project is paramount in attracting the confidence of all stakeholders. It helps the research project to cultivate the portrait of “credibility needed for

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<sup>117</sup> Sven Kepes, George C. Banks, and In-Sue, Oh, “Avoiding Bias in Publication Bias Research: The Value of “Null” Finding.” *Journal of Business and Psychology* 29, no.2 (2014): 200.

stakeholders to utilize its findings for decision making.”<sup>118</sup> It is an essential aspect of a research project as it affects the “level of belief in its trustworthiness.”<sup>119</sup> The credibility of the research is a non-negotiable trait, yet it is not easily attainable. It calls for intentionality and the researcher’s skills to adopt an effective “method to motivate and maintain credibility”<sup>120</sup> throughout the research project.

### Data Triangulation

Credibility and accuracy are primary features expected by all stakeholders in a research project. It calls for the application of an effective research technique like data triangulation to attain authenticity in all the various stages, tasks, and processes in implementing the intervention plan. Data triangulation combines “multiple methods to study the same phenomena and concept for an authentic, accurate, in-depth understanding”<sup>121</sup> of trends, themes, and concepts in data collection. Donna M. Mertens and Sharlene Hesse-Biber believe that data triangulation “ensures validation of research process and veracity of research results.”<sup>122</sup> The researcher utilized personal observation, interviews, and focus groups in enhancing the accuracy and trustworthiness throughout the implementation of the intervention plan.

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<sup>118</sup> Elizabeth A. Wager, “Credibility,” *Archives of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine* 138, no. 7 (July 2014): 874.

<sup>119</sup> Ronald E. Goldsmith, Barbara A. Lafferty, and Stephen J. Newell, “The Impact of Corporate Credibility and Celebrity Credibility on Consumer Reaction to Advertisement and Brands,” *Journal of Advertisement* 29, no. 3 (2000): 43-54.

<sup>120</sup> Alyssa Appleman and Shyam Sunder, “Measuring Message Credibility Construction and Validation of an Exclusive Scale,” *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (Mar 2016): 61.

<sup>121</sup> Norman K. Denzin, “Triangulation 2.0,” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 6, no. 2 (Aug. 2012): 82-84.

<sup>122</sup> Donna M. Mertens and Sherlene Hesse- Biber, “Triangulation and Mixed Methods Research: Provocative Position,” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 6, no. 6 (2012): 75.

### ***Researcher Observation***

The researcher's observation plays a critical role in determining the intervention plan's implementation process and stages' accuracy and trustworthiness. The issue of young American-born and pastoral ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc is multifaceted. It is intertwined in the Christian faith of all stakeholders, participants, and the researcher. The investigation has the potency of subjecting the church's diverse context and the participants for scrutinization. These factors can influence participants' responses and therefore call for holistic observation from the researcher. The researcher did apply observation to ascertain the responses of participants from such diversified backgrounds. The researcher did observe consistency among the participants' verbal and non-verbal communication attributes, choice of words, passion in expression, and knowledge of the research problem. The attainment of consistency, “a vital property of all statistical procedures”<sup>123</sup> in responses, concepts, and thematic from the research participants with excellent diversity helps the research depict a trait of accuracy.

### ***The Interview and Its Questions Framework***

The use of the interview and its questions framework was another aspect of applying the data triangulation technique. The interview is a crucial component in the research project's data collection and remains “a predominant instrument for collecting and generating data.”<sup>124</sup> It provides the platform for obtaining information, opinions, and answers on the same issues from

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<sup>123</sup> Ulrike von Luxburg, Mikhail Belkin, and Oliver Bousquet, “Consistency of Spectral Clustering,” *The Annals of Statistics* 36, no. 2 (2008): 555.

<sup>124</sup> Matthew T. Prior, “Re-examining Alignment in a “Failed” L2 Autobiographic Research Interview,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 20, no. 4 (2014): 495.

different perspectives. First, the participants' recruitment was executed with diversity and representation principles to get a random sample enriched in diversity and fulfill the representation test. These sample qualities enhance authenticity through consistency which is the “first basic theoretical guarantee of efficacy and exactitude.”<sup>125</sup> Secondly, the framing of the interview questions for both the parents' population and the youth population was designed to ensure accuracy and authenticity. Questions with the same answers were framed differently in premise, linguistic, logic, and time to ask to test the truthfulness of participants' responses. Lastly, the interview schedule and appointment were designed so that the researcher does not interview participants with a possible relationship at the same time. The time allotted to conduct the interview was sufficient to give space for the utilization of data triangulation.

### ***Focus Groups***

The last element of the data triangulation application was focus group discussion after completing all the interviews. As essential as an interview instrument is in gathering and generating data, it is always “affected by the participants' societal, experiential, and cognitive differences.”<sup>126</sup> Therefore, it helps to have data triangulation to assess the truthfulness of the prevailing concepts, themes, and opinions gathered from the interviews. The participants' various groups were engaged as a crossing-checking technique on the key trends and themes gathered. The agreement among the groups on the critical elements in the interviews' findings ascertained validation of them. The groups' disagreement and deviation encouraged the researcher to examine the data's accuracy and authenticity further.

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<sup>125</sup> Erwan Scornet, Gerard Biau, and Jean-Philippe West, “Consistency of Random Forests,” *The Annals of Statistics* 43, no. 4 (Aug. 2015): 1718.

<sup>126</sup> Prior, “Autobiographic Research Interview,” 501.



## Data Collection Sequence

The effectiveness in the process and procedure of collecting the data and the quality of the data calls for the researcher to have a comprehensive and systematic data collection plan. The data collection of the research followed a well-structured sequence. The researcher requested permission from the church's executive leadership to conduct a research project for an academic purpose and ultimately benefit the church. A permission letter was sent to the leadership, and they granted permission for the researcher to use the church members for the research project. The church members' register, both the adult and youth, were obtained from the administrative secretary's office.

The researcher randomly selected youth's personal information in the church's register and made phone calls, text messages, and emails with the recruitment letter to one hundred and twenty-seven young American-born and ten Ghanaian-born within the church's youth ministry. A total of seventy-one young people responded. A register was compiled for the interested young people. Follow-up calls were made to the young people interested in participating in the research to explain the research further and address their questions. After a comprehensive dialogue with the interested participants, forty-two of them finally agreed to participate.

The researcher continued the recruitment of the parents' participation. Fifty-six parents were contacted via email, text message, and phone calls with the principle of diversity to recruit a diversified sample. The parents contacted included presbyters and non-presbyters. Thirty-one responded with interest to participate. A register was compiled for them. Follow-up calls and text messages were sent to them with detailed information about the research, purpose, and expectation from participants. Fifteen finally accepted to participate in the research project. The researcher envisioned having sixty diversified and representative in the participants' sample, both

the young and the parents. At the end of the recruitment process, fifteen parents and forty-two young people agreed to participate in the research, totaling fifty-seven participants.

The “atmosphere of flexibility”<sup>127</sup> was created to encourage the fifty-seven participants' sense of liberty for truthfulness in their response. They received comprehensive information on the research. First, they understood that the research project was for the researcher's doctoral program, not a sponsored or partnership project between the church and the researcher. However, the research project findings would benefit the church to address the pediments discouraging the young American-born in responding to God's call for pastoral ministry in the church. It motivates participants for accurate responses, directly and indirectly enhancing the church's missions in fulfilling God's mission on earth.

The data collection sequence used in the research project may “influence participants' responses and the quality of the collected data.”<sup>128</sup> The research project adopted interviews as its qualitative data collection sequence to create comprehensive interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees. The researcher did have the privilege of seeking clarification from the participants for holistic understanding and perspective of the issue and applying observation for data triangulation.

Moreover, the researcher proceeded with developing the open-ended questions to aid in gathering data from the participants. Two separate sets of questions were designed for the two groups of participants. One set for the parents and the other set for the youth participants, respectively. They were developed in consultation with the researcher's mentor for quality,

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<sup>127</sup> Nancy Kentish-Barnes, at el, “Research Participation for Bereaved Family Members: Experience and Insights from a Qualitative Study,” *Critical Care Medicine* 43, no. 9 (2015): 1843.

purposefulness, and clearly aligned with the research project's purpose. Finally, the research proposal with the research method was sent to Institutional Review Board (IRB) for their review and approval to conduct the research. Gladly, the IRB established the appropriateness of the research and approved it.

Consequently, the principal tool for the data collection was the interview questions. The interview questions for the youth participants had nine questions, and the one for the parents contained seven questions. They were designed to focus on the research question and tailored to guide participants in their responses. All the interview questions seek trustworthy answers on young American-born and pastoral ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. The questions for the youth entailed three questions on why young American-born in the Church are not responding to God's call for pastoral ministry in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. Two of the questions seek the young people's perception of the church's pastoral ministry. The interview question further seeks to identify the level of interest of youth for pastoral ministry. Finally, the interview solicited recommendations from the young people in addressing the factors discouraging them from accepting God's call for pastoral ministry in the church as most of the current pastorate retires in the next ten years.

Furthermore, the parents' interview questions were tailored to seek their willingness to support their children's decision to become full-time pastors in the church and their perception of the young people's capability and readiness to replace the retiring pastorate in the next ten years. Two of the questions were designed to awake parents to the problem of young people and

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<sup>128</sup> Christine L Covell, Souraya Sidani, and Judith R. Ritchie, "Does the Sequence of Data Collection Influence Participants' Responses to Closed and Opened Ended Question? A methodological Study," *International Journal of Nursing Studies* 49, (2012): 664.

pastoral ministry. One question seeks the parents' perception of the pastoral ministry of the church. Another critical question focuses on parents' perception of young American-born ' readiness and capability to become an effective pastor. This question plays an essential role in discovering how the adult members see the church's young people regarding their qualifications to become a pastor. Fortunately, ninety percent of the parents' participants are members of the church's presbytery that identify, interview, and qualifies candidates for pastoral ministry in the church. Therefore, the perceived view of these parents projects the presbytery committee's views paramount in pastoral calling in the church.

The researcher then contacted all the participants who had agreed to participate in the research via emails and phone calls to schedule an interview. Each participant enjoyed the “flexibility to choose the right time, day and setting for the interview”<sup>129</sup> to enhance the sense of freedom and control needed to create an environment for the free expression of thoughts. It also encouraged the participants' availability with just a few of them that have to reschedule their initial date. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and its health protocol, all the participants picked a virtual setting for the interview.

Consequently, the researcher conducted the interviews virtually within sixteen days with a daily average of three interviews. The researcher received consent from each participant to conduct virtual interviews. The interviews were tape-recorded and stored in the computer with a password-locked for data and participants' safety. The researcher also penned notes and observations during the interviews. Also, the researcher listened to the recorded interview after completing the interview and transcribed the interviewee's response verbatim for effective

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<sup>129</sup> Kentish-Barnes, at el, “Qualitative Study,” 1843.

grasping of the information to aid in the data analysis.

### Data Analysis

The researcher adopted the grounded theory in “sorting the data”<sup>130</sup> provided by the participants. It enhances the conceptualization of the “emerging thematic categories representing the integrated narrative data”<sup>131</sup> from the interviews. It also fosters the researcher's “engagement as it relies on active participation.”<sup>132</sup> The researcher read the transcripts of the interviews and the notes taken during the interview comprehensively to identify general concepts, principles, and themes. The researcher also listened to the interview recordings attentively to confirm prevailing themes identified through the reading and those missed during the reading of the interview notes. The process used pattern and trends recognition to “discover themes emerging from the data to become the categories for analysis.”<sup>133</sup>

The researcher classified the themes identified according to their relationship with the research's ultimate purpose. The themes that directly correlate with the overall purpose of the research are listed for comprehensive analysis. The correlated themes were assessed to determine the level of their representation of the participants' views. The researcher checked the number of times the identified themes and terminologies appeared on the participants' interview responses.

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<sup>130</sup> Krzysztof T. Konecki, “Classic Grounded Theory – The Latest Version: Interpretation of Classic Grounded Theory as a Meta-Theory for Research,” *Symbolic Interaction* 41, no. 4 (2018): 548-549.

<sup>131</sup> Amalia Cochran, William B. Elder, and Leigh A Neumayer, “Characteristics of Effective Mentorship for Academic Surgeons: A Grounded Theory Model,” *Annals of Surgery* 269, no. 2 (Feb 2019): 269 -270.

<sup>132</sup> Kathy Charmaz, “Teaching Theory Construction with Initial Grounded Theory Tools: A Reflection on Lessons and Learning,” *Qualitative Health Research* 25, no. 5 (2015): 1611.

<sup>133</sup> Kate Roberts, Anthony Dowell, and Jing-Bao Nie, “Attempting Rigour and Replicability on Thematic Analysis on Qualitative Research Data: A Case Study Codebook Development,” *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 19, no. 66 (2019): 1.

Each of the themes was examined individually to assess its impact on the research question and its effect. The themes analysis factored the different perspectives in the research sample categories- young men, young women, parents.

The researcher proceeded to focus group discussion with the various groups within the research sample on the various representative themes. The predominant themes were discussed at the group level without connecting them to any individual participants to ensure their privacy and protection. The subjecting of the predominant themes from the data through the researcher's observation, the interview responses, and the focus group foster the data to pass the authenticity test. It also attests and fulfills the representation traits of the views of the participants. The key and representative themes identified through the data analysis relating to why young adults born in America in the Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. in the State of New York, are not responding obediently to the call into the full-time pastoral ministry of the church are as follows: pastors' salary, pastor's transfer system, cultural barriers, the calling process, limitation on pastors' wives, student loans, nature of pastoral ministry, parental aspirations for their children, young people's interests, and insufficient knowledge of the pastoral ministry.

The church's operational structure and system place the duty of decisions, policies, and organizational changes solely on the church's executive leadership. It calls for collaboration with the executive leadership for their understanding, agreement, and willingness to formulate a collaborative strategic plan to address the discouraging factors, thereby motivating the young American adults to respond favorably to God's call into pastoral ministry. There is a broad-church public awareness of the problem as a general problem among the youth. The researcher's ultimate goal is to create the executive leaders' awareness of the diverse nature of the problem of young people and pastoral ministry, focusing on the young American adults in the church.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

The intervention plan's goal was to have a comprehensive perspective of the factors influencing the young American-born's responses to God's call to full-time pastoral ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc negatively. The researcher believed that a holistic understanding of the hindrances would help create the right and needed personal and corporate awareness of the problem, thereby birthing personal and corporate reformation to motivate the young American adults to respond obediently to the call to pastoral ministry by the Lord in the COP.

The intervention plan utilized the research method of an interview to gather data from a diversified population sample for this research project. Fifty-eight people from The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc agreed to participate in the research project. One parent dropped out of the research to attend a family emergency requiring travel out of the country. The rest of the fifty-seven participants shares a diversity trait needed to foster quality data collection and a high tendency of truthfulness in responses. The diversified sample contains forty-two youth and fifteen parents. The youth participants entail twenty-seven males and fifteen females. Twenty-five of them are still in college, eleven have completed their first degree, and some are working. Their age ranges from eighteen and thirty. All the young people who participated in the research are of Ghanaian descent except for three of them. One has mixed parents of an Italian mother and a Jamaican father. The other two have African American parents and Caucasian parents, respectively. The youth participants are active members in the youth ministry, and ninety percent attended the church's children's ministry. The parent participants are made up of three females, and they are also mothers and wives, and eleven males. Two of the males are currently not

married. Of the parent participants, ten are members of the church's presbytery council, thirteen college graduates, and all active church members. The details of participant information depicting the diversity of the population sample for the research are reflected in table 2.

Table 2. Participants Background Information

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Male- Parent             | 11 |
| Female – Parent          | 4  |
| Male – Youth             | 27 |
| Female – Youth           | 15 |
| College Graduate (Youth) | 17 |
| College Students (Youth) | 25 |
| AGE                      |    |
| 18-19                    | 13 |
| 20-25                    | 13 |
| 26-30                    | 16 |
| 31-40                    | 3  |
| 41-50                    | 7  |
| 51-60                    | 5  |

Each of the research project participants completed a consent form and had a well-informed knowledge of the research's purpose, responsibilities, and the freedom to exit. The mandate of truthfulness to the best of their knowledge in their responses was explained to them as the ultimate goal is to help God's mission through the church's missions by motivating the young people to respond to God's call for pastoral ministry in the COP. They were assured of the



high sense of confidentiality, safety, and privacy of the research project. The interview data analysis discovered the following prevailing themes as the factors, directly and indirectly, becoming the roadblocks on the young American adults' path in accepting the call into full-time pastoral ministry in COP ministry setting.

### Perception

The researcher tailored the interview questions to understand the participants' perception of the pastoral ministry of COP. It calls for a holistic understanding of the church's pastoral ministry portrait painted in church members' minds to design a balanced strategic plan to address the issue of young people and pastoral ministry. The interview questions asked the participants their general view and interest in the COP pastoral ministry and their willingness to support young adults considering it a full-time career. Pascal Buehler and Peter Maas ascertained that “peoples’ perception affects their choices, decision making, resilience capacity about situations they must master.”<sup>134</sup> Interestingly, “people perception is multifarious,”<sup>135</sup> yet the participants' diversified nature yielded consistency in perception concerning the following areas, which positively and negatively affect young people born in America and their pastoral ministry choices in COP.

### ***Ghanaian Cultured Ministry***

The first aspect of the participants' perception of pastoral ministry in COP is that it is participants shared this perception, and interestingly eighty-seven percent of the parents'

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<sup>134</sup> Pascal Buehler, and Peter Maas, “Consumer Empowerment in Insurance: Effects on Performance Risk Perceptions in Decision Making,” *International Journal of Bank Marketing* 36, no. 6 (2018): 1074.

<sup>135</sup> Muhammad Salman Azhar, Ismail Bin Labai Othman, and Norzieriani Ahmad, “A Conceptual Framework on Customer Satisfaction: The Mediating Role of Corporate Image,” *Global Social Sciences Review* 3, no. 3 (2018): 254.

participants also said the Ghanaian culture dominates the church's pastoral ministry. The dynamics are not different by gender. Ninety-five percent of the men and ninety-eight percent of women attested to the highly Ghanaian cultured ministry. The strong Ghanaian cultural influence on the pastoral ministry of COP tends to favor the young Ghanaian-born who comes to America. The Ghanaian culture influences the totality of the pastoral ministry: its structure, operations, systems, decision-making, and functions, and the participants expressed their view in figure 1.

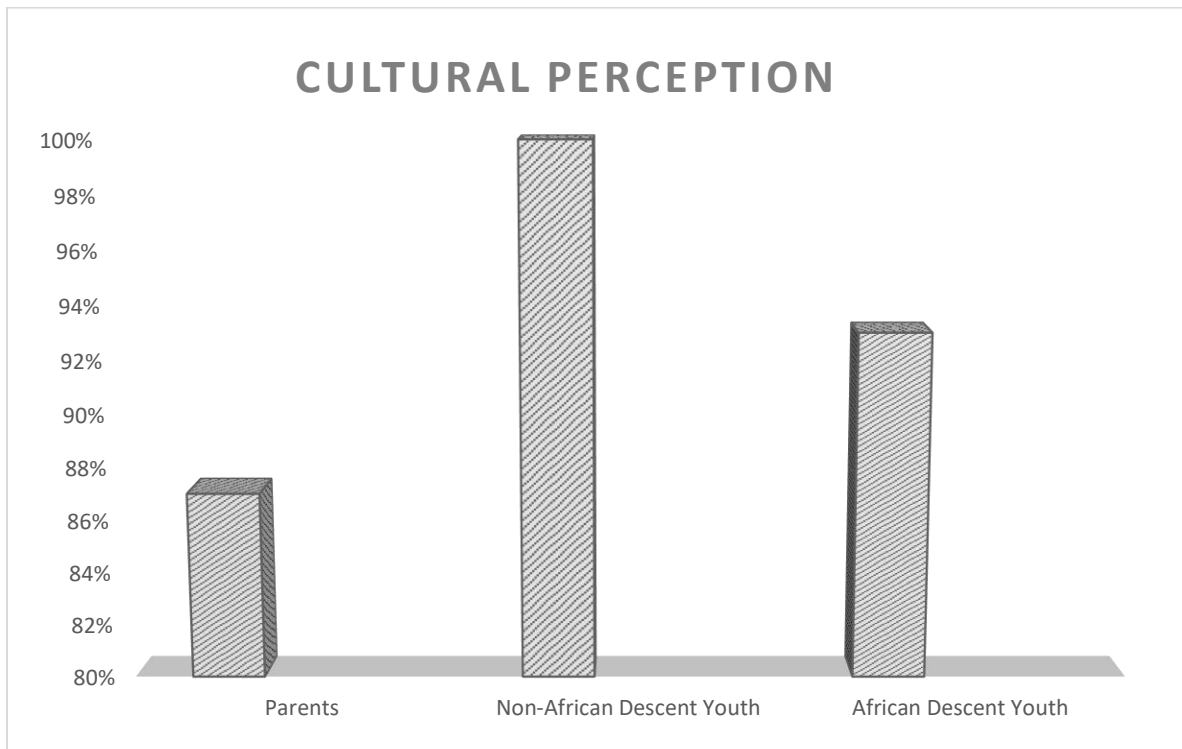


Figure 1. Participants Perception on Level of Ghanaian Culture on Pastoral Ministry in COP

### ***Transparency***

The participants share remarkable similarities in their perception of the transparency of the church and its pastoral ministry. The interview data analysis projected the issue of transparency. According to the participants, the church tends to limit the decision-making and its process to the church's presbytery. This decision-making strategy tends to sideline the church public and their

participation in the decision and policymaking. It, therefore, affects the sense of ownership and participation of the church membership. It has created an environment where most church public has limited access to information and decision processes. Therefore, church members' are limited in participating in formulations of decisions and policies that primarily affect their spiritual lives. Seventy-three percent of participants believe that the church is not transparent to the church public on its process, participation, and decision.

Furthermore, financial transparency is another challenge articulated by the participants. The youth tend to question financial transparency in the area of permission and approval of expenditure. The parents' participants share the view of the transparency of the expenditure. The area of agreement was the transparency on the expenditure that related to the leadership of the church. Eighty-two percent of the female participants did see financial transparency as a priority. The male participants, both the youth and parents, see financial transparency as a primary concern. Ninety-one percent of the participants said they know it is a small salary but do not know their pastor's salary. They concluded that such information is for public use but is not easily accessible by the general church public. It, therefore, makes it difficult to factor financial information in deciding to consider pastoral ministry as a full-time career.

The last aspect of transparency articulated by the participants is on the process of appointments and church administration. Fifty-nine percent of parents said they do not understand how most appointments are made and sometimes have questions about it yet; it is difficult to have their voice heard by the executive leadership. Eighty-eight percent of the young people perceived that most church appointments depict traits of favoritism and nepotism. They believe that it is easier for people who know persons at the church level or shares some

relationship with high profile people in the church to attract appointments to high calling and positions. Figure 2 illustrates the participants' expectations of transparency in the church.

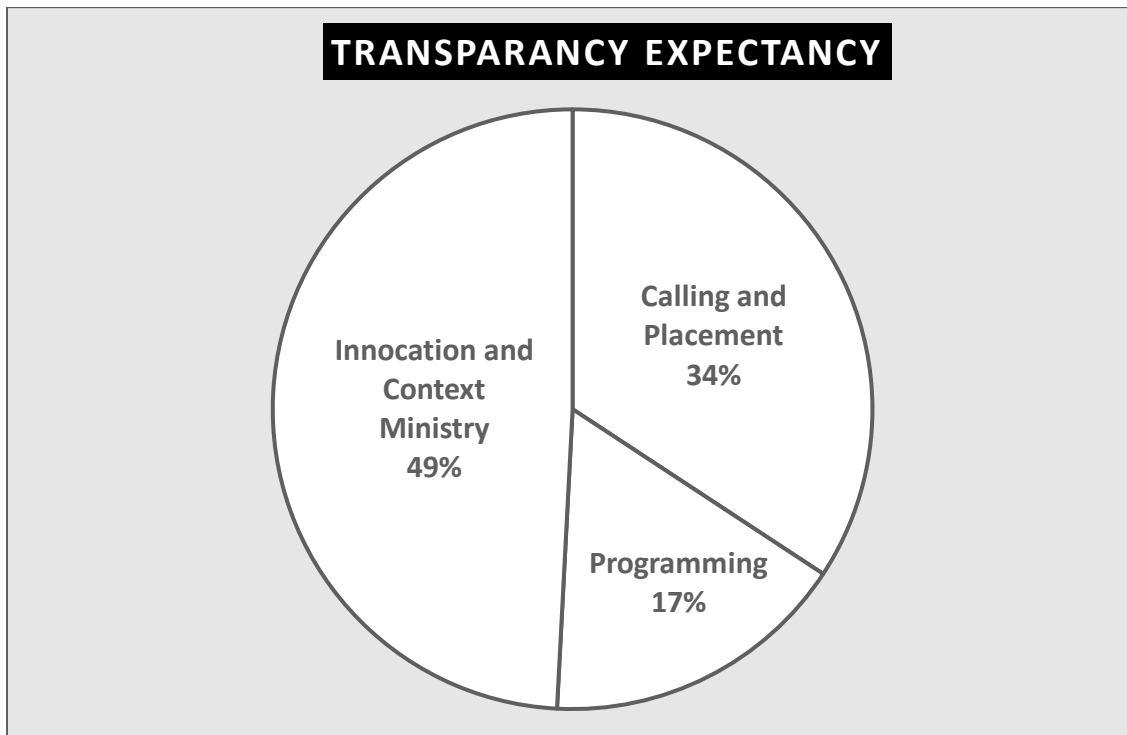


Figure 2: Transparency Expectancy Among Participants

The church's young people born and raised in the American culture believe and hold highly on transparency, accountability, and accessibility to information. The parents believe that they need to know more than what the church's leadership is communicating. Overall, Fifty-seven percent of the participants expect the church to improve its transparency on its finances. Twenty-six percent calls for transparency in decision-making, and fifty-one percent expect transparency in appointment and church administration. This prevailing perception negatively affects the church's image and the pastoral ministry in the church public's minds, as it depicts an absence of ownership and participants of the general church membership, thereby impacting their interest in the church's pastoral ministry.

### *Adults View on Youth Capability to Become Pastors*

The adult participants, by nature of the composition, represent both parents and the presbytery of the church. Sixty-seven percent of the adult participants are presbyters, and all are parents of youth. Thus, their responses to a question that asked their view on the character and stability of the young American adults reflect an essential part in addressing the research project's problem. The parents' view shares a similarity of the youth's view on their pastoral ministry readiness in the church. Forty-seven percent of the youth said they have what it takes to become pastors if God calls them. Twenty-four percent said they are partially ready for pastoral ministry if the call of God comes upon them once they finished their college education and twenty-nine percent declared that they are not ready and do not see themselves in pastoral ministry. Ninety-eight percent of the youth-female participants concluded that they do not see themselves as pastors' wives in the ministry context of COP. Seventy-five percent of them believed they could consider themselves as pastors' wives in another ministerial context.

Interestingly, the adult participants also expressed their views on these two categories. First, the researcher sought the parents' perception of supporting or encouraging their children to become pastors in the church. The second aspect was their view on the youth's readiness to replace the retiring pastorate. Forty-nine percent of parents believe that young American adults have the character and capability to become effective church pastors. Fifty-one percent believe that most young American-born would need further training and intentional mentorship to replace retiring pastors. In the view of their children becoming pastors, it was not very easy to have the authenticity on their view as it followed the same trends as their view on young American adults. The reason is that most of the adult participants said their children are an investment for their future welfare. Therefore, they expect their children to support them

emotionally, socially, and financially. Coupled with their perception that pastors' salary is not lucrative, it suggests that most parents are not comfortable for their children to become pastors in COP. The parents' view on the readiness of the young American to replace the retiring pastors is reflected in figure 3.

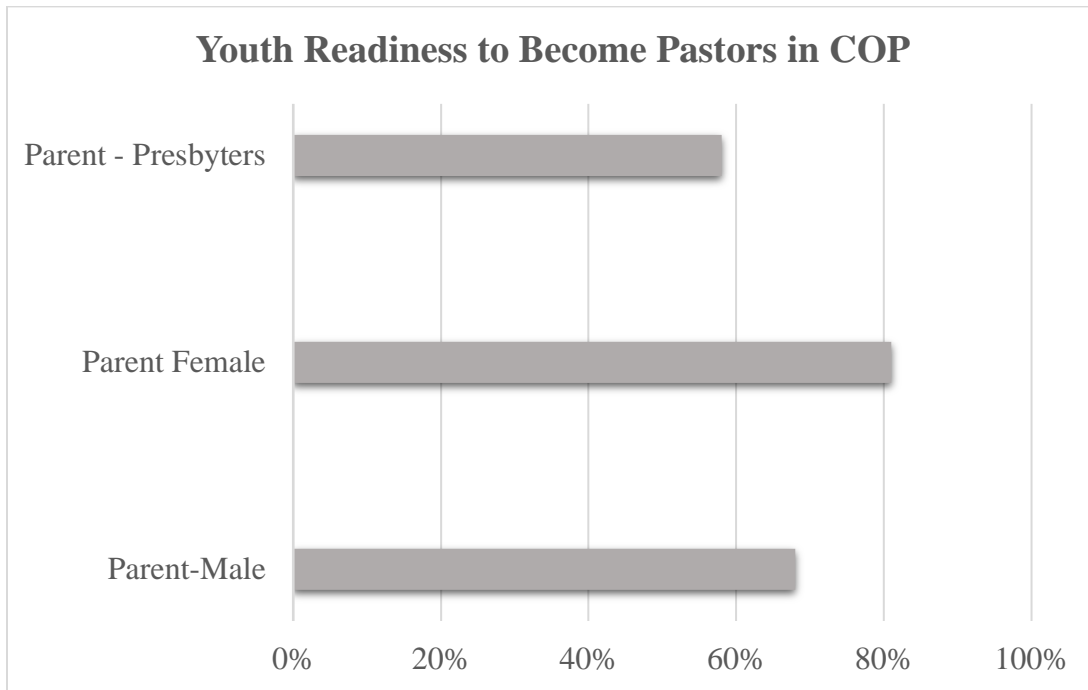


Figure 3: Adults Perception of the Readiness of the Youth Becoming Pastors in COP

#### Nature of Pastoral Ministry in COP

The participants labeled the nature of pastoral ministry in COP as a contributing factor to the problem of young people born in America and their responses to God’s call to pastoral ministry. The immigrants' founders of the church in the United States of America blended with their Ghanaian culture substantially influenced the pastoral ministry's nature. About Ninety-eight percent of the participants agreed that the church's pastoral ministry was founded with solid biblical principles and depicted a godly and biblical portrait. They all agreed that getting into the pastoral ministry of the church depends on the call of God. Nevertheless, they also shared some

aspect of the nature of the pastoral ministry that tends to discourage young American adults from responding to God’s call into pastorate within the church's ministry context.

***High Level of Institutionalization of COP Pastoral Ministry***

All the participants praised the level of security and unity in the church due to its institutionalization model. They all agreed that institutionalization is an essential element for the effective management and solidification of the church, yet it carries the “risks of conveying the pastoral ministry into authoritarianism in practice.”<sup>136</sup> First, the process of calling people into pastoral ministry, placement of pastors, and the condition of service are highly institutionalized, and the participants' view is seen in figure 4.

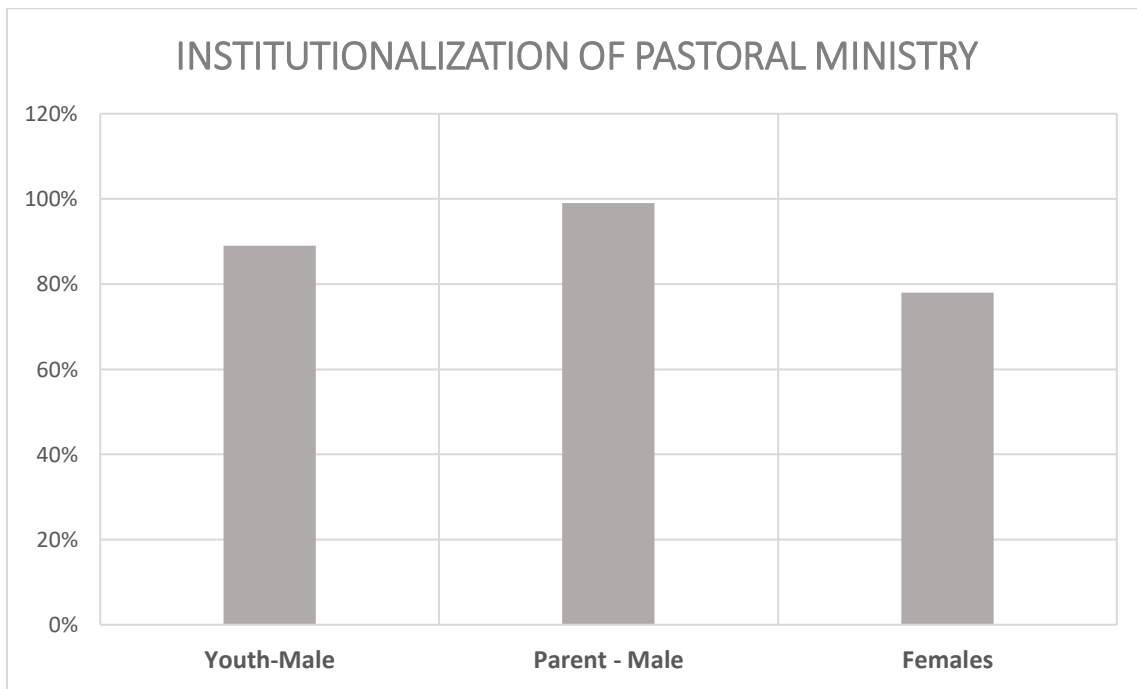


Figure 4: Participants View on Pastoral Ministry Institutionalization

Sixty-seven percent of the young participants think it compromises innovative ways of

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<sup>136</sup> Arda C. Kumbaracibasi, “Models of Party Institutionalization and Problems of Democratic Consolidation,” *Mediterranean Politics* 25, no. 2 (Nov 2018): 221.

getting some of the young people who have unique challenges that call for certain exemptions to make it possible for them to function as pastors in the church. For example, young people with certain careers like medical doctors, military officers, pilots, and similar careers may need some exemptions in placement, yet all newly called pastors of the church are called and placed according to the availability of vacancies. Ten of the eleven male parents of the participants share the same view with the youth on the high institutionalization of the church's pastoral ministry. Eighty-eight percent of female participants agreed with the rest of the participants of the high level of institutionalization of the pastoral ministry, thereby discouraging some of the young American adults in the church about pastoral ministry. The areas that experienced a high level of institutionalization, according to the participants, are cataloged in figure 5.

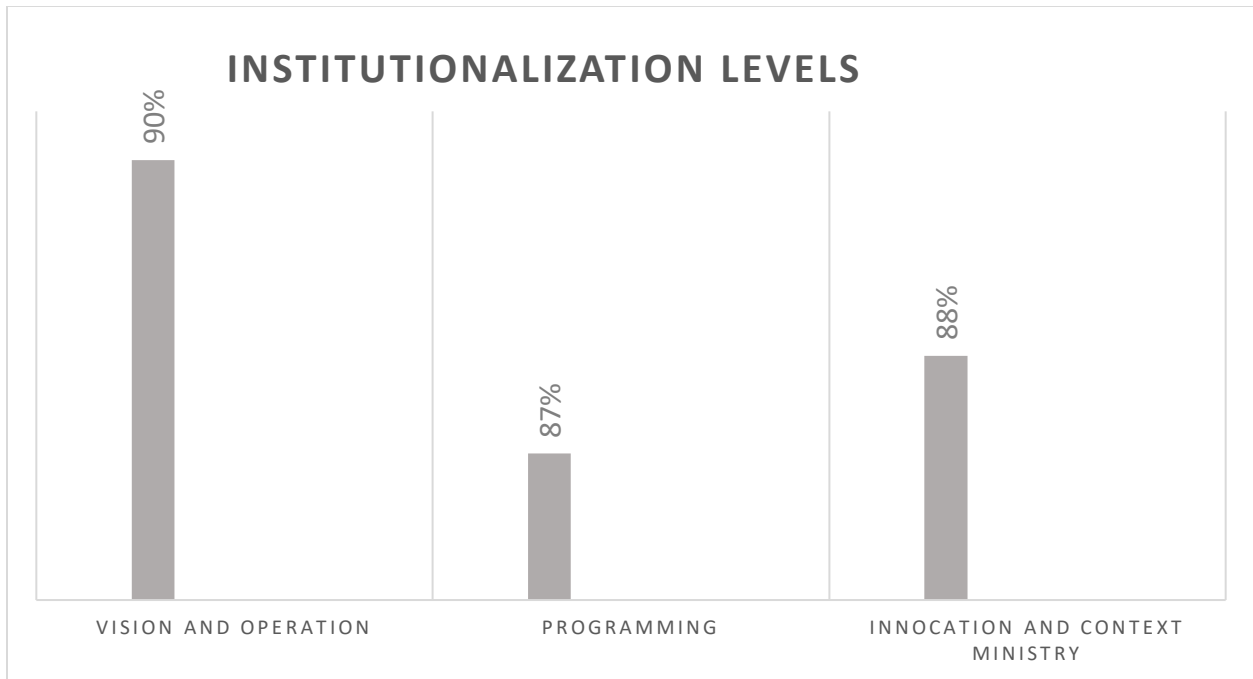


Figure 5: Areas of High Pastoral Ministry Institutionalization

Furthermore, the high institutionalization of the pastoral ministry affects the programming and activities of pastors. The church streamlines its programs and activities to ensure an equal



quality standard for effective monitoring and evaluation. It thereby limits the innovation and creativity of the individual pastors. It becomes challenging to alter programs and activities brought by the leadership of the church. Seventy-One percent of the male-youth participants labeled it as an anti-innovation practice that creates status quo phenomena. Sixty-two percent of the parents disagreed with the male-youth participants as anti-innovation practices. The high institutionalization level discourages collaboration among pastors within the church and, most obviously, ministries outside the COP settings. Seven-three percent of participants believed that holistic collaboration is needed to fulfill the Great Commission and the pursuit of young people into pastoral ministry as most pastors retire in the next ten years. They believed that institutionalization becomes “effective when combined with an approach that opens up creativity, collaboration, and engagement”<sup>137</sup> and some level of approval as depicted in figure 6.

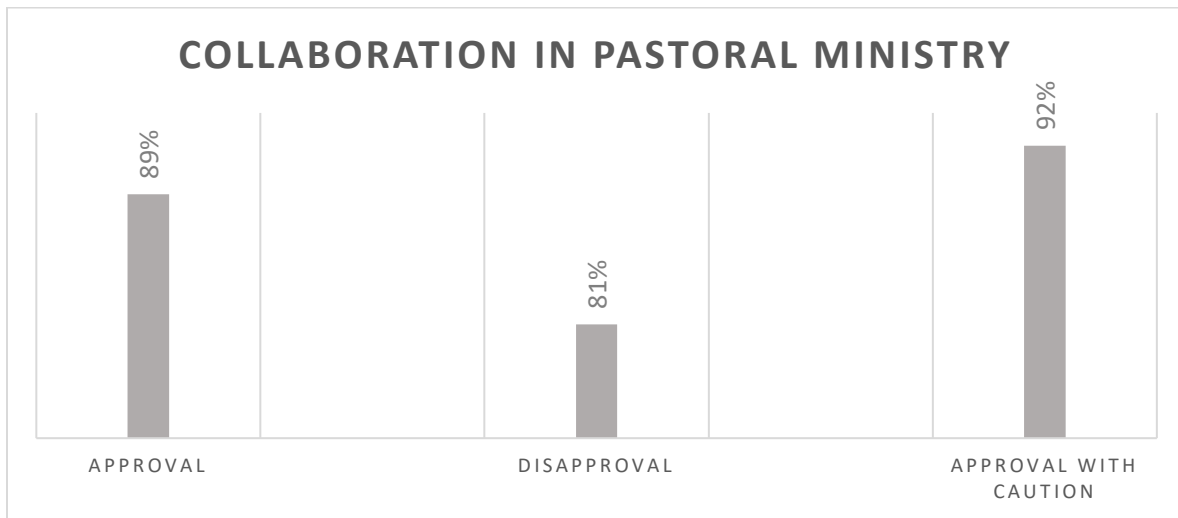


Figure 6: Participants Nature of Approval for Collaboration in Pastoral Ministry

Sixty percent of the male-youth participant perceived that the church is against

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<sup>137</sup> Richard Owen, Mario Pansara, Phil Macnagthen, and Sally Randes, “Organizational Institution of Responsible Innovation,” *Research Policy* 50, no.1 (Jan 2021): 10.

collaboration with other ministries outside the COP. Ninety percent of the adult participants attest that collaboration with outside ministries is not part of the strategy of COP, based on God's covenant with the church. Most of the adult participants reported displeasure with the collaboration of outside pastors and ministries. The participants' common element is that there is a need to model it with openness for ideas without compromising the values of the Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.

### ***Culture of Silence***

The structure and operation of the pastoral ministry have indirectly and directly created a culture of silence. Eighty-nine percent of the youth participants acclaim to have heard pastors complaining about policies and decisions privately yet never in public. Sixty-one percent of the parent participants believed that vocal pastors are mostly transferred to difficult areas or sidelined in higher callings and appointments. It has made most pastors in COP silent, and hard to see them disagreeing or expressing their views openly. Thirty-nine percent of the female-youth participants ascribe the culture of silence as a corporate problem. Seventy-five percent of youth participants and eighty-three percent of parents agreed that such culture discourages young Americans from accepting pastoral ministry call into such an environment.

### ***Transfer of Pastors***

The current pastoral ministry structure of frequent transferring of pastors contributes significantly to the issue of young American adults and the Full-time pastoral ministry of the COP. Whether the participants considered themselves in pastoral ministry was designed with the rest of the questions to discover potential factors hindering young people from accepting God's call into pastoral ministry. The hindering factors share both structurally, personally, family, and economic traits. The frequent transfers of pastors share overwhelming sensitivity among the

participants. Most participants accept the importance of transferring pastors and its positive impact on the Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.

However, it is about its usefulness and application in the context of the next generation of American adults and the church's pursuit of addressing the roadblocks discouraging them from accepting God's call to pastoral ministry in the context of COP. Sixty percent of the parents' participants agreed that it affects family life. Ninety-One percent of female-youth dislike the frequent transfers of pastors. Eighty-five percent of participants believe that it affects the continuity of implementing a strategic plan, thereby affecting policy effectiveness and planning for the benefit of the locality.

The transfer systems negatively affect the interest of the youth in pastoral ministry in the context of COP. Most youth participants view the transfer system as beneficial to the church, not the pastors and his family. Interestingly, the dislike of the transfer system of pastors in the church shares the influence of age, as seen in figure 7.

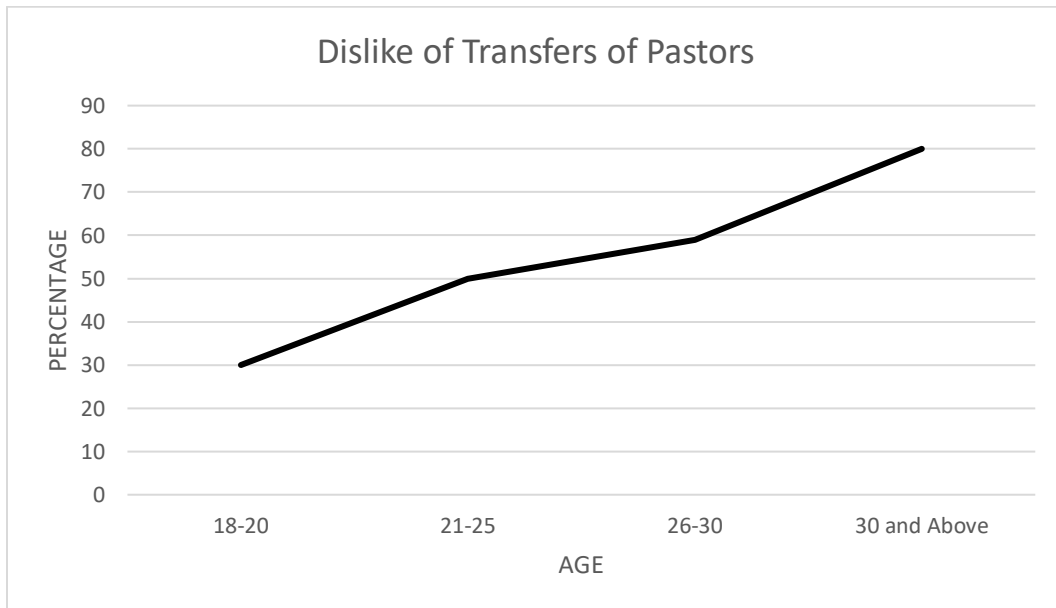


Figure 7: Participants Dislike Trends of Transfers of Pastors

The trend shows that the older participants, the higher their dislike of pastors' current transferring. The participants under the age of twenty-one tend to show a lesser dislike to transferring pastors in the church. The family impact of the current transferring of pastors leans to influence the participants' dislike significantly. The church has to reexamine the current transfer of pastors' policy and see how it could address its impact on the family to help motivate young American adults to respond to God's call into full-time pastoral ministry in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.

***Exclusivity of COP Pastoral Ministry***

How participants see full-time pastoral ministry was accompanied by questions on the changes needed to occur in COP Pastoral ministry to make it more open and attractive to the young American-born to consider it. The participants' responses to these questions identified COP full-time pastoral ministry's exclusiveness as discouraging and unfavorable to young Americans in their desire to become pastors. The majority of the participants admire the uniqueness of the COP Pastoral ministry, yet there are concerns on the following areas in alignment with the research project's purpose and catalog in table 3.

Table 3: Number of Participants Having Issues on Exclusivity Nature

|                | Full-Time | Male Pastors | General Ministry |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| Youth-Male     | 23        | 16           | 18               |
| Youth -Female  | 14        | 11           | 7                |
| Parent- Male   | 9         | 6            | 3                |
| Parent- Female | 4         | 3            | 4                |

The essentially exclusive full-time nature of the pastoral ministry is described by eighty-nine percent of participants as unfavorably to most young Americans. Ninety-one percent of the young participants supported fully implemented bi-vocational pastoral ministry options in the church. They believe that it serves as a motivation and encourages young people to work with their professions and the pastoral ministry. Secondly, it will make it possible to attract young people born in America as it would allow pastors to utilize their college education profession for volunteering basis without facing any administration and operation hindrance. Lastly, it will serve as a source of income for pastors to address their financial needs. It will also help pastors engage in pastoral ministry without money becoming a driven focus, which could shift the focus of some of them due to financial difficulties. The support dynamics of the bi-vocational pastoral ministry by the participants are captured in figure 8.

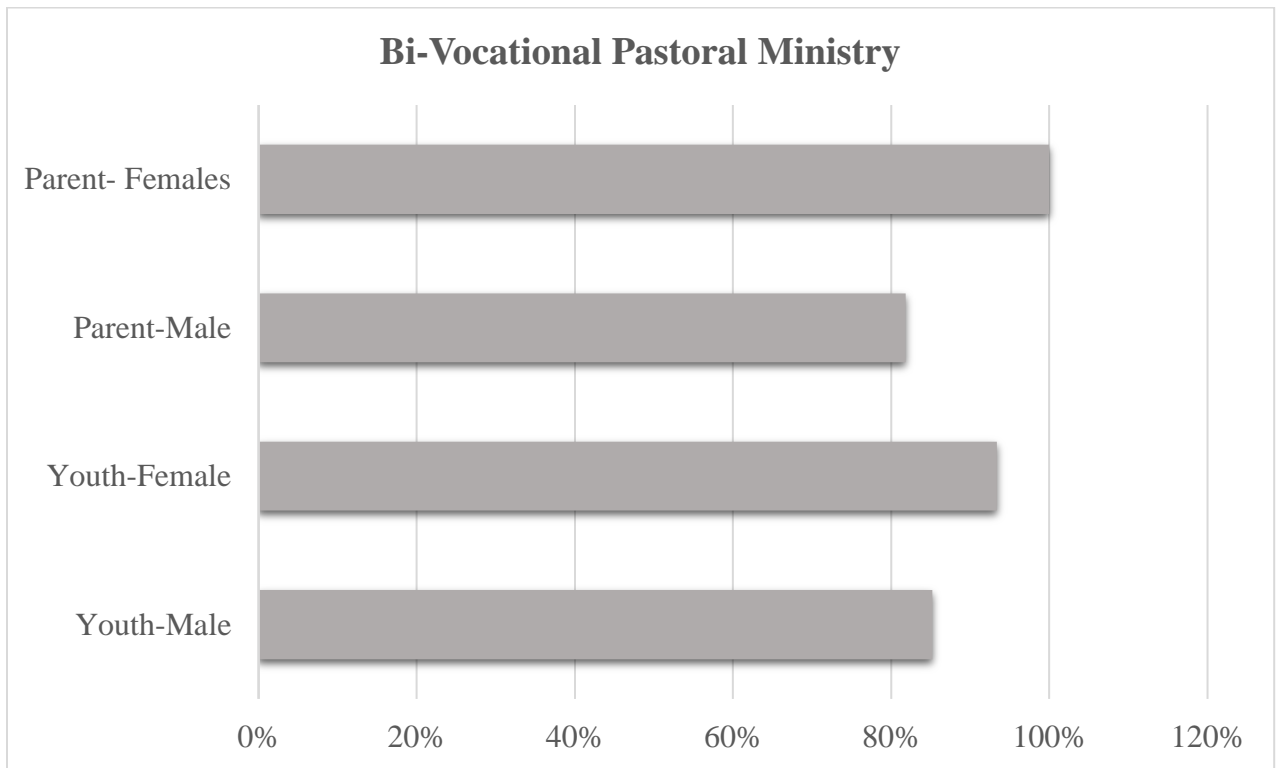


Figure 8: Participants Recommendation for Bi-Vocational Ministry

The pastoral ministry's exclusive nature in COP is not limited to its full-time pastorship; it shares gender exclusivity. The pastoral ministry of COP is exclusively for male pastors. Ninety-seven percent of participants agree that it is not a matter of discrimination against females but due to the church's historicity, operational demands and expectations from pastors, the militant operational traits, and the impact of pastoral ministry marriage. Sixty-three percent of participants reported that the male pastors' only nature of the church's pastoral ministry could project a negative portrait of the ministry; therefore, people outside the church could describe it as discriminatory. They indicate that the church could restructure its pastoral ministry to make it female-friendly, making it possible for females with God's calling to become pastors in COP.

Furthermore, eighteen out of the twenty-seven youth-male participants indicated that the church's general pastoral ministry nature could discourage some young American adults. They believe that the pastoral ministry should include pastors for special ministries like youth pastors, music pastors, children pastors, church planters, and other need-driven ministries. It will make the pastoral ministry inclusive to attract young people with special interest into the pastorate. One hundred percent of the youth females indicate the need for special ministry pastors.

The majority of the participants' responses projected a clarion call for the leadership to revisit the pastoral ministry's exclusivity nature to reflect the contemporary pastoral ministry to appeal to the American culture and context. They suggested that it will create opportunities and accessibility that would attract a broad scope of young Americans who have the call of God upon their lives and are willing to respond to God's calling with the COP ministry context. They believe that the futuristic and effective strategic plan to address the problem of young people and pastoral ministry in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc, must include

bi-vocational, female pastors, and specialized ministries as reflected in figure 9.

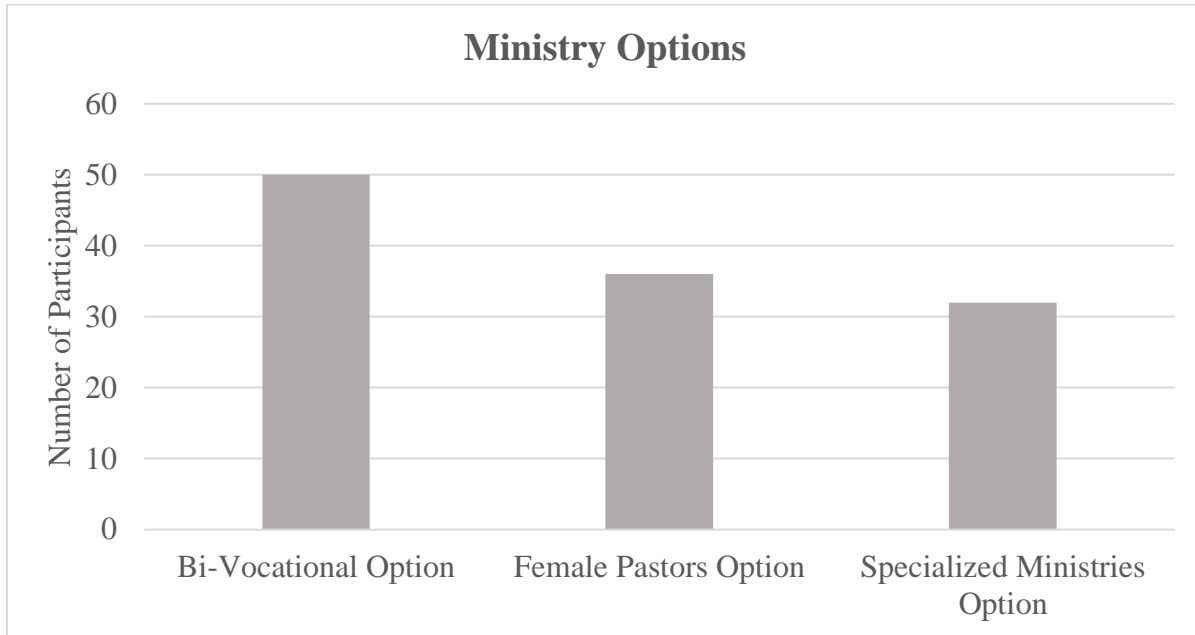


Figure 9: Participants Recommendation for Multi-Optional Pastoral Ministry

#### Policies on Pastors' Wives

The biblical, operational, and cultural elements of the pastoral ministry within the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc depict the non-negotiable importance of pastors' wives. The interview question on changes needed to be made in the full-time pastoral ministry of COP to make pastoral ministry a career consideration by young people and what the church must do to attract young people into full-time pastoral ministry identified policies on pastors' wives as a critical factor in addressing the research problem.

#### *The Essence of Pastors' Wives*

The parents' responses to the question of what will motivate parents to encourage their children to consider pastoral ministry as a full-time profession also highlighted issues in the church's policies on pastors' wives. First, ninety-one percent of the participants agreed that pastors' wives contribute significantly to the success of pastoral ministry in the church. Ninety-

two percent of the male participant responded that pastors' wives are critically essential and have an essential role in the church's pastoral ministry. The gender reflection on the essence of pastors' wives is seen in figure 10.

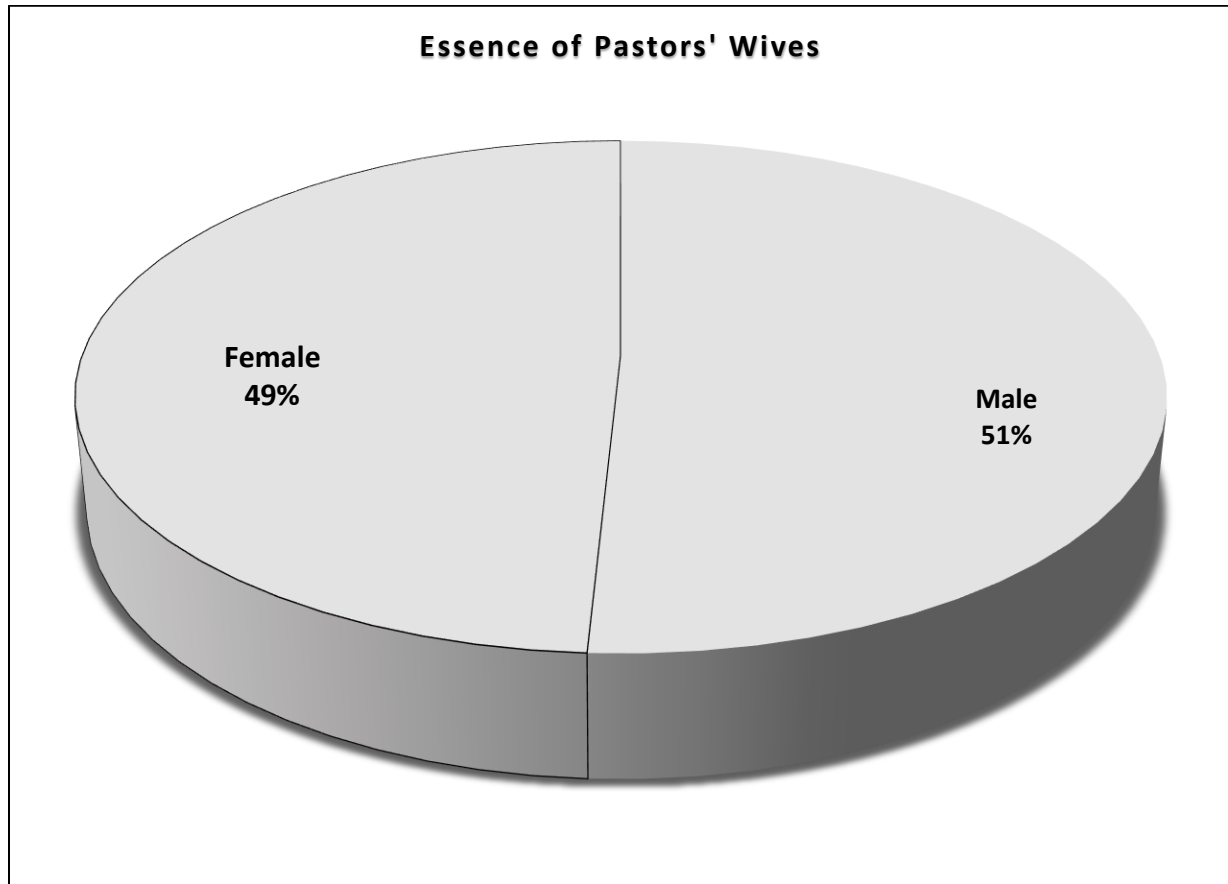


Figure 10: Essence of Pastors' Wives by Gender

Interestingly, the percent of females who see pastors' wives are essential and contribute significantly to pastoral ministry success in the context of COP is lower than the men percentage. It is only eighty-nine percent. Nevertheless, the female participants hold a strong belief in the importance of pastoral ministry in God's mission through the church's missions. They ascertained that improving the pastoral ministry of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc, would make it robust biblically and missiological to disciple all nations for Christ.



### *Pastors' Wives and Employment*

The participants indicated that some of the church's policies and portraits carry the potency of discouraging young American-born members of the church from accepting God's call into full-time pastoral ministry in the ministry context of COP. The principal among the participants' responses is the church's policies and the portrait of pastors' wives not allowed to work with their professions in secular settings. Eighty percent of the participants believed the policy discourages wives of potential young men from consenting with God's call upon the lives of their husbands for full-time pastoral ministry in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.

First, they agreed that the policy denies pastors' wives the privilege and right to utilize their acquired college professions to work and engaging their potentials. Secondly, all the participants said the policy limits pastors' wives to earn income to support their family and, most critically, be in the position to pay their student loans. Lastly, they believed that pastors' wives becoming housewives due to their husbands' pastoral ministry could affect their sense of importance and dignity. Eighty-nine percent of the male youth believe that the church must allow pastors' wives to work and allow the decision not to work become the personal choice of the pastors' wives. Ninety-Three percent of the female youth believed that pastors' wives must be allowed to work.

Almost all the female participants shared that pastors' wives not being allowed to work freely significantly influence young people's career decision-making in the church's pastoral ministry. The female and male participants indicated that pastors' wives must be allowed to engage in full-time professional employment. However, they acknowledged that it might have some level of challenges on their husbands' pastoral work. Interestingly, participants have diversified views of the nature and kind of employment pastors' wives must do.

Figure 11 reflects the diversified view of the participants on the kind and nature of employment pastors' wives must do.

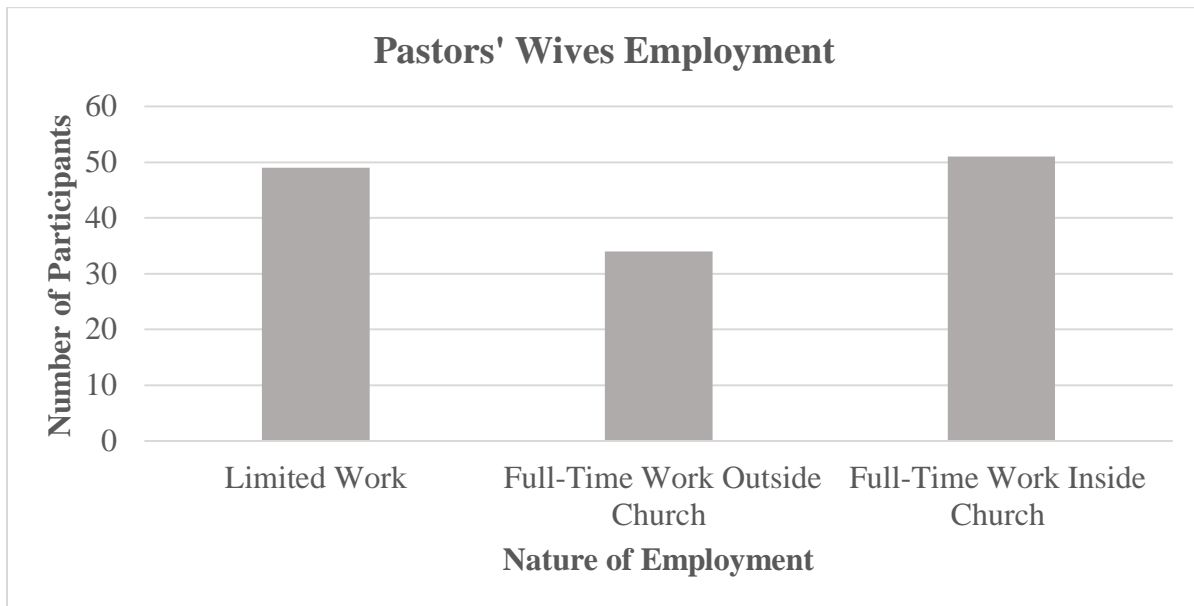


Figure 11: Participants View of Pastors' Wives Employment

Forty-nine participants said that pastors' wives must be allowed to engage in limited employments. Thirty-four of the participants believed that pastors' wives must be allowed to work without limitation, even if their employment is outside the church setting. Finally, fifty-one of the participants, eighty-nine percent of the participants, recommended pastors' wives to work but must be within the church's ministry setting.

#### ***Pastors' Wives Recognition and Clear Functions***

The research further projected that the church does not have a clear corporate policy and structure for the role of the pastors' wives. Eighty-three percent of male participants reported that the role of pastors' wives is not corporately clear. They are seen as just supporters of their husbands' ministry, and their roles are primarily dependent on their husbands' willingness to engage them. Eighty-six percent of the female participants indicated that pastors' wives' roles and

functions must be vividly and corporately included in the church's policies and manuals. Ninety-four percent of the female youth participants indicated that the explicit declaration of the pastors' wives' role in the church's documents would depict the church's culture of value for pastors' wives. They believed that the absence of official records on pastors' wives' roles depicts neglect and the absence of recognition of pastors' wives officially by the church.

The participants expressed their satisfaction with the level of recognition accorded to pastors' wives as part of the full-time pastoral ministry of their husbands. The participants expressed diversified views on the recognition of pastors' wives and are illustrated in figure 12.

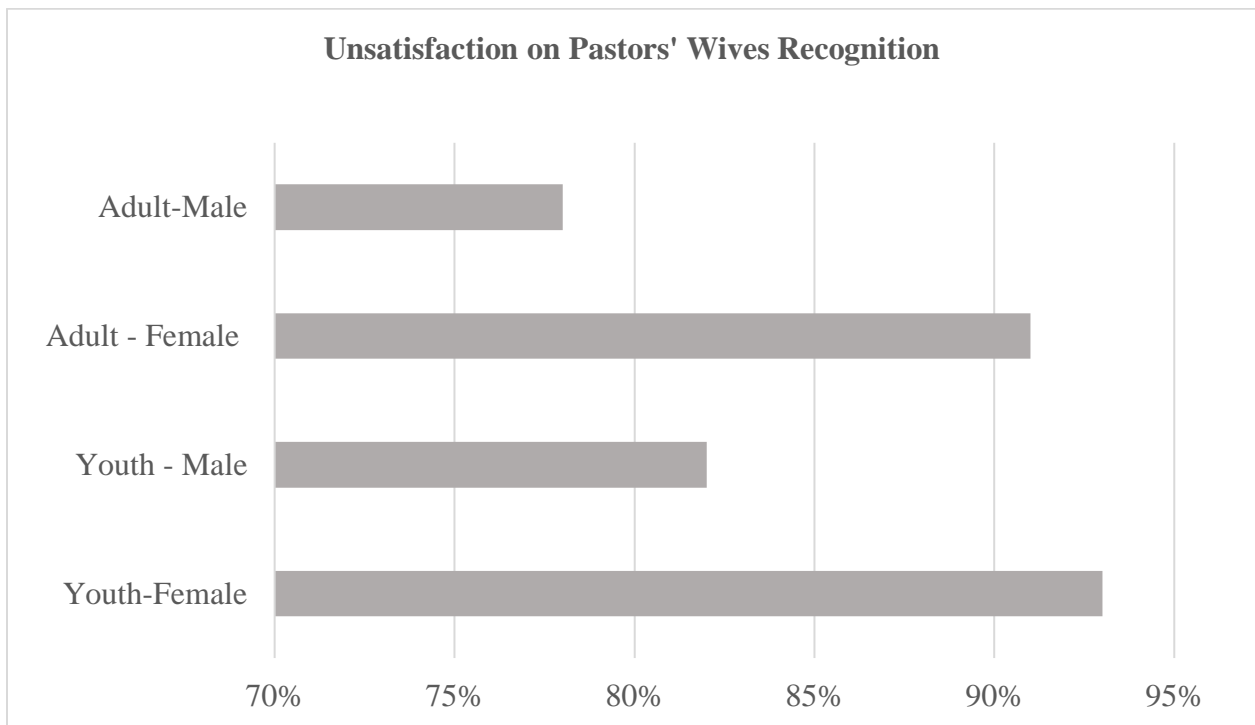


Figure 12: Pastors' Wives Recognition

The level of satisfaction among the males is higher than that of the females. Nine-three percent of the female youth participants and eighty-two percent of male youth were dissatisfied with the level of recognition accorded to pastors' wives in the church's operation and administration.

Seventy-nine percent of the male participants said recognizing their wives in the workplace plays a principal role in their satisfaction, job performance, and commitment to the job.

### Family and Marriage Life

The questions on attracting young American-born members of the church into full-time pastoral ministry and questions on the nature of pastoral ministry in COP indicated that quality family and marriage life are non-negotiable significance to the youth participants. The participants' responses reflected both the positive and negative impact of pastoral ministry on pastors' family and marriage lives. However, the data's holistic analysis narrowed down on the impact that full-time pastoral ministry has on pastors' children, marriage, and family life and how the “high demand on pastors time, lack of privacy, and frequency relocation”<sup>138</sup> contribute to the research problem.

#### ***Pastors' Children***

Ninety percent of the participants believed that the pastoral ministry rob pastors of the time and resources to participate and involve themselves wholly in their children's social and educational lives. Six of the participants happened to come from pastors' homes. They all shared their experience that their fathers were not fully involved in their lives as they grew up due to their fathers' busyness and demanding nature of their work as pastors. They said it was always their mothers that attended their social activities and meetings. Eighty-two percent of the participants responded that pastors are indirectly becoming absentee fathers in children's social lives. Forty-seven of the participants said they hardly see pastors of COP with their children in

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<sup>138</sup> Andrew Niles, and Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell, “Are Rural Clergy Wives Off? An Examination of Occupational Conditions and Pastoral Experiences in a Sample of United Methodist Clergy,” *Sociology & Religion* 73, no. 1 (2012):23.

public places like movie places, sports events, and others besides church settings.

### ***Pastors' Marriage and Family***

Sixty percent of the participants believe that it is difficult for pastors to have quality time for their wives and marriage; it is negatively affecting them. Ninety-one percent of the female participants indicated that they would not want to marry pastors because they do not have time and are busy. Sixty-nine percent of the participants believed the negative impact of full-time pastoral ministry on pastors' kids and wives ultimately affects the quality of pastors' family lives. The extent of the ministry's impact on the pastors' family and marriage is cataloged in figure 13.

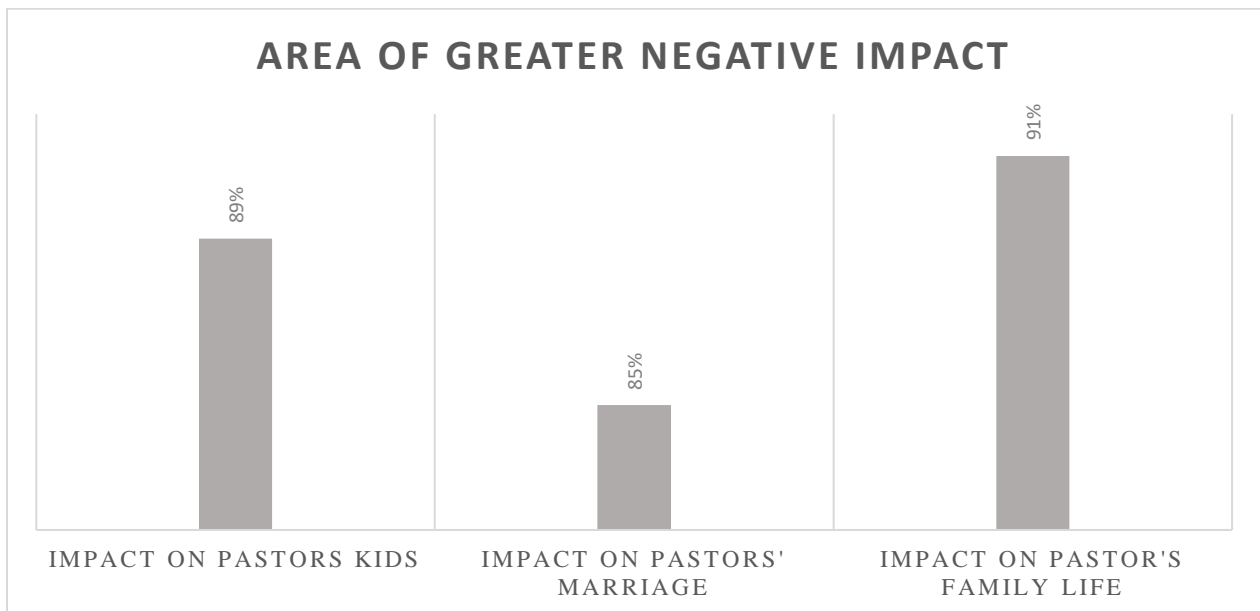


Figure 13: Pastoral Ministry Effect on Pastors' Family and Marriage

Seventy-Seven percent of the youth participants believed that pastors' families are confronted with some level of unrealistic expectations that negatively affect them. The church needs to support Pastors' families to have a healthy living. An overwhelming majority of the youth participants responded that quality marriage and family lives are paramount to their lives and determine their career choice. The church ought to pay attention to pastors and families'

psychological well-being, prepare new pastors, and implement a holistic pastoral support system”<sup>139</sup> for a healthy pastoral ministry through healthy pastors' families and marriages.

### Pastors' Welfare

The researcher designed the interview questions for both the parents and youth participants to seek a comprehensive understanding of the research problem and formulate a collaborative and holistic strategy that can motivate young adults born in American in response to God's call into pastoral ministry. The responses to the question on factors that can prevent the youth participants from accepting God's call into pastoral ministry in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc, identified the theme of pastors' Welfare or financial compensation.

### *Pastors' Salary*

The overwhelming majority believed and accepted that pastoral ministry is a call of God and entails a diversity of sacrifices. They accept the view that “pastors working in churches earn less than pastors working in other settings with the same educational and experience backgrounds.”<sup>140</sup>The participants' responses were not on the inadequate pastorate salary package but how the poor financial compensation package of COP pastorate could work for young Americans born and his family if they accept God's call into pastoral ministry.

### *Student Loan Repayment*

The participants' concerns were about the ability of young pastors in COP ministry to repay their student loans. Ninety-one percent of the youth participants reported having student loans. Thomas Adam, in his book, said, “the increase in college tuition and fees forced students to take

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<sup>139</sup> Chan and Wong, “Stress and Coping Strategies,” 163.

<sup>140</sup> Cyrus Schleifer and Mark Chaves, “The Price of the Calling: Exploring Clergy Compensation Using Current Population Survey Data,” *Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion* 55, no. 1 (2016) 148-149.

more student loans.”<sup>141</sup> According to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “one-fifth of young adults with student loans were behind on their payments and repayment of their debt remains a challenge.”<sup>142</sup> The ability to repay student loans through gainful employment is a priority among the participants, and figure 14 demonstrated its extent. The male participants

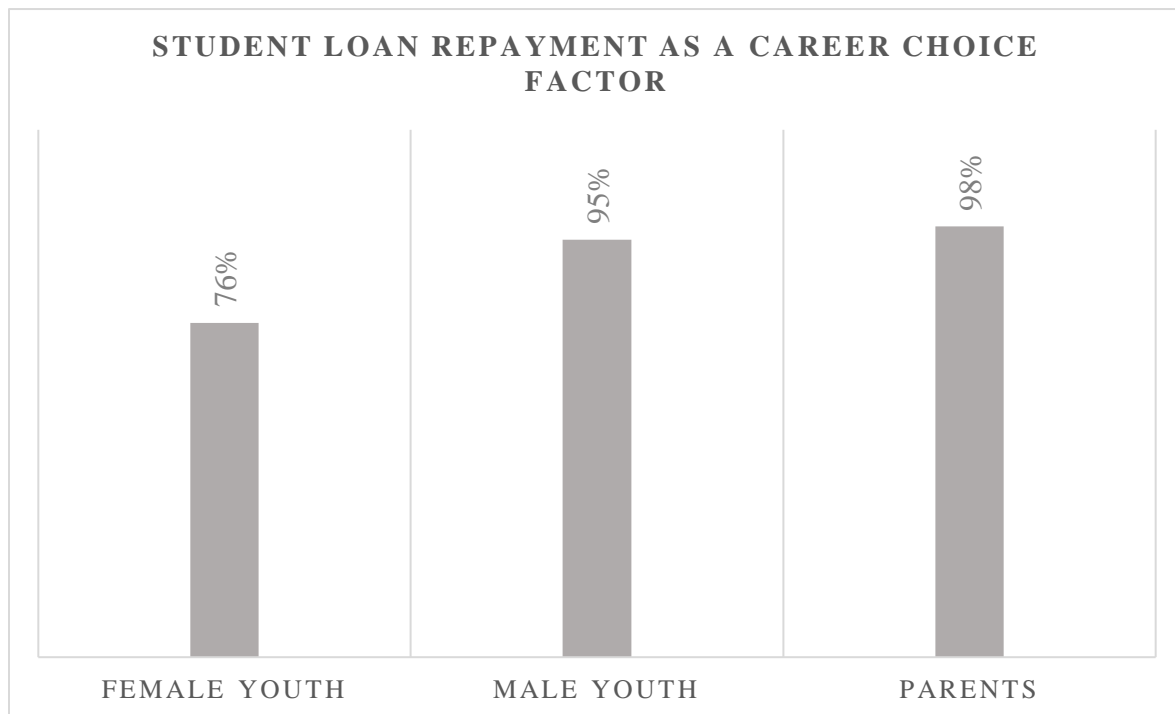


Figure 14: Student Loan Repayment as a Career Choice Factor

have a strong opinion on financial compensation as compared with the female participants. Almost all the parents expressed concern about their children's ability to pay their student loans once they completed college.

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<sup>141</sup> Thomas Adam, *The Economics of Higher Education in the United States* (College Station, TX: A&M University Press, 2019), 22.

<sup>142</sup> Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S Households in 2017- May 2018.” Federal Reserve. June 19, 2018. Accessed April 07, 2021. [The Fed - Student Loans \(federalreserve.gov\)](https://www.federalreserve.gov/econocwpr/pubs/2018/20180619/20180619pap.pdf).

### *Pastors' Financial Capability*

The research participants' responses about pastors' salary factor projected that pastors indirectly and directly depicted financial struggles through their comments and actions. Eighty-three of the youth participants indicated that pastors unconsciously comment about financial difficulties. They believed that it serves as a discouragement to the young generation concerning pastoral ministry. The same group of participants said the church tradition of pastors depending on church members' generosity as supplementary financial support tends to compromise the pastoral ministry's image and its effectiveness in executing their duties. Six parent participants indicated that this church tradition affects pastors' social and personal dignity and their families.

Pastors' ability to afford to take care of their children's college education with the current compensation system was identified as a challenge by the participants. Fifty-one participants believed that pastors would find it extremely difficult to fund their children's college education with salaries. In addition, the majority of the participants responded that pastors' financial well-being in COP worsens with their wives' not working. The dynamics of the participants' views on finance and response to God's calling into pastoral ministry are captured in Figure 15.

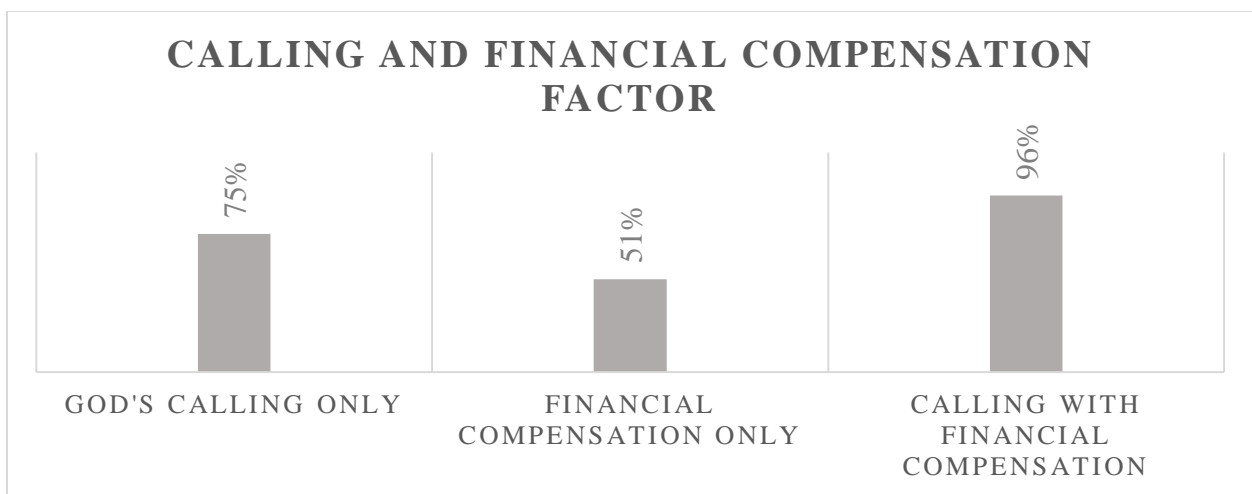


Figure 15: God's Calling and Financial Factor



Seventy -Three percent of the youth participants believed that the church must institute a bi-vocational policy and pastors' wives to work to help improve the financial well-being of pastors and their families. Ninety percent of the youth participants responded that the pastors' financial compensation system of COP favors only the born Ghanaian young person, who mostly come to the United States with their college education without student loans to pay. Therefore, the youth participants believed that the church ought to reexamine the current financial compensation for pastors to lessen the financial burden on young American adults who accept God's call into pastoral ministry in the context of COP.

The data analysis of the responses of the participants depicts the multifaceted nature of the research problem. The data analysis has addressed the concept of perception birthing from the cultural and operational dynamics of pastoral ministry in the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. These perceptions affect the corporate image of the church and its pastoral ministry. The data analysis reviewed that young American-born church members have respect and a biblical view of the pastoral ministry. They have strong support and interest in pastoral ministry as they view it as God's calling and Christian duty. However, the interest in ministry tends to shift from the COP ministry setting. They perceived the COP pastoral ministry as highly Ghanaian cultured, institutionalized, not family supportive, and financially challenged. They believed that improvements in the structural, operational, and administrative aspects of pastoral ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc would make it a biblically, morally, spiritually, and missiological, an excellent setting for the young generation to fulfill their God's calling.

The researcher had a collaborative meeting with the executive leadership and discussed the findings of the research. After an extensive discussion, they were comprehensively informed about the problem's diverse perspectives hindering, especially the young American-born in the

church. It was agreed that the uniqueness of the youth born in America has not been considered and studied in addressing young people and pastoral ministry. Also, the current organizational structure and systems favor Ghanaian-born young people in the church to respond to God's call for pastoral ministry. Therefore, the long and lasting strategy must focus on the young American-borns for pastoral ministry. Therefore, a corporate education plan was formulated to educate the church public on some of the issues discovered through this research project. Due to the complex nature of the organization and its policy implementation protocol, the executive leadership consented to implement it through the church's regular seminars, retreats, and Sunday sermons to educate the church public and the youth on the pastoral ministry and the prevailing challenges to help rebranding a non-negotiable "increasing significance"<sup>143</sup> in addressing the research problem. They also agreed to start progressive policies and structural reformations like bivocational ministry and pastors' wives employment to help motivate young American-born church members to respond to God's call for pastoral ministry in COP.

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<sup>143</sup> Subhash Iha, George D. Deitz, Ervin Babakus, and Ugur Yavas, "The Role of Corporate Image for Quality in the Formation of Attitudinal Service Loyalty," *Journal of Service Research* 16, no. 2 (2013): 155.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

The research project precisely articulates the purpose of the study with its brief overview. The overview of the research project's purpose discusses the urgency of the leadership succession plan of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc focusing on the young generation. It articulates the church's leadership succession strategy with collaborative research findings of the factors discouraging the young American adults from responding obediently to God's call into pastoral ministry in the context of COP ministry. This chapter reflects on the research's collaborative findings through the lenses of the literature review, the theological and theoretical frameworks of this research project. The discussions factored in holistic recommendations based on the researcher's findings to all the church's key stakeholders, application in other settings, and areas discovered that merit further studies.

### **Research Purpose Review and Overview**

The importance of a leadership succession plan is enshrined in almost all organizations' strategic plans, including the church. The success of its implementation and transition contributes “significantly to the organizational performance and sustainability.”<sup>144</sup> The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc is facing the urgent need to attract young American adults into its leadership succession strategic plan. The church has benefited from young people through the immigration inflow of young people already members of the mother church in Ghana. They already understand the church's operation and culture, exhibiting substantial Christian and cultural

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<sup>144</sup> Hui Li, “Leadership Succession and the Performances of Non-Profit Organizations: A Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis,” *Non-Profit Management and Leadership* 29, no. 3 (Spring 2019): 341.

maturity without student loans, positioning them to qualify into the church's pastoral ministry.

However, the disadvantage of this leadership succession plan of the church, depending on the inflow of the young Ghanaian immigrants, would not position and prepare it holistically to disciple the high membership of American-born youth and children in the church. It calls for a new breed of young pastors who understand and share generational and cultural views of the church's youth and children for better discipleship and shepherding. This research project sought to develop a holistic and collaborative strategy to motivate young adults born and raised in America in the State of New York to respond obediently to the call into ministry by the Lord as most of the current pastoral leadership retire in the next ten years.

The urgency and refocus on the young adults born in America in addressing the replacement of the retiring pastors within the next ten years does not reject the influx of young Ghanaians through immigration. On the contrary, they will continue to play an essential role in addressing the problem. The research project focused on the long-term and practical approaches to address the problem. First, the current immigration policies of nations, including the United States of America, tend to discourage immigrants' inflow. It is becoming complex daily for people to come to the United States of America. As a result, there is a high possibility that the coming of young Ghanaians to the United States who tend to respond to God's call into pastoral ministry will reduce in the long term. Secondly, they would not match the need for pastors as the church continue to expand and grow numerically in members and churches. Furthermore, the influx of young Ghanaians who become pastors would not be able to shepherd and disciple the new American generation effectively in the church due to cultural and generational differences, views, and context needed for efficient pastoral ministry.

The research project utilized the interview method to acquire data from incredibly diversified participants. The researcher applied the concept of collaboration throughout the processes, procedures, and states of the research with all the church's key stakeholders, most notably the church's executive leadership. With the collaboration of the stakeholders, the research implementation plan discovered the following factors discouraging the young American adults from responding obediently to God's call into pastoral ministry in the context of COP ministry. There is an encouraging level of interest and understanding of pastoral ministry among the youth participants, but most of them said not within COP pastoral ministry. First, they believed that the Ghanaian culture highly dominates the pastoral ministry of COP, making it extremely difficult for non-Ghanaians to thrive in that kind of environment. Nevertheless, they understand that "recognizing and aligning with people's culture is ethically and practically the best"<sup>145</sup> to function effectively as the Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc, pastor as it will "continue to persist and remain relevant"<sup>146</sup> to how the church identifies and sees itself.

Moreover, the exclusivity nature of the pastoral ministry of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc., depicts the church's uniqueness, but some of them serve as hindrances to young American adults' with God's call for the pastoral ministry. First, the pastoral ministry's full-time nature, where pastors are not allowed to work with their acquired skills, professions, and career outside the pastoral ministry, makes it not an attractive career to the youth. Pastors' inability to work other jobs aside from being pastors disadvantages them from making some income to support pastors' already low salaries. It makes it financially challenging for most to pay for their

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<sup>145</sup> Timothy B. Smith, Malanie D. Rodriguez, and Guillermo Bernal, "Culture," *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session* 67, no. 2 (2011): 166.

<sup>146</sup> Brandon H. O' Connor, "Culture, After All," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* (Feb. 2021): 4.

student loans and support their families financially. Secondly, the only male nature of the pastoral ministry within the context of COP deprived the church of benefiting from the high population of young females' members of the church who may have the call of God upon their lives. Lastly, the church operates a general pastoral ministry where pastors function in all ministry capacities, ranging from administration, children, counseling to preaching. It increases the workload of pastors and could affect the effectiveness in the execution of their roles. The general ministry nature discourages some youth interested in specific ministries like children, music, hospice, counseling, and church planting.

Furthermore, the church's cultural and operational strategy on pastors' wives plays a non-negotiable influence on the participants' decision to consider pastoral ministry a lifetime profession. First, the church's operational and structural policies not supporting the freedom of pastors' wives working with their acquired professions and areas of expertise serve as hindrances to both the young male and females. Also, Young people understand “self-sacrifice as Christians and specifically in pastoral ministry,”<sup>147</sup> the prevailing reality of student loan payments, family support, and the sense of dignity make it highly challenging to accept God’s call for pastoral ministry in the context of COP as they can work and still function as pastors in other ministries.

### **Comparative Analysis with Literature Review**

The literature review conducted during the research project revealed the comprehensiveness of pastors' shortage within Christendom. The implementation plan of this research discovered information that shares similar traits with that from the literature review.

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<sup>147</sup> Ahmed Mohammed Sayed Mostafa, and Paul Bottomley, “Self-Sacrificial Leadership and Employee Behaviors: An Examination of the Role of Organizational Social Capital,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 161, no. 3 (Jan 2020): 641.

First, the research results shared the nature of pastoral ministry discovered through the literature review. The literature review identified the divine nature of pastoral ministry, reflecting on God's role in the church's leadership succession plan. God is identified as the initiator, caller, and sustainer of church leadership. The research results attested to the divine nature, God's calling, and spirituality of the pastoral ministry. It was discovered that pastoral ministry's spirituality and divine nature could contribute to the shortage as pastors' recruitment rests solemnly on God's calling. It is not a career that someone can just be qualified by education or just working experience. The person must first have the call of God. Secondly, pastoral ministry's high biblical and spiritual nature disqualifies many people as they may not possess the needed biblical character development and spiritual capability to handle the pastoral ministry's spiritual nature.

God's divine mandate for the church in identifying, calling, training, and commissioning leaders is vividly reflected in the research results as depicted in the literature review. The essential role of the church partnership with God in preparing the next generation of church leaders and its ability to pursue God's mandate of disciplining all people groups for Christ cannot be overemphasized. The church is depicted as the training grounds for Christian leaders fully equipped for the work of ministry. Leaders' intentionality and commitment to fulfill God's given mandate are reflected in the literature review and the research results. The research results discovered another dimension of church leaders' role in preparing the next generation of leaders. It was discovered that the identification, calling, preparing, and commissioning must apply the concept of contextualization to train leaders that fit the generational and cultural dynamics of the people they will lead. Therefore, church leaders must constantly seek the help of God as only

“God knows precisely what kind of leader each generation and culture will need.”<sup>148</sup> It will help the church knowing “the kind of leaders to mentor to shepherd the upcoming generations.”<sup>149</sup>

Consequently, the theme of the complex nature of the shortage of young pastors in Christian denominations is reflected in both the literature review and the research results. The literature review addressed the general nature of the problem within almost all mainstream denominations and the urgency in addressing the problem. It also articulated that those churches are working holistically in addressing the problem. The research results painted the general nature traits and the existence of some strategies in addressing the problem. However, it was discovered that churches' strategic plans sometimes were designed without the young people's participation. It, therefore, fails to attract young people for their commitment and participation in their successful implementation. The research result also discovered that the adoption of multi-optional ministry with bi-vocational, pastors' wives' recognition, and freedom to work outside the church would help address the shortage of young pastors.

### **Comparative Analysis with Theological and Theoretical Framework**

The comparative reflection of the research findings through the lenses of the research's theological and theoretical framework presents both similarities and differences. The first vivid trait of the theological and theoretical frameworks found in the research results is God, the caller and commissioner of leaders for his church. God's calling as the entrance into pastoral ministry is comprehensive in the research's theological and theoretical frameworks. Therefore, it demands

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<sup>148</sup> Jayne Jennings Dunlap, “Empowering Through Meaningful Mentorship,” *Journal of Christian Nursing* 32, no. 2 (April 2021): 128.

<sup>149</sup> Dean Fink, “The Succession Challenge: Building and Sustaining Leadership Capacity Through Succession Management,” (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication Inc, 2010), 21.



obedience from both the church's current leadership in fulfilling their mandate and the young people responding obediently to God's call through the church's leaders.

An overwhelming majority of the participants acknowledged and upheld that pastoral ministry is the call of God, not a career profession. They believed that the church and its leaders are the agencies God utilizes to call his church leaders. The research findings revealed that the church must be focused more on people's biblical and spiritual qualifications than other factors like a personal relationship, personality traits, and people's availability and participation in the church's activities. Church leaders must engage in fasting and prayers holistically and consistently as they fulfill their mandate in the process of God's calling, just as Christ called his disciples after his forty days and nights of fasting and prayer.

The church and God's partnership in the calling, training, and commissioning of church leaders demands intentional and holistic mentorship. Mentorship is generational, and it was a "culture of learning in both the Old Testament and New Testament."<sup>150</sup> The Scripture first depicts the practice and affirmation of the concept of mentorship through God's mandate for Abraham and Elijah and, ultimately, the practice of mentorship by Jesus. The research findings attested to the importance of the church's mentorship strategy in addressing young pastors' shortage to replace the retiring pastorate. The research findings affirmed that mentorship thrives in the environment of a trusted relationship. It is, therefore, essential that church leadership intentionally initiate, build, and maintain a cordial relationship with the young generation to cultivate the needed trusted relationship for effective mentorship to produce the biblical and

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<sup>150</sup> Gabe Veas and Karima Veas, "Parents as Mentors Addressing Contemporary Childrearing through a Servant Leadership Philosophy and the Application of Mentorship Mottos," *Christian Education Journal: Research on Educational Ministry* 15, no. 3 (2018): 395.

spiritual young pastors to shepherd God’s church. The church must also implement apprenticeship by giving the young people the opportunity to work hand in hand with them before they retire, just as Moses did with Joshua as well as Jesus and his disciples.

According to the research findings and as depicted in the project's theoretical framework, the concept of mentorship must not be limited to the church. As stated by the participants, parental mentorship played a non-negotiable role in the training of young people. The church must partner with parents to work “effectively within the home and community as mentors through their lifestyle reflecting godly principles.”<sup>151</sup> First, God has already instilled in parents the mandate of training and developing their children according to God's standard. Also, children spend more time with their parents than at the church. Therefore, the church must engage in holistic parental education on their role in raising young people and preparing them spiritually and mentally to see pastoral ministry through God's mission and His word.

The church's view and its leaders on young people ought to mirror the biblical reflection of people who partner with God in leadership successions. The biblical characters that participated in God’s calling, mentoring, and commissioning of leaders first saw their mentees as people who carried God's calling and therefore related with them as co-equals and shared partners in the Kingdom of God. The research findings suggested that the view of young people as co-partners and co-workers needed improvement. It was discovered that most adult members and the church's leadership sometimes see young people as children and incapable of becoming pastors. This prevailing culture in the church influence how young people see themselves in the light of God’s calling and the pastoral ministry.

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<sup>151</sup> Veas and Veas, “Parents as Mentors,” 394.

Furthermore, the Church leadership is encouraged to improve their relationship with the young people to create an atmosphere for intentional mentorship, preparing them to replace the retiring pastorate. The inclusion of young people in designing and implementing churches' leadership succession plans will activate the sense of participation and ownership within the young generation. The sense of ownership by the young people will enhance their willingness to sacrifice in becoming pastors as participants in God's mandate of reaching and reconciling all people unto himself through the church.

### **Lessons Learned by Researcher**

The researcher acquired many impactful lessons by participating in the process and procedures and implementing the research project. First, the researcher learned that the shortage of young pastors is a multi-faceted issue that calls for intentional, comprehensive, and collaborative strategies and a strong partnership with God. It is the product of diverse factors ranging from the young people's personal settings to the church's corporate setting. Also, the researcher learned that young people personally are not engaged in spiritual formation to cultivate the needed biblical character foundation and spiritual capability to function as pastors. Most young people are directly and indirectly conditioned to focus on their secular education and careers. They tend to invest in their education and career at the expense of their spiritual lives.

Furthermore, the researcher learned that most young people pursuing a college education and career landed in situations that make pastoral ministry not an option to consider. First, by the time they finished their college education, most young people have acquired a considerable sum of student loans. Secondly, most young people spend their prime time pursuing their college education and professions. These factors tend to discourage young people from accepting God's call into pastoral ministry in the context of COP for the following reasons. First, the church's

ministry does not allow the bi-vocational pastoral ministry that helps pastors earn supplementary income aside from the low pastors' salaries to help pay their student loans. Secondly, they see it as a waste of time and investment to abandon the college education to become pastors. Lastly, the researcher discovered that the young people understand the principle of sacrifice, yet the church must engage in strategies that would enhance pastors' financial strength to help young pastors meet their financial obligations like repayment of student loans.

### **Recommendations**

The comprehensive and intentional implementation of the project with its holistic data analysis through stakeholders' collaborations, the theological and theoretical framework, and literature review enhanced the researcher to provide recommendations to stakeholders, future research, and application in other settings.

#### **Executive Leadership**

The first stakeholder to address is the executive leadership of the church. The researcher recommends that they reexamine the exclusivity nature of the pastoral ministry of the church to make it more open and inclusive to reflect a contemporary Christian ministry without compromising the fundamental values and principles of the church. The first to consider is the exclusive full-time nature of the pastoral ministry. The consideration of bi-vocational and specific ministry options would help motivate young American-borns in their responses to God's call into pastoral ministry. Secondly, the executive leadership should revisit the ministry policies and structures that discourage pastors' wives from engaging in gainful employment and deny them their rightful recognition. The needed reformation of the nature, structure, and operational elements of the pastoral ministry will rebrand the pastoral ministry to reflect its complete biblical

portrait to increase its “attractiveness and credibility for decision making.”<sup>152</sup> Lastly, the research findings discovered a need for the executive leadership to intensify its corporate education strategy on the church's pastoral ministry on the rationale behind its exclusivity, operational strategies, the comprehensive nature of pastors' welfare, and pastors' periodic transfers.

#### Pastors

The mandate of leadership succession of the church is corporate and collaborative. Pastors are recommended to function their lifestyle in action and speech, in personal and family settings, to serve as motivation and example for the young generation. They are also recommended to be futurists by discovering the “future ministry requirements, trends changes, and potential leaders' competency.”<sup>153</sup> It will enhance intentional contextualized mentorship of the young generation to prepare them first in their Christian life and consequently position and equip them on leadership and pastoral ministry. Also, they are recommended to start mentorship programs and add pastoral ministry to their career forums and symposiums.

#### Young People

The researcher recommends that young people develop their spiritual life as equally important as their secular education and career goals. It is, therefore, essential that young people view spiritual formation as a priority and balanced with education and career aspirations. Secondly, they ought to reconsider their view and interest in pastoral ministry within the context of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc, critically aligned with God's covenant with the church.

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<sup>152</sup> Wager, “Credibility,” 875.

<sup>153</sup> Rottwell, *Effective Succession Planning*, 213.

Their pastoral ministry participation fulfills God’s covenant with the church, using it to reach all kinds of people for himself. Yes, it involves suffering and sacrifice; their willingness and participation in suffering for God’s mission through the church is a “hallmark to the Christian faith”<sup>154</sup> and remains “momentous for followers of Christ as it is providential.”<sup>155</sup>

Lastly, young people whom God’s call is upon their lives must trust God to provide their financial needs to honor their obligations such as student loans.

### Parents

The researcher recommends that parents ought to continue to fulfill their God-given mandate of raising children. Therefore, they have to be watchful in their comments about the church, pastors, and pastoral ministry in hearing their children and, most importantly, exhibiting a godly lifestyle. They are also encouraged to trust God for their children's blessings and welfare if God calls them into pastoral ministry in COP. Finally, they are inspired to teach the biblical, missiological, spiritual, and ecclesiastical importance of pastoral ministry to their children. It will help develop the proper biblical perspective and mentality of pastoral ministry in the young generation, thereby addressing young pastors' shortage.

### Application in Other Settings

The research findings that could be applied in other settings are as follows: first, the principle of inclusion in the designing and implementing strategies. First, it was discovered that most young people feel that they are not included in the designing, decision making, and

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<sup>154</sup> Peter Jonescu, “Freely Suffering: Reimagining Christian Suffering with Julian of Norwich,” *The Heythrop Journal* (2021): 1-2.

<sup>155</sup> Anastasia Mitrofanova, Svetlana Riazanova, and Richard Benda, “Soteriology of Suffering: Evangelical Christians in Russia and the Trauma of Political Repression,” *Religion* 11, no.11 (2020): 6-7.

implementation of church policies and strategies. Hence, therefore, their sense of ownership is poor to attract their commitment and participation. It is, therefore, recommended that all stakeholders become participants in the decision-making and its implementation.

The second recommendation for other settings is the concept of periodic assessment of corporate structure, policies, and strategy to reflect the organization's generational and cultural era without compromising its fundamental core values and missions. For example, the Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. has been fulfilling its God's mandate, yet the current generational and cultural trends call for reevaluation and reformation to reposition its sustainability and fulfill God's mission through its missions.

Furthermore, the researcher recommends that it is essential for organizations to engage in holistic research to understand better their public image. It will provide the organization comprehensive information about its image and the public perception of them. It creates the urgency for improvement needed to position the organization in comparative advantage for performance and growth.

#### Further Studies

The research findings in light of the collaboration with stakeholders and the theological and theoretical frameworks make the following inconclusive and merit further research. The first area for further studies is the presbytery's role in the calling and commissioning of pastors. The researcher discovered the essential role presbyters play in the identification, selection, confirmation, training, and commission of pastors in the pastoral ministry of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. Could influential presbyters influence the process negatively? How can the presbytery system approach miss potential young pastors? Do relationships in the presbytery influence the process of the pastoral calling of the church? These are essential questions and

others that merit further examination to understand better the role and impact of the presbytery in calling pastors in the context of COP.

Furthermore, the researcher recommends further studies on the exodus and retention of young people in addressing the shortage of young American-born pastors in the pastoral ministry of COP. The research did not intensively research the impact of young people's exodus and retention in the pursuit of young pastors replacing the retiring pastors in the next ten years. Comprehensive studies on the exodus and retention of the youth could foster the understanding of the issue and enhance the formulation of collaborative strategies in addressing it.

### Summary

The research project focused on comprehensive strategies to motivate young Americans born in their response to God's call for pastoral ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. It was executed within the premise of young adults born in America in COP in the State of New York not responding obediently to God's call into full-time pastoral ministry. The thesis project comprehensively described the ministry context of COP from its historical birth in Ghana to its formation in the United States of America. The project engaged in a literature review to understand the nature and scope of young pastors' shortages. It discussed the theological and theoretical framework for the motivation, mandate, and concept of leadership succession to affirm the biblical truth of training young pastors to replace the retiring pastors in the next ten years. The researcher adopted the diversity concept in recruiting participants and the interview methodology to gather diversified data. The holistic analysis of the data with grounded theory identified the thematic concepts of perception, pastoral ministry's unique nature in COP context, pastors' wives, pastors' welfare, and pastors' family and marriage. The research findings call for a



corporate reformation of structural and operational policies to motivate young American adults to respond to God's call into pastoral ministry obediently.

## Appendix A

January 13, 2021

Frank Asirifi

Gary Waller

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY20-21-377 Young People and Full-Time Pastoral Ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.

Dear Frank Asirifi, Gary Waller:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46: 101(b): Category 2. (iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of

continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Sincerely,

**G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP**

*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*

**Research Ethics Office**

## Consent Form

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**Title of the Project:** Young People and Full-Time Pastoral Ministry in The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc.

**Principal Investigator:** Frank Asirifi, DMIN Candidate, Liberty University

### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be a youth or a parent of a youth. Youth participants must be youth between 18 and 35 years old and born in the United States of America. He / She must be a member of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. Parent participants must be 18 years of age or older, born in the United States of America, and a parent of youth. A parent can participate as long as they are parents and do not need to have a youth participating in this study. A parent must be a member of The Church of Pentecost U.S.A., Inc. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take the time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research project.

### What is the study about, and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to develop a holistic strategy to motivate young adults born in America in the State of New York to get into the pastoral ministry as most of the current pastoral leadership retire in the next ten years. The discovery of the factors contributing to young people's lack of interest in full-time pastoral ministry will be discussed with the executive leadership to formulate a collaborative intervention plan.

### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to participate in an interview. It will be for about fifteen minutes, and it will be audio recorded.

### How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participating in this study. Benefits to society include making pastoral ministers available to shepherd the church members to be Christ-like members of society. The ministers will provide counseling, conflict resolution, and support systems to church members and the community.

### What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

### **How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms/codes. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

### **Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision about whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or the church. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

### **What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you decide to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

### **Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Frank Asirifi. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Gary Waller, at [REDACTED]

### **Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515, or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

### **Your Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

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Printed Subject Name

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Signature & Date

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