

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

A Project on
Why Many High School and College Students
Fail to Attend Church Services

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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Abstract

The purpose of this research project is to establish why many of the high school and college students within the Light of Life Restoration Church in Kenya choose not to attend church services. Even after childhood training and church attendance since they were young, many students drop out of church. They get themselves involved in other activities and friends who eventually derail them to other attractions. This alarming trend has brought about the derailment from the Christian moral principles and values which have been the guiding principle of the nation. The derailment has caused lawlessness, unruliness, and all kinds of evils within the society. If pastoral counseling could be implemented in schools and colleges, the increased rise in church dropouts that has been causing other ills within the community would be reduced.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

High school and college students, according to the World Bank 2007 report, make the bulk of the community within a society that shapes the foundational human capital to productive workers, family heads, and community leaders.¹ The growth of any nation depends upon the foundation laid down, especially on the preparing of children. It is the responsibility of the stakeholders, (parents/guardians) to provide the students/youth with the proper facilities, and information to equip them for their future. If children are not guided on what to do and where to go, there is a possibility of them getting lost before they reach their potential. According to the World Bank 2007 report, bad choices lead to consequences that are very costly, leaving permanent scars to the community and the society.² Some choices place the individual into jail, some die in the process, others get lost amid the confusion that may arise. Understanding relationships and connections between cause and effect helps in predicting the consequences of an action.³ Those who make bad choices end up being frustrated in life especially when they engage themselves with the wrong crowd.

The Bible teaches that, bad company corrupts good morals (1 Corinthians 15:33). The Bible (Psalm 1:1-3) is clear of those who walk in the counsel of the ungodly; *I Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the*

¹ World Bank. World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation. Herndon: World Bank Publications, 2006, 5.

(<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=459822&query=>)

² World Bank, 5

³ <https://www.dailyrepublic.com/all-dr-news/opinion/local-opinion-columnists/this-youth-generation-one-bad-decision-could-cost-you-everything/>

seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law, he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. It is very important to understand that, building a desired character calls on one to connect with the right people, who will help in adding value in their lives.

It is worth noting that many parents/guardians have left their children/students to do what they want, when they want. Thus, allowing the students to chart their own ways. There is need for nurturing, training, and guiding the student to become a productive and respected individual within the community. All the same, the foundation that was laid down at the beginning determines one's values system. Many times, life is difficult, and things do not work out the way they planned. It is worth noting that natural consequences can be a behavioral management that would teach a student on how to behave. There is, therefore, need to guide and instruct the up-and-coming generation on what matters in life to make one a responsible and productive individual.

The attendance failure has contributed to the deterioration of the moral and ethical standards within the community. A notable situation was when the Corona epidemic (an infectious disease) hit the whole world and gatherings of all kinds were abolished, to reduce the rate of transmission.⁴ The attendance that was to be a training ground, an empowerment forum, a refueling moment, and a time for team building was halted. Many people did engage themselves with unwarranted activities after restrictions were put in place. The lack of attendance/gathering or association brought about the loss of income, social distancing, separation from friends and other support resources. The stoppage has caused many evils among world communities where

⁴ https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

the moral and ethical standards have been compromised. Consequently, this issue has caused many to turn to drug and substance abuse, immorality, hence increased teenage pregnancies and disintegration of families.⁵

Despite the technology involved, many nations have experienced leaning losses and inequality because of the abrupt transition and the lack of not attending in person learning. Attendance helps in molding and instructing on what and how to approach or attend to issues in life. The need for attending a class is for receiving information and the instructions, or the molding needed to help in becoming the anticipated product.⁶ Lack of attendance caused by the outbreak of the “Corona Virus” (COVID-19) as noted above, has contributed to a catastrophic loss of revenue, life, learning losses, and an increase in inequality. Failure of attendance results in having gaps between the learning and the infiltrations of other theories while causing some deficiency in the learning/growth process.

The Bible teaches that, children should be taught as they grow up (Proverbs 22:6), which is a continuous process. Learning about the faithfulness of God, His care, concern, and provision for humanity lays a foundation in molding children/students (Daniel 6, Joshua 1:8-9). It is important to note that teaching is a continuous process vital in order to keep the student maturing. This is because, rectifying a problem before it shows up is better than when the problem has erupted. A plant can only be aligned when it is young. Waiting for the plant to grow to maturity and then aligning it would be very costly and would not attain the desired product. Most of the times, the plant ends up snapping or breaking down.

⁵ www.worldbank.org/en/news/ocpinion/2021/04/02/the-impct-of-covid-19-on-education-recommendations-and-opportunities-for-ukraine

⁶ <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/training-and-technical-assistance/design-training-session/main>

According to Segal, instilling a culture of stewardship helps integrity to flow from people, where public agencies would ease heavy handed corruption controls and pursue efficiency relatively unhindered.⁷ The Bible clearly states that, “when they grow up (children), they will not depart from it” (Proverb 22:6). Pastoral counseling lays the foundation even as the students grow and learn themselves and of their surroundings, building the muscle needed as they engage with the world. This project is an attempt to get to the root cause of the attendance failure and design a program that would revert that trend. This will help instill those moral and ethical values the community is yearning for.

When God created humans, He made sure that the man had all that it takes to fulfill their God ordained purpose. God created the man to fulfill God’s purposes here on earth. He is a God of purpose, and He created all things for His will so that He might accomplish His will and fulfill it (Revelation 4:11, Ephesians 3:9-11, Colossians 1:9). “I cry out to God Most High, who fulfills His purpose for me” (Psalm 57:2). These Scriptures shows that, God had a purpose for creating mankind. All the same, the potential to fulfill the purpose must be extracted from every individual, more so the children, by impacting them with a solid biblical foundation, bringing about the issue of pastoral counseling (Joshua 1:8, Psalm 27:1, Proverbs 22:6). The World Development Report of 2007 indicates that, the decisions that will affect young people’s well-being are those that shape their foundational character and behavior.⁸ It is important to note that parents/guardians should build a firm foundation for their children’s future. Laying a Godly

⁷ Segal, Lydia. “Instilling Stewardship to Address the Integrity/Efficiency Dilemma.” *Administration & Society* 44, no. 7. (October 2012): 825–52, 825. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399711427533>).

⁸ Segal, Lydia. “Instilling Stewardship to Address the Integrity/Efficiency Dilemma.” *Administration & Society* 44, no. 7. (October 2012): 825–52, 825. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399711427533>).

foundation will influence the future of the student, hence the need for this project (Matthew 28:20).

Ministry Context

The light of Life Restoration Ministries in Kenya is an interdenominational church setting around East and Central Kenya. The main emphasis of the ministry is on reaching the high school and college students, among others with the word of God. Christian Union meetings, camps, and mission trips were well-received activities in many high schools and colleges. Most of these meetings were organized by students, an issue that is dwindling as the moral and ethical standard fade away. Many of the students were ready to attend Christian meetings which was a great venue to reach out for Christ Jesus. Christian Camps were gatherings from different schools that met at a designated school for a whole week, where they were taught, equipped, and counseled, and sent out for the Kingdom Work. The Light of Life Restoration Ministries is involved in these meetings in the attempt of pulling many from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of light.

About fifteen to thirty years ago, church attendance for the high school and college students in the Light of Life Restoration Ministry in the Muranga church was considerably high. Other ministries had great attendance and people honored and respected church attendance. Going to church was considered a noble responsibility of almost every individual within the community. Those that didn't attend church were labelled as unbelievers who purposely chose not to associate with the church or community. According to Basome and Vencie, historically, the home, church and the school are the institutions that share the work of moral education where

these values are passed on in a society.⁹ Dropping out of school and church was low and the discipline of students was good. There was a steady growth where most of the students ended up in good and well-paying careers and good and established families.

The dropout rate has drastically increased, bringing about the issue of not securing decent and well-paying jobs for the said individuals. According to Russell Rumberger, some of the reasons why students drop out were due to strained family and teacher relationships caused by the student's attitudes and behaviors.¹⁰ A change in the student's life's situation, especially going to high school or college as a reason for their dropping out of church is one that needs to be addressed. Some students blame the church/pastor, religious, ethical, or political beliefs as the reason for the fallout. The moral and ethical values/standards of an individual are foundational ingredients that need to be set in place while growing up. This is the time when the mind of the child is learning what and who surrounds him/her. The Light of Life Restoration Ministries has been set to reach out to these young minds to train and equip them with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in turn encouraging them to become responsible leaders in their generation.

To date, most of the high school and college students fail to attend church, an issue that needs to be addressed urgently. According to a survey by Jeffrey Jones, the decline in church membership reflects that fewer people have any religious affiliation, and those who identify with a religion are less likely to belong to a church.¹¹ Jeffrey Jones informs that, the emergence of this

⁹ Basome Samson and Vencie Allida. "Baraton Interdisciplinary Research Journal", (2018), 8 (Special Issue), pp 1-9
(www.ueab.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Vencie-Allida.pdf)

¹⁰ Rumberger Russell (2001). Why Students Drop Out of School and What Can be Done, pp 4.
(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267552507_Why_Students_Drop_Out_of_School_and_What_Can_be_Done)

¹¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/248837/church-membership-down-sharply-past-two-decade.aspx>

secular generation will continue the decline in church membership.¹² Basome and Vencie informs that the freedom given to children in form of children rights has ended up spoiling the children who are the future parents.¹³ Some of those who looked very promising as they attended Church have turned to be on “the wrong side of the law” by being involved in unlawful activities within the community.

Answering to the “Great Commission”, the ministry is involved in reaching out to all. This includes those who have been neglected and rejected within the community, teaching, and laying a Godly foundation that establishes one to become a reliable member of the community. When schools/colleges are closed, so are the ministry organized camps and mission trips where the students are taught/counseled and exposed to the life’s challenges as they visit some of the disadvantaged within the society. This would include visiting orphanages and children-homes where they participate in helping the disadvantaged. It is important to note that parental influences affect the way students make choices. The development and transformation of morals has been the prime objective of all religious and education systems globally.¹⁴

Problem Presented

The problem is that many of the high school and college students within the Light of Life Restoration Church in Muranga – Kenya, fail to attend Church services. Something has happened within the community (which includes other communities and churches) such that, attending Church is seen as an outdated fashion by these students. According to Massey, values

¹² <https://news.gallup.com/poll/248837/church-membership-down-sharply-past-two-decade.aspx>

¹³ www.ueab.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Vencie-Allida.pdf

¹⁴ Basome Samson and Vencie Allida. “Baraton Interdisciplinary Research Journal”, (2018), 8 (Special Issue), pp 1-9

are learned from parents/guardians, teachers, and peers, but at ages 13 to 21 (the high school and college group), they are more influenced by their peers, and the media.¹⁵ This is the category of people that ought to be grounded with a firm foundation that would keep them strong through their lives. As the challenges of life confront them, this group chose to get help from the internet or their peers, instead of getting it from their parents, teachers, or spiritual leaders.

All the same, many of the stakeholders have relinquished their responsibilities by not giving instructions, guidance or corrections to their students allowing them to chart their own paths. This relinquishing of responsibilities has given the students an upper hand in doing what they want. They engage themselves with their peers who seem to have been through the same challenges and they all go through it on their own. This has given the Devil an upper hand in orchestrating their way of life which ends in destruction (John 10:10) ... *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.* Though these students get entangled with the social media which can also be a great tool in the ministry, and other distractions which cause them to view Church attendance as a waste of time, intentional measures need to be put in place for the purpose of good moral and ethical foundations.

Massey informs that social media is an influence on these ages, especially those parts which seem to resonate with the values of the peer groups.¹⁶ As they search for their place within the society, they eventually get entangled and stuck amid it all. Social media advances have contributed to a sedentary lifestyle that have changed the phenotype of children who now weigh

¹⁵ <https://www.coursehero.com/file/10029084/Values-Development-by-Morris-Massey/>

¹⁶ <https://www.coursehero.com/file/10029084/Values-Development-by-Morris-Massey/>
(*Crossing the line* (liberty.edu, 17))

more and have higher body mass index (BMI) than their peers just a generation earlier.¹⁷ These changes have contributed to the dropout from church attendance for those who do not like their look. Some of those who attend Church have a tendency of engaging with their phones and get captivated, such that following Church proceedings is distracted in a very high degree. Hence the moral integrity of the future leaders in the Church and the community is dwindling, an issue that needs to be attended to as soon as possible, hence the purpose of this project.

According to Lantieri, children should know that they have a purpose, they must have tolerance and compassion in whatever they do.¹⁸ Lantieri insists that, the vision of soulful education has the potential to produce students with a sense of clear direction and purpose who are emotionally and socially skillful.¹⁹ The truth is that regular physical activity promotes growth and development with benefits of physical, mental, and psychological health that contribute to learning.²⁰ But many students have chosen a different route where they depend on the internet, social media, and peer influence to guide their choices. Students are facing other forces that are drawing them from the foundational teachings that have been instilled in them since they were young.

According to Massey, students look for ways to get away from the earlier programming and turn to people who seem to be more like them and other influencers that include media.²¹ Preparing them to counter those “other” forces and to maintain the values and morals instilled by

¹⁷ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201497/>

¹⁸ Linda Lantieri. *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001), 11.

¹⁹ Lantieri, 165.

²⁰ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201497/>

²¹ <https://www.coursehero.com/file/10029084/values-development-by-Morris-Massey/>

their parents and the church is crucial. It is important to note that when students stop depending on their parents/guardians, and the church, other forces of influence will come in and take the lead (Psalm 1:1-3)... *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, or sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.* According to Garcia, one should recognize that almost everything is potentially dangerous; therefore, the focus should be of best intentions.²² The Bible warns that the enemy is roaring like a lion looking for anyone he can devour (1 Peter 5:8). Those who do not have a support system, (especially social, emotional, and spiritual systems) are prone to the enemy attacks from different directions. There is need for a hedge of protection that no enemy can penetrate through, as provided by God.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research paper was to identify the root cause of the fallout from attending church and then implement counseling strategies to help resolve it. The deterioration of the moral and ethical values of many students adds up to the ethical and moral decay of the future of the community and the nation at large. According to Rev. Richard Gula, the moral life of a student/individual arise out of the spiritual endeavor to become the person God desired one to be, hence the need to nurture that spiritual aspect through spiritual practices.²³ Gula informs

²² Marito Garcia, Alan Pence, and Judith Evans. *Africa's Future, Africa's Challenge: Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*. (Washington, DC: World Bank 2007), 157.

²³ <https://www.librarything.com/work/317274>

that, spirituality inspires and shapes the commitment of religious communities to sponsor institutions that care for those in need.²⁴ Research has shown that, the practice of spiritual discipline can have a significant positive medical impact and therefore should be regarded as a significant variable in the overall well-being of an individual.²⁵

The Bible records that the people perish for lack of knowledge/understanding (Hosea 4:6). Counseling on the principles and strategies that would build ethical and moral values and the upholding of the same would be helpful in establishing strong and vibrant congregations with good moral and ethical standards within the community. Allowing students to chart and direct their own way of life would be a challenge to the family and community at large since there are always community values that need to be upheld. The need to instruct and counsel is enshrined in the Bible when God instructed Moses to teach their children and their children's' children. The truth is that values cannot be directly seen but are made clear in the actions that express people's preferences in each sociocultural and temporal context.²⁶

According to Meira Levinson 2015, the thought of the potential consequences of lawlessness may influence a change in behavior to the better option.²⁷ Being incarcerated for

²⁴ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Wray-Lake L., Christens B.D., Flanagan C.A (2014). *Community Values*. In: Michalos A.C. (eds) Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research. Springer, Dordrecht.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_482

²⁷ Meira Levinson. "Moral Injury and the Ethics of Educational Injustice." *Harvard Educational Review* 85, no. 2 (Summer, 2015): 203, 228, 300.

(<http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fmoral-injury-ethics-educational-injustice%2Fdocview%2F1691427600%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>).

years and losing freedom of choice would make one choose to do the right thing. Having a dysfunctional family where everyone fights for their own without caring about the repercussions thereof is ungodly. The Bible instructs of being a “brother’s keeper” where one is deeply concerned about the welfare of his/her kin (Genesis 4:9, Luke 10:27). There is a need to identify those areas in the family and the Church that need to be addressed so students can be equipped with the knowledge and fortitude necessary for them to mature into respectable leaders with integrity within the society.

Pastoral counseling principles and parental guidance create fundamental strategies of building the moral and ethical values of an individual. Lack of Church attendance creates a vacuum in this area which eventually creates room for unbiblical information that would seem right to the student. This lack of Church attendance denies the student the knowledge and skills necessary to help him/her cope with life's challenges. Many students have turned to drug and substance abuse, immorality, unruliness, and many other evil practices. There is a need therefore for this problem to be addressed and hence the purpose of this paper. According to Meira Levinson, the society owes educators the moral repair by restructuring educational and other social systems to mitigate injustices and discipline within the society.²⁸ She informs that educators suffer moral injury, the trauma of perpetrating significant moral wrong against others despite the desire and responsibility to do otherwise.²⁹

²⁸ Meira Levinson. "Moral Injury and the Ethics of Educational Injustice." *Harvard Educational Review* 85, no. 2 (Summer, 2015): 203, 228, 300.

(<http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fmoral-injury-ethics-educational-injustice%2Fdocview%2F1691427600%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>).

²⁹ Meira Levinson. "Moral Injury and the Ethics of Educational Injustice." *Harvard Educational Review* 85, no. 2 (Summer, 2015): 203, 228, 300.

Training on moral and ethical values and how to handle issues as they come indicates that it is possible to increase emotional intelligence and knowledge on how to process those challenging issues of life.³⁰ Therefore, counseling is a vital part of the growth process that explains when and how to act and behave in certain situations. The Bible clearly indicates that, where there is no counsel, the people perish, but in the multitude of counselors, there is safety (Proverbs 11:14). There is need to have some wise and intelligent individuals who would advise students on the right course of action before they wreck their lives. Watching from a distance and allowing students to do whatever they want even as they mess up their lives will not add value to anyone's future. There is a dire need for a "brother's keeper" who would be there to guide and warn of the surrounding potholes and wild animals along the way. There is a need for a watchman who would be there for the community (Ezekiel 33). The Bible has given an obligation as a watchman, to warn those that are on the wrong route.

Definitions

Some the terms that need to be understood would include the following:

Acceptance: Favorable reception; approval; favor.

Admonition: An advice that is also a warning.

Appellation: An identifying name or title.

Autonomy: The act or power of making one's own choices or decisions; the state of being free from the control or power of another

Behavior: The way one reacts, acts, or respond to issues.

³⁰ https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/can_emotional_intelligence_be_taught

BMI: Body Mass Index – A measure of relative weight based on an individual’s weight and height.

Brother’s Keeper: Looking out for a fellow brother and sister, noting that they are God’s creation.

Catastrophe: An event causing great and often sudden damage/destruction or disaster.

Christian Union: A body of Christian students in high schools and colleges

Concur: To express agreement.

Contrition: The state of feeling remorseful and penitent: (To show contrition for his crime he offered to do community service).

Counsel: Advice given form ally to an individual or group.

Delimitation: The boundary line or an outer limit.

Deprivation: The lack or denial of something considered to be a necessity.

Devour: To use up, to destroy, or to eat up greedily.

Deficiency: A lack or shortage; a failing or a shortcoming of something.

Dwindle: To become smaller and smaller or shrink/waste away.

Ethics: A set of rules that define right and wrong conduct.

Faith Community: A group with diverse talented individuals that work together and are accountable to each other.

Fundamental: Basic instructions; A primary rule or principle on which something is based.

Great Commission: A personal call by Jesus Christ to the disciples and His followers which is a foundational mandate for evangelism.

Harmoniously: Having component elements pleasing or appropriately blended/combined or working together.

Human capital: The economic value of the abilities and qualities of labor that influences productivity.

Infiltration: The action of entering/gaining access to an organization or a place surreptitiously to acquire secret information or cause damage.

Fortitude: Courage in pain or adversity; allows someone to face danger or pain.

Implement: Put into effect.

Incarcerated: Being imprisoned or confined.

Inequality: The quality of being unequal or uneven

Literature Matrix: A document that assists in the organization of references useful for a research project.

A longitudinal study: A type of correlational research study that involves looking at variables over an extended period of time.

Mitigate: To make something less harsh or less severe.

Morals: Values that are the foundation of a person's ability to discern.

Monastery: A building or buildings occupied by monks under religious vows.

Participant: A person who takes part in something.

Piety: The quality of being religious

Pedagogy: The method and practice of teaching.

Potential: Showing or having a capacity to perform a certain responsibility

Purport: Appear to claim to be or do something falsely.

Relinquish: To withdraw or to retreat from something or someone.

Roaming: Traveling or moving from one place to another.

Scrambling Down: To go to a different place or position where you move there in a hurried or awkward way.

Sedentary: Tending to spend much time seated.

Serenity: The state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.

Surreptitiously: A way to avoid notice or attention; Secretively.

Stakeholder: Someone with an interest or concern in something between right and wrong.

Piety: Quality of being religious or reverent.

Praxis: The process of using a theory, lesson, or skill is enacted or realized.

Stewardship: The art of taking care of something that one has been entrusted with.

Tranquility: A state of being calm, peaceful, serenity or quietness.

Trauma: An emotional upset, or an injury to a living tissue caused by an external agent.

Tolerance: A fair objective and permissive attitude towards those whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality, sexuality..., differ from one's own.

Values: What is considered essential and what is lived for which combine the core psychological needs of self and society's norms.

Valuable: Something of great worth.

WHO: World Health Organization?

Limitations

It is important to note that, due to the lack of pastoral counseling, many of the high school students have opted to get help or counsel from the internet, which has little or no biblical bases in them.³¹ According to Howard et al, skill and habits learned from the faith community

³¹ Howard Ecklund, Elaine; Daniels, Denise; Schneider, Rachel C. 2020. "From Secular to Sacred: Bringing Work to Church" *Religions* 11, no. 9: 442. (<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11090442>)

help in succeeding in life.³² Faith can be strengthened through principles, experiences, and actions.³³ This shows that once one connects with a faith community, the success rate of that individual rises to a higher level. It is wise to note that, spiritual beliefs and practices help people feel greater hope and connectedness and find meaning in life.³⁴ But when there is lack of attendance, the issue of connectivity gradually diminishes.

All the same, cultivating for one's spirituality may uncover what is most meaningful in life and connects one to others, which leads to a valuable inner peace even in difficult times.³⁵ Turning to the internet for help will only respond once information is put in it, and Reggie informs that, when someone actively listens carefully, it helps to feel as though life matters. Likewise, when dealing with trauma and pain, perceiving that someone understands makes it feel like healing is taking place.³⁶ There is therefore need for that connectedness where one can see and read the body language of each other.

Help from the social media have little or no biblical/pastoral background. The internet is dependent on what has been communicated and has no spiritual discernment. When one is in pain or needs help, there is a possibility of withdrawing or shutting down. Social media is just a tool and if not used correctly, it becomes destructive. Cyber-bullying, comparisons, and the issue of not having a one-on-one setting that bind people together is an area of concern. Most of the teenagers are at risk of being bullied, an issue that ends up causing depression, anxiousness, and

³² Howard et al, 442.

³³ <https://www.unity.org/publications/unity-magazine/articles/can-faith-be-learned>

³⁴ <https://theactionalliance.org/sites/files/faithcommunityleaders1.pdf>

³⁵ www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044464

³⁶ Reggie Abraham. "Reflections on Narrative in Pastoral Theology." *Pastoral Psychology* 65, no. 6 (12, 2016): 727-42.

even withdrawal. This brings about suicidal thoughts, ideations that have become a great challenge to the community. Suicide has become a leading cause of death among teenagers many times with the assistance of the internet via social media. Others engage in some negative behaviors that at times leads to accepting risky challenges and being initiated into some entities. Most of the students feel they are not somehow heard, and therefore get closed-up in a way opening a doorway for the enemy (Devil) to devour and tear apart that which had been deposited in the student.³⁷

According to Basome and Venice, educators and parents acknowledge that children are born helpless and need the care and guidance of adults throughout their lives well into their adult years in order to learn how to live harmoniously in the society.³⁸ The Bible instructs that children are to be nurtured in the discipline and admonition of God (Ephesians 6:4). Failure of the stakeholders to provide or meet the necessary needs to the students contributes to the moral and ethical decline, opening a loophole for the enemy to install whatever he wants in them. Students need to acquire those moral and ethical virtues to help them live good lives and become productive members of their communities.³⁹ But when the Devil takes over the student's life, the moral and ethical values are pushed out of the student resulting to unwarranted and an unimaginable behavior (John 10:10; ... ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*).

³⁷ Reggie Abraham. "Reflections on Narrative in Pastoral Theology." *Pastoral Psychology* 65, no. 6 (12, 2016): 727-42,

³⁸ www.ueab.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Vencie-Allida.pdf

³⁹ <https://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2246/Moral-Education.html>

Lack of moral and ethical values constitutes to a student that going to school with a gun and killing other students, teachers, and those within their vicinity is acceptable behavior. They would go to school and steal from the school, burn the school, or do all kinds of evils within the school compound. Those who try to stop these students are met with great opposition from some civil societies that purport to fight for human rights. Others choose to cut off their parents such that the parent cannot offer any guidance/counsel. The truth is that, without instructions and proper guidance, the students will do anything that would come out of their minds, and engage in unwarranted behaviors, which results in the decay of the moral and ethical values. Pastoral counseling and parental guidance would prepare and equip the student in all aspects, preparing them to face the future with confidence and with a purpose. It also gives the student an opportunity to ask and be molded in any area of interest to the student, which in turn prepares a great foundation that sustains them as they face life's challenges.

Delimitations

Implementing pastoral counseling strategies in high schools and colleges would help in guiding the student in the right direction. The future moral and ethical integrity of the nation depends on what has been instilled in their lives. The builder starts with the laying of the chief corner stone which becomes the base from which the whole foundation is laid. The strength and durability of a building depends on the foundation that was laid down. When the foundation is a shakable one, the whole structure scrambles and fall. It is therefore the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or church to prepare the student with all the ingredients necessary for their maturity as dependable individuals within the community.

The Bible instructs that, children should be brought in the way they should grow with the assumption that even when they grow old, they will not depart from those ways (Proverbs 22:6) *.... Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Though the child may deny God for some time, the truth is that they will come back. According to Carol, what matters most to a child's chances of a successful and fulfilling life is not the wealth of their upbringing but the warmth of their parenting.⁴⁰ The importance of parents/caretakers devoting energy and time in rearing children is accepted by political and community leaders across the globe.⁴¹ To preserve that warmth, there is need to instill limits and boundaries that will conserve the warmth in the house and to seal any loopholes that would bring about leakage of the warmth. Students need to be taught and advised on what would hold them together even as they engage themselves with hustles of life.

Assumptions

The Bible instructs that, children should be taught in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). This gives the parent, guardian, and or the church, the responsibility of shaping and directing the children as they grow. This in turn impacts the Biblical values and principles into the life of the child, hence building the muscle needed as they engage in the life's challenges. Though there are challenges as the foundation is being laid down, it is important to persist through to the end until all is said and done. Religious communities are one of the organs that

⁴⁰ Vincent Carol. "The Illiberalism of Liberalism: Schools and Fundamental Controversial Values." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, no. 0 (2020): 1-18.

⁴¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-14899148>

individuals go to for assistance with depression, grief, and marital conflict among other issues including societal problems.⁴²

The issues of students not listening or getting time with a parent/teacher or a pastoral/spiritual leader for moral and ethical values need to be addressed to facilitate the much-needed virtue. There is need to grow up within a particular moral tradition for one to be considered or accepted as an effective leader. The Bible has examples of those who took time to learn under certain religious leaders. Joshua learned under Moses to become a great leader who took the Israelites into the “Promised Land” (Deuteronomy 3:28, Joshua 1). Joshua spent time learning under Moses for about forty years before becoming the man God desired him to be. Elisha followed and learnt from Elijah and became one of the greatest prophets of old (1 Kings 19:19-22:40). This was a real training/mentorship process where Elisha had to find time to follow/sit with the man of God, Elijah. Apostle Paul teaching the Philippians advised them to learn and receive the things he taught them, and practice those things they had seen in him, promising them of God’s peace upon them (Philippians 4: 9 - *9The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you*). Apostle Paul had to be intentional in training and counseling the Philippians of the ways of God. For God to use an individual, he/she must be willing to undergo the training/shaping for the preparation.

The Bible informs that, the Devil is like a lion roaming around looking for anyone he can devour (1 Peter 5:8). All the same, the cruelty of the Devil who seeks to devour humankind can only be overcome by being equipped with the Scriptures, which assures of God’s presence and protection, through faith in God (Isaiah 41:10). The Bible gives a clear assurance to those who

⁴² <https://counselingcenter.org/a-defination-of-pastoral-counseling/>

put their trust and dependence in God, that He will never leave nor forsake them (Deuteronomy 31:6-8, Joshua 1:5, Hebrews 13:5). Pastoral counseling helps people/students build their lives around the promises and the protection of God.

There is therefore need for the implementation of Biblical principles in the lives of the students, to help them face the daily challenges as they grow and discover themselves. Once the student steps out of the parent's presence, they usually get the freedom they have always craved. It is therefore important to have prepared the student with the required ingredients to keep them moving in the right direction, even when no one is watching them. The student should know that one does not make it alone without the help of God, who knows and understands all things (Psalm 139:1-6). Knowing that God will never forsake nor leave His own will give students courage and confidence to face the "giants" that come their way. The truth is that though Gideon thought he was the least and counted himself a coward, God looked at him as a great man of war (Judges 6:12-16). Having this attitude implanted in the student will help them in facing the challenges of the day in confidence, knowing that the Lord God of Host will always be there for him/her.

Implementing pastoral counseling in schools and colleges would help in restoring students back to the church. Pastoral counseling will help the students maintain the spiritual muscles that was imparted on them by their parents, guardians, or church. The moment the student is left to direct his thoughts and actions without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then it would be an open door for the Devil to get in and uproot all that had been planted in him (John 10:10 – *¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*). Pastoral counseling becomes a shield or a wall that stops all outside intruders who purposely come to abort and kill that which

has been put in place. Counseling becomes a wall that controls and regulates the waters in the “water dam”, where when the controls are not in place, then the water finds its own route resulting in a massive destruction.

When the waters in a water-dam are left to chart their own course, anything downstream experiences a massive destruction. Any plantations, construction/developments of any kind are wasted down the water course, just because there were no controls. There is always a need to construct/implement controls that will regulate the water-flow, hence preserving the plantations and other developments down the stream. Letting students chart their own course without guidance would bring some destruction in their lives. Pastoral counseling helps in the control and to uphold the values that represent what is essential to self and the society.⁴³ One should know that to avoid bad faith, he/she is responsible not only for self but for all others, and counseling helps in seeing or recognizing one’s place in experiencing life.⁴⁴ The caretakers have a responsibility to give instructions/teach a righteous man/student so that he will increase his learning (Proverbs 9:9 – *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning*).

Thesis Statement

If pastoral counseling is offered to students, there would be the upholding of good moral and ethical standards within the community. Pastoral counseling is the integration of thoughts and methods of how to deal with issues that come into one’s life and helps students to know and live according to the plan and purposes of God. The plan and purpose of God is to establish an

⁴³ <https://positivepsychology.com/find-your-purpose-of-life/>

⁴⁴ <https://positivepsychology.com/find-your-purpose-of-life/>

individual so they will glorify God through his or her life and enjoy the presence of God in their daily life. Therefore, it is important for students to know how to dwell in God's will and presence and be empowered to fulfill the plan of God for their life. Through a spiritual counseling culture, students gain a sense of identity, a feeling of belonging, and beliefs about issues of life and how to care about one another.⁴⁵

According to Berens, it is important to understand that higher education has many advantages as well as many attractive temptations to which many young men and women have yielded even to injuring their character.⁴⁶ Once one joins high school, it becomes an opportunity of being exposed to a larger community with diverse views and beliefs. Joining college becomes an even greater exposure to diverse cultural beliefs and practices. The foundation that has been imparted on an individual will be an important “safe-guard” for the individual maintenance of their cultural beliefs and practices. Most of the students choose not to be involved or to respect those cultural and religious systems and get entangled with that which seems right in their sight. Forgetting the culture, one has been brought up with is a big betrayal to that community. It becomes like a child forgetting a mother who bore and brought him/her up. Culturally responsive practices are essential to supporting a student’s development in all domains.⁴⁷

Pastoral counseling would help students develop a deep understanding of their beliefs to receive spiritual awareness and direction on their life’s journey. Again, pastoral counseling gives an individual the spiritual muscle necessary to help students deal with the challenging issues of life which mostly affect the moral and ethical standards of the individual. The lack of pastoral

⁴⁵ www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/itguidesensitivecare.pdf

⁴⁶ Edward Berens. *Advice to a Young Man upon First going to Oxford in Ten Letters, From an Uncle to His Nephew*. (St. John’s Square, London: Gilbert & Rivington Press, 2007), 2.

⁴⁷ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/re/documents/itguidesensitivecare.pdf>

counseling opens an individual to other forces of influence that interrupt and tear apart the laid down principles and allows those other forces to guide and direct their way of life (Psalm 32:8). Pastoral counselors use prayers, scripture study, group/congregation community as they help and guide in one's life journey. They help in the support, guidance and solution related issues that integrate with faith, spirituality, and behavior.⁴⁸ There is therefore a need for pastoral counseling so the biblical truths that have been laid down in one's life will be upheld (Genesis 28:15). Whatever the circumstances in one's life, pastoral counseling helps in understanding beyond any doubt that God is always a present help (Psalm 46:1, Proverbs 11:14).

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

To attend to the presented problem, a thorough search for books, articles, journals, and magazines was initiated to figure out what others have said about the presenting problem. The main hope and aspirations of any nation depends on the counsel/guidance that has been impacted in the lives of its children/students. Many researchers have been involved with the plight of students though in different approaches and concerns. According to Lifeway research, churches continue to see students walk away as young adults shrinking the church from within.⁴⁹ What was once a characteristic of the nation's culture of being a member of a certain church/faith community has become absolute.

The central issue of dropping out or withdrawal from the social, spiritual, or interpersonal relationships is that it reflects underlying difficulties of a social or emotive nature that represents

⁴⁸ www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/modes/pastoral-counseling

⁴⁹ <https://www.lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

the developmental outcome of particular temperamental dispositions.⁵⁰ Again, the drop-out from church/social or interpersonal settings can be considered an individual characteristic that influences the quality of a person's social/emotional relationships, reputation and standing in a group.⁵¹ Lack of social interaction in childhood may result social fear and anxiety or a desire to be alone, where socially withdrawn students are concurrently and predictively at risk for myriad of negative adjustment outcomes, including socio-emotional difficulties, peer difficulties, school, and academic difficulties.⁵²

According to Meredith Morris, seventy per cent (70%) of college students leave church when they join the workforce.⁵³ The current trend indicates that younger generations are less likely, or do not attend church as the older generation did, an act associated with the massive cultural shift of the nation.⁵⁴ Some students with a history of church attendance when they reach their late teen years pull out of church as they get increased independence, a driver's license, or a job.⁵⁵ The trend is that, many drop out of church and engage in other activities that dilute the already installed principles in the student's life. Due to the excitement and freedom offered through the internet (social media), there is a decline in church commitment which, according to the students/youth, the church is a restrictive institution with no freedom of action. The truth is

⁵⁰ Rubin Kenneth H et al (2009). "Social Withdrawal in Childhood." *Annual Review of Psychology*. Vol. 60. 141-71.

doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163642

⁵¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3800115/>

⁵² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3800115/>

⁵³ <https://www.acstechnologies.com/church-growth/college-students-disconnect-church/>

⁵⁴ <https://www.lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

that, although many researchers have engaged with this problem, the problem persists and seems to be on the rise.

According to a Christian Today article, many parents/caregivers wonder how to cultivate a durable faith in the lives of the young people after observing the shift in the current culture.⁵⁶ These students have an unprecedented access to ideas and worldviews of how they express the desire of faith in Christ and their connection with the world in which they live.⁵⁷ They also feel a lack of connection indicating that the Church is boring and with no relevance to what they desire to do or become.⁵⁸ As technology advances, some students feel disconnected from Church due to the tension they feel between Christianity and science, accusing the Church as being out of step with the scientific world they live in.⁵⁹ The article argues that Christians demonize everything outside of Church, thereby ignoring the problems of the real world, terming it harmful.⁶⁰

The students express the desire of experiencing the world in their own way and at their pace, not realizing the fact that before they learn and experience the said world, they will have possibly dropped down to a place of no return. This would be a very regrettable situation which might be fatal or even permanent. All the same, a student-led approach and the individual projects on issues pertaining life and character formation would help the student articulate that which is at stake for him or her. Allowing students to challenge themselves as they face and

⁵⁶ <https://www.barna.com/research/six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.barna.com/research/six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.barna.com/research/six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church/>

⁵⁹ <https://www.barna.com/research/six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church/>

⁶⁰ [Six Reasons Young Christians Leave Church - Barna Group](#)

tackle difficult life issues with the engagement of the stakeholders would be part of the student's progress.⁶¹

According to a Lifeway research article, most students reflect on a shifting of priorities and changes in their own habits even though the church have communicated its beliefs through word and action.⁶² All the same, there are those students who consider the church as vital and an important part of their relationship with God and desire the church to help in their life's decisions.⁶³ This concur with the Scripture that informs that, even though they may depart from the truth of God, they will surely return (for the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but your lovingkindness will not be removed, nor will your covenant of peace be shaken).⁶⁴ *10 For though the mountains should depart and the hills be shaken or removed, yet My love and kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace and completeness be removed, says the Lord, Who has compassion on you.* According to the Bible Study Tools Commentary, sometimes the earth is moved by earthquakes, and as they will be moved at the last day, when the earth shall be dissolved, and all that is in it, it may be understood comparatively that they will depart and be removed, the kindness and covenant of God will never be removed.⁶⁵ The seed of the Word of God that was planted way back in the lives of students will always germinate and blossom. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in the field... the one who sowed a good seed is the Son of God, while the field is the world; and the

⁶¹ <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/10/what-happens-when-students-control-their-own-education/381828/>

⁶² <https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

⁶³ <https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

⁶⁴ Isaiah 54:10. Amplified Version.

⁶⁵ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/isaiah-54-10.html>

good seed is the people of the Kingdom (Matthew 13:24, 37-38)...²⁴ *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;*³⁷ *He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.*³⁸ *The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.*

All the same, students have been shaped by a culture that esteems open mindedness, tolerance, and acceptance, and want to find areas of common ground with their peers.⁶⁶ According to Kinnaman, the problem of students dropping out of church life is particularly urgent because most churches work best for traditional students whose life journeys and questions are normal and conventional.⁶⁷ The world for the students and the young adults is changing significantly as they access the world through the technology of the day, being alienated from the traditional institutions and other sources of authority including Christianity and the Bible.⁶⁸

Though spirituality encompasses the life lived in relation to God as the absolute value, spirituality has been restrained within the education and social systems, the influence and the support of the moral and ethical character of the students have been chocked as a result of a non-committal character towards God.⁶⁹ Spirituality inspires and shapes the commitment of religious communities (students) and helps in imparting positive growth/learning and must be regarded as

⁶⁶ <https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ <https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

⁶⁹ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

a significant variable in the overall well-being of an individual.⁷⁰ According to Rev. Richard Gula, spiritual interests and practices are cutting across the boundaries of religion and education to become integral to all aspects of education/learning and ethics.⁷¹ Morality and ethical values build a personal character that motivates decision making and personal principles that dictates the inner dynamics of human actions which are influenced by a personal spirituality.⁷²

Many sources are very relevant to the topic but, despite the intensive studies, many high school and college students are not attending church services, an issue that has created gaps that need to be filled up. Those who have dropped out and rejected the Church route have really gone out even to fight the Church discrediting and challenging the teachings that were once important in their lives. According to a College Ministry article, high school seniors feel that they have graduated from church and have more expectations and responsibilities in college.⁷³ According to this article, most students go for fun and friendship where they get exposed to participate in the wrong activities which gradually erodes their morality as they try to “fit in”.⁷⁴

Moving to college has been identified as a reason for failing to attend church, which is associated with relocating and leaving the norms where one is no longer connected to their local church.⁷⁵ The project shows that the failure to attend church is caused by life changes that takes place as one gets older and with different line of thought and ideas.⁷⁶ This is line with the

⁷⁰ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

⁷³ <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

⁷⁴ <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

⁷⁵ <https://www.lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>

attempt in finding life's meaning and their place within the new social and political environment. Many feel they are mature enough to manage their life independently while others say they are advanced intellectually. They feel that they have what it takes to reach their goal, or achieve their God ordained destination. Other students do not care about anything other than face challenges as they come.⁷⁷ Others want to experience life their own way and learn from it.

Most students lack the preparation, training/coaching, and the emotional aspect, missing the much-needed maturity. Hence, they experience mental health and adjustment difficulties where schools and colleges lack the resources to provide the appropriate help and attention.⁷⁸ Having been exposed to different beliefs, religions, cultures and skepticism about Christianity, students need help to navigate their way forward.⁷⁹ According to Lantieri, students should know that they have a purpose in life, and they need to learn tolerance, compassion, and have a sense of interconnectedness with the others.⁸⁰

Different sources have presented cases that are related to the problem but have not produced definite solutions on how to fix the problem. According to Lantieri, there is a need to integrate emotions with the cognitive work in the classroom, to feel and to reach the heart of the student.⁸¹ Students need to be able to do and know what behavior they would need to thrive in the future as they agree on some fundamental tasks of education and extend beyond by helping

⁷⁶ <https://baptistcourier.com/2019/02/study-confirms-majority-of-college-students-drop-out-of-church/>

⁷⁷ <https://plpnetwork.com/2013/11/07/obsession-academic-teaching-preparing-kids-life/>

⁷⁸ Lantieri Linda (2002). *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 10.

⁷⁹ <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

⁸⁰ Lantieri Linda (2002). *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 11.

⁸¹ Lantieri, 1.

others and achieve academic competence.⁸² Nurturing these experiences in schools and colleges would instill the unique and inherent value of every individual and education would be seen as a lifelong process.⁸³

The literature matrix (input from other sources/researchers) has proven to be a great tool that would bring the synchronization of the different sources and what they have to say about the presenting problem. Help from parents/stakeholders has also been a great tool in figuring out what are some of the emerging problems within the family/school set-up. Most of the students were willing to engage in giving their views of why students fail to attend church services. Though some were hesitant in giving their views and observations fearing to be labelled by their peers, their participation was very varied. All the same, the intentional participation of all the stakeholders is critical in reaching out to this category of people.

Parental Counsel

Religion/spirituality is becoming increasingly irrelevant in today's culture where regular participation and attendance of church is no longer a priority within a family unit. In the later years, parents took the front roll in a family's spirituality, helping their children to know and understand the Bible that included spiritual nourishment and the "gathering" of the saints/believers. They taught and counseled their children on the things of God and how to face life's challenges. Parents/caretakers have the responsibility of helping children/students practice new ways of coping and thinking and develop life skills and a coping mechanism in areas they

⁸² Lantieri, 11.

⁸³ Lantieri, 8.

may lack or be inadequate.⁸⁴ According to a Focus on the family article, spiritual training involves not only sending children to church but a matter of living the biblical principles that permeate through conversations and making every day an incident to make a point or illustrate God's truth.⁸⁵

Though the children want to be left alone to direct their lives, Murray informs that, parents have a primary responsibility for directing children's lives even in their adolescence.⁸⁶ Murray continues to say that parents have an effect in the lives of their children.⁸⁷ The truth is that a parent's continuous counseling helps the student learn how to cope positively and adjusts to new issues/spheres of the outside world.⁸⁸ Although parents have a right to expect someone to help in the spiritual aspect of their children, most schools and colleges are not geared to that, an issue that calls for action.⁸⁹ According to Godwin and Kemerer, the empowering of parents by making them consumers of education and matching them with the learning styles and interests of the student with the pedagogy of the school improves student performance.⁹⁰ By this, the parent will be part of the team in educating and equipping the student.

⁸⁴ www.commpsy.com/whats-happening/guide-parental-involvement-childrens-treatment/

⁸⁵ <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/family-qa/spiritual-training-for-children/>

⁸⁶ Milner Murray. *Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids: Teenagers in an Era of Consumerism Tests, and Social Media*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), 18.

⁸⁷ Milner Murray, 19.

⁸⁸ www.commpsy.com/whats-happening/guide-parental-involvement-childrens-treatment/

⁸⁹ <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

⁹⁰ Kenneth Godwin, and Frank Kemerer. *School Choice Tradeoffs: Liberty, Equity, and Diversity*. (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), 20.

The exposure to a variety of ideas, ideologies, cultures, questions, skepticism about faith and spirituality, and doubt of all kinds becomes a stumbling block to the student.⁹¹ According to Garcia, Pence, and Evans, there is need for changes in attitudes, approaches, methodologies, and service provision as one attends to students.⁹² According to Barter and Berridge, adults are no longer respected, their authority, values, and laws are disregarded by young adults which is a national crisis.⁹³ The Bible records that wisdom is found in those who take advice (Proverbs 13:10), and victory comes with many elders (Proverbs 24:6). Where there is no counsel, the people perish, plans varnish; but with a multitude of counselors the same people are established (Proverbs 15:22). There is therefore a need for the parent's/caretaker/s advice and counsel to the student on the way they should go and live. According to Cortlandt, it is the responsibility of the parent to instruct their children and point them to Jesus Christ and to pray for them.⁹⁴ Cortlandt informs that, it is the duty of the parent to implement early in their children's life (mind), the pure and exalted principles of the virtue and piety they should pursue.⁹⁵

Parents have an obligation of improving students' lives by attempting to model a behavior of choice, setting boundaries, and have control of internet sites.⁹⁶ Though the students may rebel, close themselves up, while some say they know what is good for them, it is the responsibility of the parent/caretaker to keep on telling them. Parents/stakeholders should have a

⁹¹ <https://collegeministry.co/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

⁹² Marito, Pence, and Evans, 155.

⁹³ Barter, C., & Berridge, D. (Eds.). (2011). *Children Behaving Badly? Peer Violence Between Children and Young People*. ProQuest Ebook Central. (<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu>). Philadelphia, PA: Martien Publisher, Vol 1. 12.

⁹⁵ Van Cortlandt, 15.

⁹⁶ <https://www.lifespan.org/lifespan-living/social-media-good-bad-and-ugly>

conversation on why some things should not be kept private. Some students engage themselves in sites where they are initiated into sites where they mutilate or even kill themselves.⁹⁷

Parents/stakeholders should also make a deliberate effort to actively engage face to face with the students and have genuine conversations that are not forceful.⁹⁸ The truth is that, though technology/social media has changed the way of life, parenting should take the priority.

All the same, there are gaps right there since the responsibility of the parents have been transferred to the teachers, who may be overwhelmed with the many students. Some parents believe that they have the power to make decisions regarding their children every aspect, including decisions on the school curriculum though they do not engage the students.⁹⁹ Some parents have been overwhelmed by the pressures of life due to the economic challenges, forcing them to change their schedules in their daily activities as they nurture their children. The other gap is when the parent fails to restrain the child when they do wrong because they do not want to anger the child. Snyder informs that, students who are home schooled achieve significantly higher scores than those in public and private schools.¹⁰⁰ The attention and supervision by the parent to the home-schooled student forces the instilling of the principal elements into the life of the child, which will grow and give forth fruit. Whatever is instilled or implanted in a child germinates and give forth fruit, giving the parent/caretaker the responsibility of the implementation.

⁹⁷ <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/helping-self-harming-students/>

⁹⁸ <https://www.lifespan.org/lifespan-living/social-media-good-bad-and-ugly>

⁹⁹ [Parental Rights: Curriculum Opt-outs in Public Schools \(unt.edu\)](#)

¹⁰⁰ Marc Snyder. "An Evaluative Study of the Academic Achievement of Homeschooled Students Attending a Catholic University." Order no. 3492700. *Nova Southern University*, 2011, 289.

According to Roozen, parent's right to control the education of their children is subordinate to the state, to allow important programs available for the child.¹⁰¹ This issue introduces a gap in the process because the student does not have to do what the parent instructs. Introducing pastoral counseling strategies in schools and colleges will help fill the gap by introducing and instilling Biblical morals and ethical aspects in the life of the child. Biblical principles are the main nuggets in the formation and implementation of good morals which are acceptable within the community. Once the Holy Spirit is in control of one's life, the fruit of the Holy Spirit will be evident, producing that which is needed in schools and colleges.

Pastoral Counsel

Pastoral counseling helps in integrating spirituality, faith, and theology with psychotherapy to help those seeking assistance with personal, family, marital and faith issues.¹⁰² According to Lantieri, whatever is done about welcoming the inner life into the classroom will be very significant.¹⁰³ There must be a preparation of the inner person of the student, to have a conducive environment for the spiritual content to be built in the inside of the student. According to Lantieri, the need to encourage the spiritual quest of a student and the nurturing of the student's heart, soul, and mind is emphasized, where the exploration marks a promising beginning for those who would teach "the whole child."¹⁰⁴ Lantieri continue to say that one

¹⁰¹ David Roozen. "Church Dropouts: Changing Patterns of Disengagement and Re-Entry." *Review of Religious Research* 21, no. 4 (1980): 105.

¹⁰² <https://www.pastoralcounseling.org/how-to-become/>

¹⁰³ Lantieri Linda (2002). *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 10.

¹⁰⁴ Lantieri Linda (2002). *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, x.

should not miss that opportunity of addressing life's deepest questions and help the children know that they matter.¹⁰⁵

Life is precious, and anything to protect and build it up should be upheld and encouraged. Pastoral counseling becomes that avenue on which life's challenges are discussed and addressed. In the quest for a sober and well nurtured life, there is a vacuum in a human being that need to be filled up with the appropriate material. The material to fill up the vacuum is spiritually motivated and nothing else would satisfy that gap. To achieve this goal, Murray says that some other cultures send adolescents off to monasteries for both protection and discipline, while others increase adult authority and restrict peer influence.¹⁰⁶ Spirituality is a dynamic way of expressing being in love with God that begins with accepting God's love, that can never be separated from the moral life which is the awareness of the commitment to living in a way that makes this love a real and transforming presence in the world.¹⁰⁷

According to Rev. Richard Gula, spirituality has to do with a relationship to what is ultimately valued and a commitment to live in a way consistent with what is the ultimate demand to spirituality, which is the wellspring of morality.¹⁰⁸ This spirituality that comes through the involvement of a pastoral counselor would shape the perspective from which one sees everything, and by which one integrates the fragments of life into a meaningful person.¹⁰⁹ The

¹⁰⁵ David Roozen. "Church Dropouts: Changing Patterns of Disengagement and Re-Entry." *Review of Religious Research* 21, no. 4 (1980): 105.

¹⁰⁶ Milner Murray. *Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids: Teenagers in an Era of Consumerism Tests, and Social Media*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), 21.

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

heart links spirituality and ethics into a discourse with a cognitive reflection through expressions of feelings, intuitions, and somatic reactions which are reliable guides to moral and ethical truth.¹¹⁰

Integrating spirituality into all educational aspects, relational aspects of ethics need to be included since spirituality, morality, and ethics cannot be separated, nor can it remain the practice of prayer and sacramental rituals.¹¹¹ This is because spirituality involves the whole life lived in relation to God as the absolute and supports the moral character and style of life that comes out of a commitment to God.¹¹² Spiritual care (pastoral counseling) can be a great help (tool) in the process of awakening students to their deeper love and longing for God in their life's choices that influences the benefits that lead to an ethical and moral judgement.¹¹³

According to Diedria and Camille, the success of a student can be improved through the increased support and collaborative partnership between the church and the school.¹¹⁴ Without support and the connecting with pastoral counseling, the meaning/experience of life can be meaningless hence the need to create opportunities for students to articulate the meaning and purpose of spiritual development.¹¹⁵ Diedria and Camille insists that, utilizing the authority and

¹¹⁰ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

¹¹¹ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

¹¹⁴ Jordan Diedria, and Milson Camille. "Supporting African American Student Success Through Prophetic Activism: New Possibilities for Public School-Church Partnerships." *Urban Education* 52, no. 1 (January 2017), 91-119, 92.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085914566098>.

¹¹⁵ www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2719514/

legitimacy of faith-based organizations is a cultural strategy to influence values, rituals/morals, and family and community actions.¹¹⁶ This means that the church/spiritual entity must be included in the life of a student for them to be successful in life.

Training/teaching is the structure that helps a student to fit into the real world happily and effectively.¹¹⁷ To help the student uphold the moral and ethical standards, the church should be involved in the public education because the church is not only a social arena but also a moral arena and the nurturing of the youth is a moral concern.¹¹⁸ In the individual and institutional levels, Diedria and Camille says that, interpersonal relationship matters and therefore, the Holy Spirit guides the parent on mentoring and friendship through better relationships and institutions.¹¹⁹ It is important to understand that most students tend to withdraw and isolate themselves due to the overloading issues that challenge their systems, hence the need for pastoral care.¹²⁰

Nurturing a young person's emotional intelligence enhances a student's ability to learn though schools and colleges have been struggling with ways to attend to the emotional and social intellectual development.¹²¹ The participation of parents/caregivers in advising and guiding the student on issues pertaining life and spirituality must be intentional. Irrespective of the

¹¹⁶ Jordan Diedria and Milson Camille, (91-119).

¹¹⁷ www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2719514/

¹¹⁸ Diedria, and Camille, 103.

¹¹⁹ David Kinnaman, and Aly Hawkins. *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church... and Rethinking Faith*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012), 13.

¹²⁰ <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

¹²¹ Lantieri Linda (2002). *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

challenges that one face in life, it is important to be intentional in moving forward towards the mark that has been set for one to receive an award. The Bible instructs of the need to press toward the goal to win the Heavenly prize of the upward call of God (Philippians 3:14). Though there is pressure from the outside world as the student engage and attempt to “fit-in” there need to be an intentional sense of faith in God in all engagements.¹²²

Peer Influence

Students get to engage in activities they could not otherwise do if it were not through other influencers. Some of the influence is for the good of the student, and therefore, not all that is through pressure from outside is undesirable. At times, peers naturally play a greater role in one’s life and, in emotional situations, peer influence can be irresistible because of the pressure. According to Springer, peers who have similar interests, age, background, or social status, serve as an important source of information, feedback, and support to individuals as they develop a sense of self.¹²³ All the same, peers are essential throughout one’s social development, but research suggests this is particularly true during adolescence.¹²⁴

According to Massey, this is the “Socialization Period” where students between 13 and 21 years of age (the high School and College age-group) are very influenced by others and look for ways to get away from their earlier programming to people who seem more like them.¹²⁵ These are those that are looking for their space within the society where they would feel

¹²² <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

¹²³ https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-24612-3_1931

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ <https://www.coursehero.com/file/10029084/Values-Development-by-Morris-Massey/>

recognized (being popular or being initiated into a particular group) and be part of the “it” group. According to Hughes, culture is continuously changing causing the contemporary culture of young people to be diverse, complex, and uncertain.¹²⁶ Since the explosion of internet, media, and the immigration of individuals from their cultural environment to other parts of the world, students have been exposed to cultural diversity which can be a great tool for maturity. This can also be an avenue to the moral decay for an individual. As students venture out into the world, many of them want to explore the new culture out there without holding tight to the teachings of their parents and church. Hughes continue to say that many of the Christians feel that the dichotomy made between the church and the outside world does not do justice to the reality they experience.¹²⁷

Students and young adults are being shaped by a culture that esteems to be open-minded, tolerance and acceptance, where they search for areas of common ground with each other.¹²⁸ According to this research, faith leaders and parents/caretakers have minimized concerns and issues of students (the next generation), allowing them to take their own course essentially where they depend on their peers and the media.¹²⁹ According to Beasley, the influence of new friends that one meets, marriage, cohabitation and conflicting choices have more impact than other elements of college life.¹³⁰ This source wants to give leeway for the actions through the influence

¹²⁶ Philip Hughes. “Why Young People are Leaving the Church.” *Pointers: Bulletin of The Christian Research Association* 25, No. 1 (2015): 1-8, Loc 502.

¹²⁷ Hughes, 4 (Factors of Disconnection).

¹²⁸ <https://biologos.org/articles/six-reseans-young-christians-leave-church/>

¹²⁹ <https://biologos.org/articles/six-reseans-young-christians-leave-church/>

¹³⁰ Beasley. "Stopping the Dropouts: Guiding Adolescents Toward a Lasting Faith Following High School Graduation." *Christian Education Journal* 5, no. 1 (2008): 28

of the new friends, but there is a need for one to stand their ground based on what has been invested into his or her life.

Pastoral counseling would prepare the students for instances when they mingle with others in the world and give them tools of handling presented challenging issues. According to Uecker, Regnerus and Vaaler, the freedom students have out there as they go out into the world gives the emerging adults an opportunity to cease Church activities that they find uninteresting, or unpopular among their peers, and engage in actions that are at odds with their religious tradition's teaching.¹³¹ There is need to have individuals and institutions which can reinforce those morals and values and help students understand the repercussions that might befall them without these virtues.¹³²

It is true that each child/student is special and possesses unique talents to be used for the works that God has ordained for him or her. When there are no interesting Christian activities in the new environment, the child or student has the capacity to create interest in activities of their religious tradition. Most students want to be part of something that makes a difference and is meaningful and is bigger than they are. They want that excitement they can show their peers. They want to be involved in the excitement as they give their options/views, which become an impacting moment.¹³³ Preparing the student to know their purpose in life would equip them to know that they are not to depend on others to ensure they are successful in life and become the

¹³¹ Uecker J., Regnerus M., and Vaaler M. (2007). Losing My Religion: The Social Sources of Religious Decline in Early Adulthood. *Social Forces* 85(4), 1667-1692, 3.

¹³² https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4778533_Interdependence_between_sexual_debut_and_church_attendance_in_Italy

¹³³ <https://www.lifewyresearch.com/2018/12/17/the-number-one-reason-for-the-decline-in-church-attendance/>

person God intends them to be (Jeremiah 29:11 ... *11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*)

According to Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, in Jeremiah 29 verse 11, the Bible teaches that God know the thoughts He has for you ... *The word used for "saith the Lord" implies that the gracious promise came to the prophet's soul as an oracle from heaven. In the "thoughts" of God there is a reference to what had been said before of the Babylonian exiles in Jeremiah 24:6. To give you an expected end. Better still, to give you a future (that which is to be hereafter) and a hope. This is the literal rendering of the words, and it is far more expressive than that of the English version. An "expected end" may be one from which we shrink in fear or dislike. The "future" tells them that their history as a people is not yet over; the "hope" that there is a better time in store for them. To wait for that future, instead of trusting in delusive assurances of immediate release, was the true wisdom of the exiles)*¹³⁴. God has a plan for every individual, irrespective of their origin, culture, ethnicity, age, or gender. For these individuals to become a part of God's plan, they need to be trained, taught, and counseled, in the things of God so as to be aligned with God. God molded each student and equipped them with the necessary abilities, gifts, and talents to enable them to give their best to the surrounding community.

Pastoral counseling will establish strong foundations so that, whatever the challenges of the world, the students will not be uprooted from what they value most (Matthew 7:24-27....
²⁴Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶"But everyone who

¹³⁴ Jeremiah 29:11 Commentaries: 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. (biblehub.com)

hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” Luke 6:47-49 – ⁴⁷ Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was ^[a]founded on the rock. ⁴⁹ But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it ^[b]fell. And the ruin of that house was great. ”). Linda Lantieri states that the student should know that they have a purpose, learn tolerance, and compassion, and have a sense of interconnectedness with the world.¹³⁵ This knowledge will empower students to hold onto their religious, cultural, and traditional values instead of living and acting like the world (John 15:19). According to Utter and Storey, the concept and principle of the religious right has been more across denominational and religious than racial or ethnicity lines where there are no color barriers involved.¹³⁶

Moral Counsel

According to Garcia, Pence, and Evans, it is important to note that, everything done is potentially dangerous, and therefore, the focus of a student should be for good and best intentions.¹³⁷ Murray states that, the most time-consuming activity of students is hanging out

¹³⁵ Lantieri, 11.

¹³⁶ Glenn Utter, and John Storey. *The Religious Right: A Reference Handbook*. (Millerton, NY: Grey House Publication, 2007), 7.

¹³⁷ Marito Garcia, Alan Pence, and Judith Evans. *Africa's Future, Africa's Challenge: Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*. (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2007), 157.

with friends/ peers with whom they engage in non-academic activities.¹³⁸ Diedria and Camila says that, it is important to note that churches often aim to socialize students for school success by offering programs geared toward boosting their social and emotional development and their cognitive skills and abilities.¹³⁹ All the same, possibilities of forging a critical culturally relevant partnership between schools and churches that promote shared leadership tackle issues of racism ultimately help ensure educational success.¹⁴⁰ This coupled with the moral aspect of the student through pastoral counseling would help ensure a great educational success.

Despite the long-standing interaction between the religious right and politics, religious rights have attracted a great attention.¹⁴¹ With pastoral counseling, this religious right would help in maneuvering through the interaction knowing that one can go through the challenges that come their way. While students are constantly influenced by the surrounding new environments, it is important for the students to know that the ultimate decision lays within an individual. There should be a reasonable respect for the religious and moral concerns about curricular offering and the school's mission should not be disrupted noting that religions have clear teachings on morality which is central to the to people's faith.¹⁴² Legal rights have been granted to parents by some states and federal legislation to enforce moral values. According to Tommy Rogers, it

¹³⁸ Milner Murray. *Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids: Teenagers in an Era of Consumerism, Standardized Tests, and Social Media*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 27.

¹³⁹ Jordan Diedria H., and Camille M. Wilson. "Supporting African American Student Success Through Prophetic Activism: New Possibilities for Public School-Church Partnership." *Urban Education* 52, 93.

¹⁴⁰ Diedria, and Camille, 93.

¹⁴¹ Glenn Utter, and John Storey. *The Religious Right: A Reference Handbook*. (Millerton, NY: Grey House Publication, 2007), 2.

¹⁴² <https://ct.counseling.org/2018/02/ethics-religion-and-diversity/#>

should be clear that pastoral counseling would enhance the transition in the learning process of the student.¹⁴³

All the same, Linda Lantieri writes that, it is important to understand that one can never know in advance what might happen in moments of confrontation.¹⁴⁴ But when one is equipped with the knowledge of how to deal with situations in a wise and effective way and has an action plan in place, anxiety, and the fear of the unknown will be no more. The Bible instructs on putting on the whole armor of God, Ephesians 6:11-12 ... *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* Pastoral counseling equips the student with the necessary tools as the Holy Spirit gives guidance in the appropriate action plan.

Theological Foundations

According to the Bible, believers have been commissioned to guide and counsel all nations of the earth, with the Word of God, teaching them to obey God (Proverbs 11:14 - *(The following references are from the Amplified Version) - Where there is no [wise, intelligent] guidance, the people fall [and go off course like a ship without a helm], But in the abundance of [wise and godly] counselors there is victory;* Matthew 28:18-19 - ¹⁸ *Jesus came up and said to them, "All authority (all power of absolute rule) in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [help the people to learn of Me, believe*

¹⁴³ Tommy Kelvin Rogers. "Parental Rights: Curriculum Opt-Outs in Public Schools". (2010), 108. https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc30507/m2/1/high_res_d/dissertation.pdf

¹⁴⁴ Danielle Goldman. *I Want to Be Ready: Improvised Dance As a Practice of Freedom*. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 97.

in Me, and obey My words], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”.

The Bible emphasizes the teaching of children, which would help them learn and fear the Lord God (Deuteronomy 4:9-10 – 9) “*Only pay attention and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen, and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your grandchildren [impressing these things on their mind and penetrating their heart with these truths]—¹⁰ especially the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb (Mount Sinai), when the LORD said to me, ‘Assemble the people to Me and I will let them hear My words, so that they may learn to fear Me [with awe-filled reverence and profound respect] all the days they live on the land, and so that they may teach their children. (Deuteronomy 6:5-9, 11:19) - ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind and with all your soul and with all your strength [your entire being]. ⁶ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be [written] on your heart and mind. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your [^a]children [impressing God’s precepts on their minds and penetrating their hearts with His truths] and shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand (forearm), and they shall be used as [^b]bands (frontals, frontlets) on your forehead. ⁹ You shall write them on the [^c]doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 11:19) – ¹⁹ You shall teach them [diligently] to your [^a]children [impressing God’s precepts on their minds and penetrating their hearts with His truths], speaking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. (Joshua 1:8 - ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall read [and meditate on] it day and night, so that you may be careful to do*

[everything] in accordance with all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will be ^[a]successful. (1 Timothy 4:11) – ¹¹ Keep commanding and teaching these things. ¹² Let no one look down on [you because of] your youth but be an example and set a pattern for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in [moral] purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to public reading [of Scripture], to preaching and to teaching [the sound doctrine of God's word]. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, [that special endowment] which was intentionally bestowed on you through prophetic utterance when the ^[a]elders laid their hands on you [at your ordination. ¹⁵ Practice and work hard on these things; be absorbed in them [completely occupied in your ministry], so that your progress will be evident to all. ¹⁶ Pay close attention to yourself [concentrate on your personal development] and to your teaching; persevere in these things [hold to them], for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

The Bible instructs that, children should be taught on the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). This gives the parent, guardian, or the church, the responsibility of shaping and directing the children as they grow and even helping them understand what they teach or impart in them (students). This in turn impacts the biblical values and principles into the life of the child, hence building the muscle needed as they engage in the life's challenges. The Bible instructs that, the Devil is like a lion roaming around looking for anyone He can devour (1 Peter 5:8). The cruelty of the Devil who seeks to devour mankind can only be overcome by being equipped with the Scriptures, that assures of God's presence and protection, and faith in God (Isaiah 41:10).

There is therefore need for the implementation of biblical principles in the lives of the students, to help them face the daily challenges as they grow and discover themselves. Once the student steps out of the parent's presence, they usually get the freedom they always crave for. It

is therefore important to have prepared the student with the required ingredients to keep them moving in the right direction, even when no one is watching them. The student should know that one does not make it alone without the help of God, who knows and understands all things (Psalm 139:1-6) ... *O LORD, you have searched me and known me. ² You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. ³ You comprehend my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴ For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. ⁵ You have hedged me behind and before and laid Your hand upon me. ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.*

Jesus Christ taught that children be brought to him, showing the place of children in the Kingdom of God (Luke 18:16) - *¹⁶ But Jesus called them to Himself, saying [to the apostles], "Allow the children to come to Me, and do not forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.* Training and coaching/counseling children/students is a clear commission that Jesus gave to the church. Also, making disciples is a clear mandate given to the church with an assurance of the involvement of the Holy Spirit as a guide as they engage in the assignment (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7, 8, 13). It is important to know that once the Holy Spirit is involved in the assignment, He helps in convincing and convicting the individual and guides into the truth that sets free.

God's grace through the teaching and the impartation of the Biblical counsel brings in the forgiveness, and the redemption, which is perceived in the ordinary events of an ordinary life.¹⁴⁵ As the children grow to become mature and respectable individuals, it is wise for them to know

¹⁴⁵ Neil Browne. "Participatory Grace: Calvinism, Pragmatism, and the Ethics of Grace in Marilynne Robinson's Gilead." *Connotations: A Journal for Critical Debate* 25, no. 2 (15, 2016): 225-43

(<https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1853848062?pq-origsite=summon>) 2.

that the fear of the Lord God is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom (Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10). Diligently teaching and counseling children in and out of the house is a mandate given by God (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). But when children are not taught or counseled by their parents, guardians, or church, they bring shame to their parents, church, and the community (Proverbs 29:15). This is because they will obviously receive counsel from the wrong and not caring source (2 Peter 2:19). Parents/caretakers, who happen to be the greatest impactors upon a child's faith should direct the instruction and training of their children/students all through that they may be Christians.

Knowing that the earth and everything therein belongs to God is of paramount importance as one faces life (Psalm 24:1 and Colossians 1:16). Knowing the plan and purpose of God towards people is very important. The Bible instructs that, children should be trained up in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4). There is a need to train and counsel children on how to conduct themselves and how to handle issues as they face them, an art that promotes a healthy spiritual and moral development that flows out of the right relationship with God (Deuteronomy 6:6-7, Ephesians 6:4). It is important to know that children are an inheritance from the Lord God, and one would not want to see their heritage going to destruction or being drained (Psalm 127:3-5). There is need, therefore, to train the children wherever they are and in whatever they do, so that these instructions would be impacted within their lives (Deuteronomy 11:19). There is need to make known the doing of the Lord God to the children, who are the next generation (Psalm 78:4). Fathers should tell of the faithfulness of God to their children (Isaiah 38:19, Joel 1:3).

Pastoral counseling should be an intentional act of mentoring, where the mentee is trained and instructed on the Biblical foundations that prepares an individual in life. Elijah the prophet

mentored Elisha intentionally until Elisha became mightily used by God during his time (1 Kings 17:1-24; 18:17-46). Despite the challenges, weaknesses, and other failures, Elisha was used by God because he was willing and obedient to the call of God in his life (1 Kings 19:19-21 ... ¹⁹ *So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.* ²⁰ *And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you."* And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" ²¹ *So Elisha turned back from him and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and became his servant).* As Elisha followed his master Elijah, he taped from him a double portion of the blessings of God. A time is coming when the coming generation will take over the mantle, to lead and declare the oracles of God. Without the training, the moral integrity of the community will disintegrate and fail. This would bring about the losing of an entire generation.

Jesus Christ mentored His disciples, laying a foundation that could not be moved by any challenges, having the right attitude toward God and His creation.¹⁴⁶ Though there would be hatred, rejection, and no appreciation in whatever one does, Jesus taught His disciples to move on and trust in the provision of God in whatever situation they were in (John 21:15-17) ... ¹⁵ *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I ^[b]love You."* He said to

¹⁴⁶ Jiwan Moon, S., "Mentoring and Discipling the Early Adolescents of the Kitchener-Waterloo Seventh-day Adventist Church" (2014). Dissertation Projects DMin. 87.

(<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1086&context=dmin>)

him, "Feed My lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of ^[c]Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I ^[d]love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of ^[e]Jonah, do you ^[f]love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, you know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. They were commissioned to go and teach/counsel/guide the flock of God.

While the high school and college students look for appreciation and recognition in what they do, pastoral counseling lays a more robust foundation as they face life's challenges. The teaching and counseling of children would help in knowing that a good solid foundation has been laid down for the family, community, and the society at large. This would make the parent and the community move in their daily activities with their shoulders high knowing that their children are like arrows in the hand of a warrior (Psalm 127:3-5) ... *Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward. ⁴ Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. ⁵ Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.* It is important to lay a foundation that will help the children/students take their place as the leaders/teachers of tomorrow which without them, the whole community will be doomed.

Theoretical Foundations

The durability of any building depends on the type of foundation that has been laid down. According to the Bible, Jesus teaches on a wise builder who laid the foundation upon a rock, and when the rain, wind, storms, and floods fell, the building stood firm on the ground (Matthew 7:24-27). According to Horan Anne, Christian education seeks to foster millennials' spiritual

formation to equip them for future challenges and to benefit the society and the community at large.¹⁴⁷ Relational based programs are perceived to be the most effective spiritual formation activities though they are barely implemented.¹⁴⁸ When the youth is not educated or equipped with the necessary material, the future of the society is at the risk of disintegrating followed by a great break down. Horan states that, spiritual mature students are more likely to help develop future leaders and will participate in community service and extra-curricular activities exhibiting prosocial behaviors, improved self-esteem, self-control, and academic achievement with fewer risky behaviors.¹⁴⁹ While moral development and spiritual formation share some common ground, spiritual formation is differentiated through its Judeo-Christian lens while moral development is tied to cultural labels of good, bad, punishment, reward, and social approval.¹⁵⁰

Ubani and Murtonen states that the boundaries between youth and young adults have become blurred with similarities from teenage years to the late thirties.¹⁵¹ In this regard, Ubani and Murtonen states that the aspect of changes in people's spirituality is often affected by the educator, hence advocating for the need for pastoral counseling in schools and colleges.¹⁵² Though one is exposed to other influencers, it is important to note that the best safeguard is the sense of religion, habitually kept in one's mind and heart, endeavoring according to the language

¹⁴⁷ Anne Puidk Horan (2017). "Fostering Spiritual Formation of Millennials in Christian Schools". *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 26:1, 56.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 54.

¹⁴⁹ Anne Puidk Horan (2017). "Fostering Spiritual Formation of Millennials in Christian Schools". *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 26:1, 57

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ubani Martin & Murtonen Sari (2018). Issues in spiritual formation in early lifespan contexts, *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 23:2, 103108, 104.

¹⁵² Ubani Martin & Murtonen Sari (2018). Issues in spiritual formation in early lifespan contexts, *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 23:2, 103108, 104.

of Scripture.¹⁵³ As Flennaugh et al puts it, there needs to be the belief that if educators are not committed to the fundamental elements of learning, disconnected youth will not thrive in their lives.¹⁵⁴ The stakeholders (parents/guardians, teachers, and spiritual leaders) have to take a deliberate approach in reaching out to spiritual aspect of the student engaging them with moral virtues that need to be put in place.

According to Leal Elise, the spiritual nurture for the young transforms and molds them in serving and participating in the Church.¹⁵⁵ Leal Elsie insists that, an increase in emphasizing the spiritual nurture of the youth produced a significant shift in facilitating youth leadership.¹⁵⁶ The stakeholders should be aggressive and committed in establishing those values that need to be in place, for the youth to maintain and follow the route set forth. According to Cutas et al, beliefs about the moral status of children have changed significantly in recent decades, where knowledge about likely consequences for children of individual, parental, and societal choices have grown, as has the many choices the parents may have at their disposal.¹⁵⁷

When the relationship between the youth and the parent, church, or guardian is not conducive, Crosnoe et al (2004) states that other sources of support may be arenas of comfort

¹⁵³ Berens Edward (2007). *Advice to a Young Man upon First Going to Oxford in Ten Letters, From Uncle to His Nephew*. St. John's Square, London: Gilbert & Rivington Printers

¹⁵⁴ Flennaugh, Terry K., Kristy S. Cooper Stein, and Dorinda J. Carter Andrews. "Necessary but Insufficient: How Educators Enact Hope for Formerly Disconnected Youth." *Urban Education* 53, no. 1 (January 2018): 113–38.
(<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085917714515>).

¹⁵⁵ Leal, K. E. "All our Children may be Taught of God": Sunday Schools and the Roles of Childhood and Youth in Creating Evangelical Benevolence." *Church History* 87, no. 4 (12, 2018): 1056-90, 1057.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 1056.

¹⁵⁷ Hens, Cutas, and Horstkötter. (eds). *Parental Responsibility in the Context of Neuroscience and Genetics: International Library of Ethics, Law, and the New Medicine, vol 69*. Springer, Cham. Springer International Publishing. (2017), 1.

(https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/978-3-319-42834-5_1)

and support towards relationships.¹⁵⁸ The truth is that nonparent relationships, as indicated by Crosnoe and Elder are more likely to be directly associated with a student’s behavior than with parent-related interactions.¹⁵⁹ The issue of the parent/guardian telling the student on what should be done and what should not be done is a contention as the student seek his/her freedom and autonomy. All the same, the Bible commands that parent/guardian should teach the children on what to chose and where to go. According to MacArthur, children must be taught about the attributes of God, a topic that helps students to recognize that God is worthy of honor and invokes in them a desire to live righteously.¹⁶⁰ They want to do things on their own and on their terms. There is therefore the need to use all available resources to build the resilience needed in building the muscle required to form the person God intended.

Raising up Godly children, it is important to use the word of God without which the children/students become rebellious and unruly.¹⁶¹ To teach and train properly parents/caretakers need to fear and know God, and know the task laid upon them. Rather than bashing the students for what they do (get glued to their phones and stuck on social media for hours), there is need to use these platforms to the advantage of the church.¹⁶² According to Gayle Macklem, school counseling is less successful since social skills alone is not sufficient because there are

¹⁵⁸ Crosnoe, Robert, and Glen Elder. “Family Dynamics, Supportive Relationships and Educational Resilience During Adolescence.” *Journal of Family Issues* 25, no. 5(July 2004). 571–602.

<https://doi/10.1177/0192513x03258307>

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 571-602.

¹⁶⁰

<https://www.crosswalk.com/family/parenting/kids/john-macarthur-s-10-crucial-lessons-we-must-teach-our-children.html>

¹⁶¹ <https://biblereasons.com/teaching-children/>

¹⁶² <https://www.medium.com/publishous/8-things-millennials-say-would-bring-them-back-to-church-5ced959e2005>

considerable implementation challenges that need to be addressed.¹⁶³ The church/stakeholders need to involve students for help in addressing the presented problem and need to create an amazing social media that caters to a more youthful audience.¹⁶⁴ Tenai Noah reports that pastoral response affirms the full personhood and complete humanity of people as fully human and whole in their status.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, self-understanding can only be extracted from a spiritual viewpoint. The truth is that non-parental relationships, as indicated by Crosnoe and Elder, are more likely to be directly associated with a student's behavior than with parent-related interactions.¹⁶⁶ The likelihood of leaving church increases with age with some students attending church when they were young but after their twenties, they got busy and stopped or reduced attendance.¹⁶⁷ Pastoral counseling for students, therefore, would be the tool to implement the moral and ethical standards within the community and the society at large.

Chapter 3:

Methodology - Intervention Design

How the Intervention Would Make a Change in the Problem:

¹⁶³ Macklem G.L. (2011) Strengthening School-Counseling Interventions. In: *Evidence-Based School Mental Health Services*. Springer, New York, NY.

(https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/978-1-4419-7907-0_3)

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.medium.com/publishous/8-things-millennials-say-would-bring-them-back-to-church-5ced959e2005>

¹⁶⁵ <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1797885627?pq-origsite=summon>

¹⁶⁶ <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1797885627?pq-origsite=summon>

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/most-young-christians-drop-out-of-church-in-college-years/131490.htm>

Qualitatively, the Bible instructs to train up a child in the way they should go. This becomes an anchor that holds the child even when the child grows old and when storms blow their way (Proverbs 22:6) - *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Though the “boat” is swayed up and down by the storms that come, a ready anchor will hold it in place. Biblical counsel is the anchor that will uphold the student even when challenges of life ranges from all sides. The Bible clearly states that, “when the enemy comes like a flood, the Lord will raise a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19) - ¹⁹ *So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift a standard against him.* The Bible also promises the protection of God to those who trust and believe in Him. The Devil knows it, and even acknowledged to God of the protection He has for His people (Job 1:6-10) ⁶ *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.* ⁷ *And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” So, Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and from on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”* ⁸ *Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?”* ⁹ *So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰ Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.*

It is important to note that, everyone desires some protection to feel safe.¹⁶⁸ Many times, people move from one location to another in search of safety and peace of mind of feeling protected. All the same, the student should know that, the only sure bet for any individual of

¹⁶⁸ <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/what-exactly-does-hedge-of-protection-mean-for-my-life.html>

being protected is when one surrenders to God for protection. Jehovah God has promised that; no one would pluck one from His grip (John 10:28-30)²⁸ *And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.* ²⁹ *My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.* ³⁰ *I and My Father are one.*”

Once Pastoral Counseling is incorporated in schools and colleges, students will know and fear the lord and desire the things of God. The truth is that, when one is in the plan and purposes of God, the Lord builds a hedge surrounding the individual, such that the enemy, who is the accuser of the brethren, attacks with no avail. The Lord God builds a wall separating His own from the attacker/enemy (Exodus 14:9-31)¹⁹ *And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved, and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them.* ²⁰ *So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus, it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night...* But when the hedge is removed by not following the command of God, the enemy gets full access to steal, kill, and destroy the individual (John 10:10) - ¹⁰ *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).* When the Devil takes over the lead in one's life, He pulls down all that had been set up in someone's life, destroying it, and makes sure that it would not come back up again. Since the beginning, the Devil has been planning on destroying that which God have established. The Bible records that the Devil is like a roaring Lion, looking for anyone to devour (1 Peter 5:8⁸ *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* ⁹ *So*

resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brothers and sisters who are in the world (New American Standard Bible).

When one gets out of the plan of God, he/she becomes an open target of the enemy, where the enemy pulls him/her to whatever sites/places He desires. Those places are always locations designed for the destruction of the moral and ethical values of the student.... (Ezekiel 16:27-30) - *Behold, therefore, I stretched out My hand against you, diminished your allotment, and gave you up to the will of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. 28 You also played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were insatiable; indeed, you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied. 29 Moreover, you multiplied your acts of harlotry as far as the land of the trader, Chaldea; and even then, you were not satisfied. 30 "How degenerate is your heart!" says the Lord GOD, seeing you do all these things, the deeds of a brazen harlot.*

Preparing a student by informing, advising, and coaching on how to face life, how to behave, and those things that matter in life is very important. Letting them know how to approach a challenging issue, when to attack or flee from it will help a student on how to survive in this challenging world. Having sessions where student express himself/herself and discussing those challenging issues in life prepares an avenue to reach out offer the much-needed help. Otherwise, the student will get himself/herself in situations that would eventually impact his/her live/education in a very negative way. The informing will be done by involving the students who will participate in reaching out to other students. Once they get involved, the project becomes a part of their agenda which gives them the desire to push it to the finish line.

Getting to the level of the students and taking time to know them as individuals helps in reaching and having an impactful moment in their lives. This eventually builds a solid

foundation without which there would be no trust, respect, or any quality learning. Showing interest and engaging with them is a powerful motivational process that helps in the academic and psychological state of attention that affects the success of any project.¹⁶⁹ Having and showing interest in an individual is a tool that energizes the learning/counseling process and needs to be exercised and promoted.¹⁷⁰ This interest builds an intergenerational relationship which is important in developing and flourishing the faith of the community across their entire lifespan, fulfilling the purposes of God.¹⁷¹

Counseling helps the student to know when and how to choose his/her fights, and not to engage in whatever issue that arises. This should be an ongoing activity in the life of a student. Winston Churchill (1874-1965), a British statesman once said that “One does not have to throw a stone to every barking dog.” Time is precious and it needs to be spent wisely. Many students are obsessed with phones and devices and sometimes they miss out on many opportunities as they concentrate on their devices.¹⁷² To the advantage of the project, these electronic devices can be used to reach out as many students as in any other forum within social media.

There is need that students be equipped with a Christian compass as they leave their homes by developing a ministry that is attractive to them.¹⁷³ It is important to know and understand every student’s like and dislike, then strategies on what works and pursue it. They need guidance, support, and love as they engage with the responsibilities and the choices that

¹⁶⁹ Harackiewicz, Judith M et al (2016). “Interest Matters: The Importance of Promoting Interest in Education.” *Policy insights from the behavioral and brain sciences* vol. 3, 2, 220-227.

¹⁷⁰ <https://biologos.org/articles/six-reseans-young-christians-leave-church/>

¹⁷¹ <https://biologos.org/articles/six-reseans-young-christians-leave-church/>

¹⁷² <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/time-precious-waste-wisely>

¹⁷³ <https://www.acstechnologies.com/church-growth/college-students-disconnect-church/>

mostly overwhelms them. The reason why the students engage themselves with the unwanted behavior is after the enemy takes over their lives and controls their activities. The discipline and the morality which is the anchor to uphold the child is no longer enforced at home and in the learning institutions, eventually opening a doorway for any other theory/wind that comes from whichever side (East, West, North or South). Anyone coming with a different faith/belief theory, irrespective of their origin, will not move or deter the student because they have been founded on a firm foundation (Matthew 7:24-27²⁴“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” Once the students are taught, molded, and founded on the solid foundation of the word of God (Pastoral Counseling), the challenges that come their way will not affect or deter them from reaching their desired goal.

The Bible clearly indicates that, though the rains will come down and the winds will blow, the building (student) that have been built on a solid foundation will not be moved. In the Devil’s plan of destroying and killing the individual, the individual engages themselves in drug abuse, violence, unruliness, and the involvement of all kinds of evils forgetting that they have been delivered from all these evils; (Ephesians 6: 2-4) - *How can we, the very ones who died to sin, continue to live in it any longer? 3 Or are you ignorant of the fact that all of us who have been (b)baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 We have therefore been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead*

through the glory and power of the Father, we too might walk habitually in newness of life.

These activities become the agents that drug the individual to the destruction of their lives/future.

According to a survey on drug and substance abuse, it is important to consider the perceived consequences and motivations for drug and substance abuse to better inform policy and educational programs.¹⁷⁴ All the same, when the individual turns back to God and follow the biblical instructions given, God builds a hedge surrounding this individual and gives him/her a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11) - *¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.* Counseling the students on the way they should go and helping them know when and how temptations come would help them make better choices and build a hedge around them, which becomes a fortress for them. If pastoral counseling is implemented in schools and colleges, though the enemy would try to attack the students, they would be equipped with the spiritual muscle, and with the “full armor of God” to help them in time of need (Ephesians 6:11-18) - *¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of*

¹⁷⁴ Morgan, Celia J A et al (2013). “Harms and benefits associated with psychoactive drugs: findings of an international survey of active drug users.” *Journal of psychopharmacology (Oxford, England)* vol. 27, 6: 497-506.

(<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4107777/>)

God; ¹⁸ *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.*

How to Inform or Involve those in the Project:

Creating activities that involve the participation of the students towards the project of interest will help in informing them of the project. Sharing and exposing the concerns of the project and asking for their input towards the issue would be a way of involving the students. It would be important for the students to know that no matter the challenges that come in life, God has promised never to leave nor forsake His own (Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Psalm 27:1). The implementation of the word of God and the involvement of the students becomes a great potential in the student's life. According to Franklin et al, those that have been entrusted with the students can unconsciously, but permanently clip the innocent wings of angels.¹⁷⁵ The stakeholders therefore are to be intentional and prepared to build upon the talents and qualities of every individual student, for them to become productive members of the society.¹⁷⁶ Every individual was created with a potential and a purpose in life which needs to be extracted from and implemented.¹⁷⁷

Exposing the problem and the threats imposed by the same and similar problems, asking their view and take on the issues would help in exposing and keeping them informed. Visiting detention facilities where those apprehended for the same or similar problems and hearing what happened and how they feel about it or visiting those in hospitals or rehabilitation centers having

¹⁷⁵ Franklin, Streeter, Webb, & Guz. *Solution Focused Brief Therapy in Alternative Schools: Ensuring Student Success and Preventing Dropout (1st Ed.)*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2018, viii.

¹⁷⁶ Franklin et al, 1.

¹⁷⁷ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK208601/>

been involved in similar activities would open the students up to what lays ahead. Since information is power, as used by Thomas Jefferson, this information will sensitize the students on the issues that affect their potential.¹⁷⁸ According to Adolf and Stehr, knowing has often been reduced to the relationship between the individual subjects (the problem) and the object or referent, who is the knower, in this case, the student.¹⁷⁹ Once an issue has been exposed and understood, acting on it with knowledge and understanding helps an individual to make an informed action.

The Plan to Address the Problem

The truth is that, if pastoral counseling is offered to students, there would be the upholding of good moral and ethical standards within the community. Since social media has become a meeting spot for students, creating an interactive app that would enhance spiritual values into the lives of participants would be a great tool. Focusing on the eleventh graders to the fourth-year college students (16 – 21 years) who are the most affected, this was to help capture the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of the participants in the area of attendance failure. For the research process, participants were drawn from 18 – 21 years of age. Though there are advantages and disadvantages in any approach, pastoral care was the guiding principle of participation in this approach. The concern for moral virtues such as honesty, responsibility, and respect for others was an area of concern where the students would acquire these virtues helping them live good and productive lives.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/knowledge-power-quotation

¹⁷⁹ Marian Adolf and Nico Stehr (2016). *Knowledge: Is Knowledge Power?* New York, NY: Taylor and Francis Group, (Introduction), 4.

¹⁸⁰ <https://education.ststeuniversity.com/pages/2246/Moral-Education.html>

Moral education, then, refers to helping children acquire those virtues or moral habits that will help them individually live good lives and at the same time become productive, contributing members of their communities. In this view, moral education should contribute not only to the students as individuals, but also to the social cohesion of a community. Pastoral counseling is the integration of thoughts and methods of how to deal with issues that come into one's life. It helps to know and live according to the plan and purposes of God, which is to establish an individual to know and glorify God through his or her life and enjoy His presence in their daily life (Genesis 1:26) ... ²⁶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over ^[a]all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* Isaiah 43:7... *Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him;* Ephesians 2:10) ⁷ *Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.* ²¹ *This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise.* The Lord God has a plan and a purpose for every individual.

It is therefore important for students to know how to dwell in God's presence and be empowered to fulfill the plan of God for their life. The plan was therefore to start up counseling sessions, to equip the students with the information. Knowing how to approach an issue with a sober spiritual enlightenment would yield some spiritual fruit. After identifying those who are willing and ready for the sessions, it was important to empower them to reach out to their colleagues with the same objective but in their own way of approach. It was important to make sure the sessions were categorized according to their ages (1 Corinthians 13:11) ¹¹ *When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a*

man, I put away childish things. Getting to the level of the student was key to reaching them where they are. This would give them courage to a free discussion/participation without intimidation or fear of anything or anyone.

Implementation of Intervention Design:

The Actual Intervention Plan

The lack of pastoral counseling opens an individual to other forces of influence that interrupt and tear apart the laid down principles and allows those other forces to guide and direct their way of life (Psalm 32:8 ... ⁸ *I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye*). The Lord God has promised to instruct and teach (through pastoral counseling) of the right way to go. Intentional and deliberate pastoral counseling need to be implemented so that the biblical truths that have been laid down would be upheld in one's life (Genesis 28:15 ... ¹⁵ *Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you*"). It is important to know and understand that the Lord God will always keep one safe, irrespective of where one is. When one is in the plan and purpose of God, He has promised to keep and preserve such a person in all places and with the grace, comfort, and presence of God accompanying such.

Creating activities of interest and allowing the students to participate while introducing biblical truths in those activities would act as a bridge to connect with the students. Though the created activities were hampered by the COVID 19 pandemic that hit the world, Students were to be involved in creating activities with the guidance of the pastoral counselor, where biblical truths were to be introduced and discussed in an open forum. All the same, few high school and college students showed up and had some activities together. The main activities were the

basketball and soccer games where discussion forums for the study were established, and issues deliberated on.

The participants of the study were from ages 18 to 25 years, most of them drawn from Covenant church with few of them having no church to call home. The study/survey was conducted by the researcher under a stressful COVID 19 pandemic health restrictions of isolating and restricted movement. Participation was announced in the church by the researcher where, though with limited movement, few participants showed up and participated in the project by answering the presented questionnaire. The highest number of participants were the twelfth graders who were sixteen, ten college students and four eleventh graders.

There was a session of each student writing down issues that causes students not to attend church or even to be affiliated with any religious organization, and issues that would pull students back to church. They were to write down issues that affect them as they mingle with other students and what should be done about those issues. There was a questioning and answering session where questions were posed by the students. The pastoral counselor was to implement the biblical dos and don'ts as they engage in their daily activities (Joshua 1:8; *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success;* Proverbs 22:6; *Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it*). Those who like games like baseball, basketball, football, and the like were to be coached in the same and organize competitions on those sports. Those who like other activities would be addressed too, with a culmination of discussion sessions that involve pastoral counseling. There was the visitation program where

students would visit those in rehabilitation centers, jails, and hospitals, to hear and see what the world is offering out there.

It is important to note that biblical counsel acts as an anchor that will uphold the student even when difficult challenges strike. When the enemy comes like a flood, the Lord raises a standard against him (Isaiah 59:19 ... ¹⁹ *So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him*). According to Matthew Henry's commentary, God charged His people that they had stopped the current of God's favors to them, and some sins were specified which had kept good things from them; they were told of the judgements of God upon them, and how God would work deliverance for them, purely for His own sake, and how He would reserve mercy in store and would grant it to them.¹⁸¹ This scripture indicates that, though the students might be lost in the worldly issues and staff, the Lord God Almighty has kept mercy and grace in His store house, for those who come back to Him. There is therefore need to stand in the 'gap' before all is lost, train and teach them the right way towards the righteousness of God, who will then show them grace and mercy.

Action groups derived from the stakeholders (after gathering on how to involve them and what would help in getting to the next level), would be implemented. As Stringer puts it, an effective action research process requires the participants to work through the cycle of investigation by exploring and examining how they interpret the problem.¹⁸² The involvement of the stakeholders in every level will act as an eye opener to them. This helps in knowing whether

¹⁸¹ [Isaiah 59 Commentary - Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible \(Complete\)](http://biblestudytools.com)
(biblestudytools.com)

¹⁸² <https://libertyonline.vitalsource.com/#/books/9781483320731/cfi/6/24!/4/10@0:51.7>, 99

the students know or understand that they need pastoral counseling sessions. Stinger informs that, the stakeholders should develop a plan for each issue and present them for discussion, modification (if necessary), and endorsement.¹⁸³ Otherwise the researcher might start up a process without any interested stakeholder.

Working with the students and establishing communication creates an avenue that would be used in reaching out to the students. Whatever the circumstances in one's life, pastoral counseling helps in understanding beyond any doubt that God is always a present help (Psalm 46:1). To go through life's challenges, one must have the resources available that would help to go through to the other side of victory. It is important for the student to know that their being here on earth is not in vain and not to be a loser in life. But the Devil, who accuses the brethren and has been condemned already, with his place in the lake of fire want to pull and derail that which God has instituted (Revelation 12:10¹⁰ *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God, day, and night, has been cast down*). The Bible has answers for all challenges that face humans.

Since the heart of man can distort how one sees the circumstances, and relationships with others, and the character of God and His promises, there is need for some help and loving care of one who can provide wisdom and guidance to fully see the one who rescues from may look difficult and even of no hope.¹⁸⁴ Since man was created by God, God has all that is needed to make and mold this person to become what God desire of him, for there is nothing too hard for God (Jeremiah 32:27) - *"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard*

¹⁸³ <https://libertyonline.vitalsource.com/#/books/9781483320731/cfi/6/28!/4/24@0:48.6>, 168.

¹⁸⁴ https://www.redemptivepromise.com/biblical-counseling?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIzuuxqoby9gIVT1VyCh3prwrNEAEYASAAEgLGAPD_BwE

for Me? Though they have turned their back on God, God can change and transform them to become the people God want them to be. It is the desire of God for people to find refuge, hope, and strength in Him, hence He equips men and women through special training, and spiritual gifting to provide wise counsel to those amid struggles.¹⁸⁵

Whose Approvals is Needed

For the non-exempt human subjects, research conducted or supported by HHS (Department of Human Health Services) provides guidelines on the authority of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) to approve research with conditions.¹⁸⁶ An IRB must review proposed research, including proposed changes in approved research except when expedited review is authorized, and must receive the approval of most of the members present.¹⁸⁷ Also, an institution may use an alternative approach if the approach satisfies the requirements of the HHS regulations.¹⁸⁸ When conducting a research project, researchers require cooperation and communication with the potential research subjects who can chose to participate or not.¹⁸⁹ It is therefore important to rias and agree with the participants on the area of participation and the parameters involved and the set time for the same.

¹⁸⁵ https://www.redemptivepromise.com/biblical-counseling?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIzuuxqoby9gIVT1VyCh3prwrNEAEYASAAEgLGAPD_BwE

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance-on-irb-approval-of-research-withconditions.2010/index.html#section-a>

¹⁸⁷ <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance-on-irb-approval-of-research-withconditions.2010/index.html#section-a>

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance-on-irb-approval-of-research-withconditions.2010/index.html#section-a>

¹⁸⁹ <https://research.phoenix.edu/news/irb-corner-understanding-permissions-research>

Another issue to consider is that individuals or organizations that own the copyright to an instrument that might be used for data collection must give permission to use their data for the said project.¹⁹⁰ The permission process extends to any materials for the literature review, data results or support, or any other information used to support the project.¹⁹¹ Institutional approvals from organizations like schools, colleges, universities, and business entities are often required before a study begins.¹⁹² The introduction and implementation of pastoral counseling in schools and colleges is an issue to be dealt with by the education board. Once the board integrates the idea into the system, there will be no need to seek for approval. This is because it will be included in the school/college curriculum. In case the board fail to approve the implementation of the program, there would be the contacting of the parents/guardians of the younger students, and of course the teachers to allow them to participate in the project. In this case, there will be consent forms to be signed for that purpose.

How to Get the Participants' Consent

It is important to get consent from all participants and to maintain a record of their consent whether in direct or in remote participation. The participants need to be informed about the project to decide on whether to participate or not. The involvement of the parent/guardian and the teacher will give the student the trust that he/she is not being misused, and the liberty to choose either to participate or not. By signing a consent form, this will act as a commitment to participate, though there would a lee way for either withdrawing from the project participation or

¹⁹⁰ <https://research.phoenix.edu/news/irb-corner-understanding-permissions-research>

¹⁹¹ <https://research.phoenix.edu/news/irb-corner-understanding-permissions-research>

¹⁹² Ibid.

be denied participation. This will be after presenting the problem to the students and let them decide on participating in the research process. There will also be a set time when the consent forms are to be ready for filling, setting teams and projections for the project followed by the commencement of the project.

Other Resources and Personal Preparation Required

Any resources out there that could be of help in relation to the problem was highly appreciated. Literature (theoretical, theological, philosophical, or sociological) materials that help in encouraging and bringing the students back to themselves, the purpose of life and life goals, and the involvement of other (like minded) individuals who have gone through this journey of life would be of great help in molding these students. Skits and presentations that relate to the issues that affect the ethical values and the morality of an individual were of great help in this project. Asking questions about life and life goals/challenges and asking feedback from their peers became an interesting and productive resource for this project. Having access to correction centers, rehabilitation centers, body building, and recreation facilities would have helped to ease, reflect, and to mold the kind of a person God desired when He created man. But due to the COVID-19 epidemic restriction, the visiting of facilities was not achieved. All the same, the involvement of other like-minded individuals was of great help in this project.

What is Currently True Regarding the Problem

The truth is that many high school and college students do not attend church as they

used to. According to a lifeway research article, teenagers drop out of the church as they make the transition out of high school and student ministry.¹⁹³ Students have involved themselves in activities that have brought down the moral and ethical standards that ought to be upheld. Evil have taken over in many schools and colleges, where drug abuse, violence, unruliness, unbecoming behavior has been in the rise. The value of life is not seen as important, where a student do not mind carrying a weapon, or a gun and shooting randomly to other students and members of the school community.¹⁹⁴ *On April 16th 2007, a 23-year-old college student named Seung-Hui Cho killed 32 people and wounded 25 others on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg and later put a gun to his temple and pulled the trigger.*¹⁹⁵ *On August 30, 2006, a 19-year-old youth, clad in a trench coat, drove into the parking lot of his former high school in Hillsborough, N.C.--and began firing wounding two students, and when the police arrived, Alvaro Castillo gave up without a struggle.*¹⁹⁶ The problem of drug abuse, violence, unruliness, lack of integrity, and such like habits causes individual do whatever comes in their minds.

The Bible records that, the Devil comes to steal that which had been planted in one's life (Matthew 10:10) - *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.* Failure to attend Church denies one the opportunity of being taught, trained, equipped, and counseled on what, and how to behave, act or do when out in the world or when challenges come. Being equipped prepares one to be ready even when the enemy is on the offensive. One is able to distinguish the

¹⁹³ <https://www.lifewayresearch.com/2018/12/17/the-number-one-reason-for-the-decline-in-church-attendance/>

¹⁹⁴ www.scientificamerican.com/article/deadly-dreams/

¹⁹⁵ Ibid

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

appropriate weaponry as counter attacks the enemy. This is because with or without the desired armor, the attacks of the enemy are eminent. All the same, unruly students do not care the repercussions when they burn their dormitories, libraries, laboratories, and the like, just because... The reasoning that should be applied in nowhere in their systems because the enemy has already stolen that reasoning aspect of the individual. The “good” that was once in the individual has been killed, hence there is nothing good that can be found in them.

According to Tommy Rogers, there are struggles between some public schools and parents due to their religious views which conflict with the school curriculum, but the implementation of pastoral counseling will ease the process and harmonize the relationship.¹⁹⁷ Many of the stake holders have been busy fighting one another about faith and religiosity leaving the children/students in a state of confusion, allowing the diversity of faith and worldview to demolish the structures that had be laid before. According to a (British Journal of Religious Education) article, there is a strong interest in different forms of spirituality and a corresponding rise in people identifying as being spiritual but not religious.¹⁹⁸ Giving instructions and advising on what to do and what not to do is an important ingredient that need to be upheld. The issue of letting the student do and behave in whatever way they desire needs attention. As suggested earlier, it is important to consider the consequences and motivations for drug use to inform policy and education curriculum.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Tommy Kelvin Rogers. "Parental Rights: Curriculum Opt-Outs in Public Schools". (2010), 108-109. (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/deadly-dreams/>)

¹⁹⁸ Lipiainen Tuuli, et al. (2020). Diverse Worldviews Education and Social Inclusion: A Comparison Between Finnish and Australian Approaches to Build Intercultural and Interreligious Understanding, *British Journal of Religious Education*, 42:4, 391-402, (DOI: [10.1080/01416200.2020.1737918](https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2020.1737918)).

¹⁹⁹ Morgan, Celia J A et al (2013). “Harms and benefits associated with psychoactive drugs: findings of an international survey of active drug users.” *Journal of psychopharmacology (Oxford, England)* vol. 27, 6: 497-506.

The growth of any nation depends upon the foundation laid down, especially on the preparing of children. If children/students are not guided on what to do and where to go, there is a possibility of them getting lost before they reach their potential. When God created humans, He made sure that the man had all that it takes to fulfill their God ordained purpose. All the same, this potential must be extracted from every individual, more so the children, bringing about the issue of pastoral counseling (Joshua 1:8 ... ⁸ *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.* Proverbs 22:6 ... *Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it*). Parental involvement has been associated with more favorable social and emotional outcomes for students, such as less disruptive behavior.²⁰⁰ All the same, though the involvement of pastoral and or parental guidance and counseling is important, additional research pertaining to the social-cultural and peer influence need to be pursued.

The positive association between schools and levels of parental involvement in their adolescents' education are mediated by parents' construction of their role.²⁰¹ This indicates that the parental involvement in molding and aligning the student in the way he/she should go is very vital. Again, learning by association is a great foundational tool that was identified by a Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) as he was studying the behavioral system of dogs, where he noticed a behavioral phenomenon where the dogs salivated because of association.²⁰² Pavlov

²⁰⁰ Sira Park, and Holloway Susan. "Parental Involvement in Adolescents' Education: An Examination of the Interplay among School Factors, Parental Role Construction, and Family Income." *School Community Journal* 28, no. 1 (Spring, 2018): 9-36.

²⁰¹

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326254703_Parental_Involvement_in_Adolescents%27_Education_An_Examination_of_the_Interplay_Among_School_Factors_Parental_Role_Construction_and_Family_Income

²⁰² <https://open.lib.emn.edu/intropsyc/chapter/7-1-learning-by-association-classical-conditioning/>

realized that the dogs were salivating because they knew they were about to be fed, showing that the dogs had begun to associate with the feeding group.²⁰³ This phenomenal shows that the association one gets involved in becomes part of that individual. If one associates with immoral people, that person becomes immoral. If one associates with drug dealers, the individual will eventually be recruited into the same dealership. The individual will act and behave as the associating team. It is important to choose the kind of group one associates with.

It is true that there is need to have an intentional instructional model of informing and instilling into the students, the parameters they need to know and have. This will help them grow, learn and have the necessary tools to help them become the people God intended them to be, a people with integrity and wisdom to be the leaders the world is longing for. Without addressing this problem, the generation that will come out will be a people without remorse or who do not care who or what happens to their neighbors or colleagues, while the Bible instructs of the need to take care of a neighbor (Genesis 4:9)⁹ *Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"* Families which are to be the foundation of a community, the nation, and the world at large have been affected by these "don't care" phenomena. The family unit that ought to be upheld is led by one whose behavior is questionable, who do not care about live (drug abuse, violence, unruliness, unbecoming behavior is part of their daily activity).

The truth is that children living with their married biological parents consistently have better physical, emotional, and academic well-being, and the society should promote the family structure that has the best chance of producing healthy children/students.²⁰⁴ Parents should

²⁰³ <https://open.lib.emn.edu/intropsyc/chapter/7-1-learning-by-association-classical-conditioning/>

²⁰⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4240051/>

become involved in the student's education in response to inclusive school practices and also compensate for perceived deficits in the student's experience at school.²⁰⁵ This is to say that parents are foundational stakeholders in molding, guiding, and directing students in their becoming people the society is longing for.

Marriage and sex have become an issue that nobody cares, where one can marry as many times as they wish and have sex with anybody out there without caring about their lives. Hence the institution of marriage that was ordained by God becomes neglected and abandoned as is seen today (Genesis 2:18, 21-24) ... ¹⁸ *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him...."* ²¹ *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.* ²² *Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man...* ²³ *And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man"* ²⁴ *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

Marriage, though seen as a convenience wise was ordained by God and therefore the defilement of those principles is an issue of concern. The implementation of pastoral counseling will help bringing those broken pieces together and molding them to become that which God intended to be. Those moral and ethical standards that were once present need to be established and implemented into these individuals, making them become the people God intended them to be.

The truth is that the society have put an effort to exclude God and religion sentiments from public schools/colleges, an issue that has put the spiritual aspect of the students into the

²⁰⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4240051/>

dust bin.²⁰⁶ The stakeholders that ought to be in the forefront in enhancing and implementing the spiritual aspect of students are engaged in an endless tussle that leaves the students vulnerable to the schemes of the enemy (Devil). The Devil is always looking for someone to tear apart and destroy anything that God has planned for his/her life (1 Peter 5:8) ... ⁸ *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* When the walls of a city are destroyed and pulled down, the city becomes a playing ground for all kinds of games, a dumping ground for all junks, a route for any animal (wild or otherwise), and all kind of evil. But when the walls are well placed and controlled, the well-being of the city, the restoration of order and tranquility of the same becomes a model to be reckoned with. When one is sober, his/her thinking and acting is well coordinated and always ready to learn and be to be corrected. The unsober mind is always opposed to anything new or anything challenging to them.

The truth is that children are like a fallow ground prepared and ready for any seed to be planted in them. It is important to plant good seeds into the lives of these students before the enemy steps in with an “evil seed” (Matthew 13:24-30) ²⁴ *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ ²⁸ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ ²⁹ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the*

²⁰⁶ <https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2007/05/religion-public-schools.pdf>

tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them but gather the wheat into my barn."

According to Matthew Henry's Bible commentary, the seed in the parable, is the word of God, the Sower is the Lord Jesus Christ, by Himself or by His ministers (Pastoral Counselors), while the sowing is the preaching to the multitudes.²⁰⁷ The commentary elaborates that the things of God should be made more plain and easy to those willing to be taught, and the same time more difficult and obscure to those who are willingly ignorant.²⁰⁸ Students need to be trained and coached on the dependance on God in everything they do, knowing that God has a plan and a purpose for them. There is need to be aligned with the word of God for the student to receive that which God has in store for the student.

The entanglement and the defilement of students with the worldly issues has brought about the calling of all stakeholders to stand their ground and tell as it is. The choking and the drying of the seed is because of not being founded or grounded on the right soil. For the soil to be right/good, it must be worked on by the farmer. The farmer prepares the soil by applying fertilizers according to the crop based on the type of soil, thereby achieving maximum yield. Planting seeds without first preparing the soil will always end up in wasted resources, time and energy. Children/students are some sort of good ground that receives the seed because they have not been polluted by Satan, who is the great murderer of souls, and is the great thief of sermons and will be sure to rob the word (seed) if they do not take care to keep it.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ <https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary/matthew-henry-concise/matthew/13>

²⁰⁸ <https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary/matthew-henry-concise/matthew/13>

²⁰⁹ <https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary/matthew-henry-concise/matthew/13>

It is the responsibility of the caretakers (parents, teachers, spiritual leaders, and others) to impart into the lives of students those good seeds that will help them become leaders with integrity that would build a community with good moral and ethical values. If the caretaker does not plant the good seed, the enemy will step in and plant all other kinds of seeds into the life of the student. Having an upper hand in the preparation of students/children as they grow up, the caretaker has the duty of implementing the basics that would help in developing the spiritual muscle that would keep the student afloat despite the challenges of life. In Hosea 10:12, (*Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you*) ... The Bible instructs of planting the good seeds of righteousness and one will harvest a crop of love. Pastoral counseling will help students get grounded with the word of God, knowing their place in God and the purpose of their being here. It also helps one to be founded and established in the things that he/she do.

The English Standard Version of Hosea 10:12 *Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for it is the time to seek the LORD, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.* The Amplified Bible says that ... *Sow with a view to righteousness [that righteousness, like seed, may germinate]; Reap in accordance with mercy and lovingkindness. Break up your uncultivated ground, for it is time to seek and search diligently for the LORD [and to long for His blessing], Until He comes to rain righteousness and His gift of salvation on you.* The scripture indicates that, whatever is done should be done with a view of that which is upright and of good report, knowing that the blessings of God will follow.

According to Clarke's Bible Commentary, Hosea 10:12 says.... *Sow to yourselves in righteousness — Let the seed you sow be of the best kind, and in just measure.* In the plowing, it

is important to intentionally prepare the ground for the seed that need to be planted with an expectant heart. There is need to do a thorough search in figuring out where there is need, come up with a strategy of addressing those needs. The stakeholders should not be satisfied with addressing one area of need but have an open mind in addressing those different areas that need attention before they go beyond repair or before the season is over. Clarke Commentary indicates that *God will give you the early rain in due time, and in proper measure. Here are the metaphors, and the application cannot be difficult. Here are ploughing, fallowing, sowing, harrowing, watering, reaping, threshing, and feeding on the produce of well-directed labor. All may be applied to the human heart, and the work of God upon it. Correction, contrition, conversion, receiving the grace of Christ, bringing forth fruit* (Hosea 10:12d).

Hosea 10:12 instructs to plow up the hard ground of the heart, for now is the time to seek the Lord, that he may come and shower righteousness. This scripture clearly indicates that there is a time for plowing and a time for planting. For the Lord to shower righteousness, the plowing should not be mixed with the planting. There is need to prepare the student at the right time, for the seed of the word of God, which will open up the door for the Lord God to shower His blessings upon the student. Neglecting or “sitting back” and watch attitude will cause the student not to receive the “showers of blessings” the Lord God has promised. The “instructing” is a call to the parents, teachers, and caretakers to take the lead without relenting, to teach, counsel, train the students/children to become the people God intended them to be.

Chapter 4: Results

Since the research project was on identifying the root cause of the attendance failure, which has brought about the deterioration of the moral and ethical principles within the

community and the society, several findings were realized and recorded. Parenting principles and the presence of the parent/guardian were issues that featured the most. Parents were identified as some of those who cause the disconnect by many of those interviewed. They were also reported as those who did put restrictions and conditions, which according to the students were very oppressive and inconsiderate. Many of the parents/caretakers were not available, and some did not care what the student did or did not do.

According to an article by *The Guardian 2011*, deprivation and inequality in some area is a root cause of disobedience amongst the young people, where some talk about not being given the same opportunity even in accessing education.²¹⁰ Deprivation occurs when those who are obligated to perform or assist the students fail to do so, just because they do not feel like doing it. Since the enemy have infiltrated in the world, and more so the school system, His desire is to destabilize systems, confuse the stakeholders making them not to take responsibility and instead, they stand on the side and watch as the student mess themselves up (Matthew 26:31).³¹ *Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'* Through the cunningness of the Devil, stakeholders who ought to mold and train the students on the way to go, are pulled out of the way and the students are left to lead themselves. The students are therefore deprived of whatever privileges they would have enjoyed in the presence of their teachers and those who are obligated to be their guide.

The restrictions applied by some of the stakeholders become stumbling blocks to the students as they try to maneuver their way to their destiny. Every student goes to school/college to study with a goal to graduate. As they graduate, there is need for them to be equipped with all

²¹⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/sep/05/young-people-2011-summer-unrest>

the necessary apparatus to help manage their lives as they mingle with other individuals. They therefore need a team that would steer them towards that goal. Parents/teachers and other stakeholders have the obligation of training and teaching the student towards that goal, and towards making them respectable men and women who will lead the nation to the next level. As the stakeholders chart and lead the way, no group should be treated better than the other, an issue that have caused many students to rebel and become unruly. The truth is that some of the stakeholders do dominate the whole program without giving room to each student to help them grow through participation.

According to an article by Dr. Laurence Steinberg, good parenting helps foster empathy, honesty, self-reliance, self-control, kindness, cooperation, cheerfulness, and promotes intellectual curiosity, motivation, and encourages a desire to achieve.²¹¹ This shows that, poor parenting would result in the direct opposite of the above. The article indicates that, raising a happy, healthy child is one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs for a parent.²¹² With this attitude in a “parent’s porch”, there is need for an intentional plan on how to reach a desired goal for the child. Since a parent’s desire for their children is for them to be the best in whatever they do, there is need for the parent/guardian to be intentional in raising them up. Stakeholders should provide an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and empathy, while allowing the natural consequences of a student’s behavior and actions to train the student.²¹³

Dr. Laurence Steinberg insists that the most important principle one should have is to know that children/students learn from what the parent/caretaker do.²¹⁴ Parents are the agents

²¹¹ <https://www.medicinenet.com/parenting/article.htm>

²¹² <https://www.medicinenet.com/parenting/article.htm>

²¹³ <https://www.medicinenet.com/parenting/article.htm>

²¹⁴ Ibid

that should propel the students/children to the desired direction. What they do as they bring up children become a “rail line” that they should follow. This means that these children will go where the rail line takes them. The Bible instructs that, those that are willing and obedient, will eat the good of the land (Isaiah 1:19) *If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;* ²⁰ *But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword”; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken. According to Bridgeway Bible Commentary, God is ready and able to cleanse them, but whether He will, depends on them.*²¹⁵ *They must be willing to stop pleasing themselves and obey God, who wants them to enjoy prosperity in their land, but if they refuse to change their ways, they will meet only disaster.*²¹⁶ No wonder the Bible informs that (Isaiah 54:10) *“For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,” Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.*” Irrespective of the situation one is in, the love and concern of God is evident in His word when He beckons humanity to go to Him and have a conversation.

Isaiah 1:18 calls on humanity to approach the Throne of God – “Come now let us reason together” indicates that God is ready to discuss the problem with His people even as He opens a door for reconciliation towards God. Though the students may not be willing to reason, there is a need to make that open avenue for them, and make it plain so that they can see the light. The truth is that when the light of God is exposed to the people, their eyes open up to see the reality of things, and what the world offers, and they can compare with what God offers. The Bible informs that “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Again, “the

²¹⁵ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/isaiah/1-19.html>

²¹⁶ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/isaiah/1-19.html>

wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). According to Clarke’s Commentary, every sinner earns “death” by long, sore, and painful service.²¹⁷ All the same, the gift of God is eternal life, which is the gracious gift of God, through Jesus Christ who died on behalf of the sinful man, who find redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ²¹⁸. Jesus Christ has reserved this redemption, which is for all those who find it through the blood of Jesus Christ who died for that purpose. This truth being shared to the students sheds the light on what and where to put their faith/trust, this becoming the foundation that every individual need to be founded upon.

The Bible asks a question of who will tell them (Romans 10:14); *14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?* There is need for someone to stand in the gap and deliver the message to the students/children. Being left alone means letting them charter their way without knowing where they are heading to, why they are going that direction, and what lays ahead of them. The truth is that good parenting helps students from developing anxiety, depression, eating disorders, antisocial behavior, alcohol/drug abuse and such like behaviors.²¹⁹ The rules and the foundation laid by the parent/guardian shapes the principle/ordinances that the students applies as they engage in their daily life. When students are left alone to figure out and sketch their way out, the possibility of opting the “easier way” is on the higher level. Laying a foundation is an area where most students have been left to figure out for themselves. Knowing what need to be done and when to do it is an area of concern. Just as they have been left to make their meals, they are somehow mandated to fetch for themselves.

²¹⁷ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/romans/6-23.html>

²¹⁸ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/romans/6-23.html>

²¹⁹ <https://www.medicinenet.com/parenting/article.htm>

From the settlement of the children of Israelites in Canaan, they were led astray by the worship of local gods, collectively known as Baalism, where Joshua warned the original settlers of the dangers of idolatry in Josua 24:14-15, (¹⁴ *“Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!”* ¹⁵ *And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD*).²²⁰ Students need to be warned and informed of the consequences that follow failing to adhere to the laid down approach in their daily walk.

The truth is that most students go to school ready and willing to learn, a disposition that need to be fostered and strengthened by all stakeholders to ensure that the desired results are realized.²²¹ Schools and colleges need to strengthen that disposition in ensuring that students leave school/college with the motivation and capacity to continue desiring to learn throughout their lives.²²² When these attitudes and skills are developed in a the life of a student, the student will be well prepared to acquire the skills necessary to help when challenging times come.²²³ All the same, many students engage with other unnecessary activities which take most of the spare time they have. The development of attitudes, skills, values, and morals will help in acquiring the much-needed learning which is necessary for a successful adaptation to the changing

²²⁰ <https://www.studydrive.net/commentary/isaiah/1-19.html>

²²¹ <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/programme-for-international-student-assessment-pisa/33918006.pdf>

²²² www.oecd.org/education/school/programme-for-international-student-assessment-pisa/33918006.pdf

²²³ Ibid

circumstances.²²⁴ But the peer activities that are free and readily available takes the center role giving the student a quick option of the peer route.

There is need to create a conducive learning environment where the student will not feel alienated and disengaged from the learning contexts in school, involving them in the projects and activities around the school.²²⁵ All the same, some stakeholders have perfected the art of dictatorship while with their children/students. All what the children hear are instructions on what to do and where to go. Others have been left to do what they want and there is literary no one to guide, teach, or ask the student on what they do or what bothers them. The parents/guardians are uninvolved, which gives the student to “do it their way”. All the same, though parenting is a personal experience that takes a lot of time, there need to be a consistent effort for one to be successful.²²⁶

Students need motivational resources that contribute to their readiness in refining their own goals, interpret success and failure appropriately and translate wishes into intentions and plans.²²⁷ Where there is commitment and dedication, a positive relationship with the student and the establishment of the dos and don'ts can be maintained, which will help mold the student. The truth is that teacher-student relationship is at the heart of teaching where a positive relationship with a student is close and supportive and believes that every child can learn at different levels setting high expectations and strives to keep relationships conflict-free.²²⁸ Stakeholders/teachers

²²⁴ www.oecd.org/education/school/programmeforinternationalstudentassessmentpisa/33918006.pdf

²²⁵ www.oecd.org/education/school/programmeforinternationalstudentassessmentpisa/33918006.pdf

²²⁶ <https://wellnessmind.org/4-types-of-parenting-styles>

²²⁷ www.oecd.org/education/school/programmeforinternationalstudentassessmentpisa/33918006.pdf

²²⁸ https://ggie.berkeley.edu/school-relationships/positive-teacher-student-relationships/#tab__1

manage much of students' learning where learning is enhanced if students can manage it themselves even when they school/college.²²⁹ There is need for the establishment of goals to preserve and monitor their learning progress with the help of stakeholders.

Teachers need to understand how individual groups of students are likely to respond to any given opportunity to make consequential choices about the goals, activities, and experiences they wish to pursue in the classroom.²³⁰ According to this article Parker, Novak, and Bartell, students feel autonomous when they understand the value or relevance of a task, particularly if they believe that the task aligns with their values.²³¹ It is important for the stakeholders to provide students with real and relevant choices at hand with at least one option of choice.²³² It was established that some parents/caretakers do not care about the developmental norms of students which is a tool in upholding and establishing a solid foundation in the live of a student. Some students claimed that their parents/guardians are so much committed with their "job responsibilities" such that, even when they are at home, they miss the much-needed bonding with their children due to the job commitments. This has eventually contributed to the moral and ethical decay and the withdrawal from church/religious engagements, hence the need for this research project.

It is important for the student to receive the nurturing, guidance, and parental/guardian attention needed. A student's experience of being nurtured and developing a bond with a caretaker affects all developmental and behavioral aspects of the student/child, having a strong

²²⁹ www.oecd.org/education/school/programmeforinternationalstudentassessmentpisa/33918006.pdf

²³⁰ <https://kappanonline.org/engage-students-give-meaningful-choices-classroom/>

²³¹ <https://kappanonline.org/engage-students-give-meaningful-choices-classroom/>

²³² <https://kappanonline.org/engage-students-give-meaningful-choices-classroom/>

and warm relationship where trust, acceptance, guidance, and protection is realized.²³³ This is an area where most of the students raised concern, indicating that the parent/caretaker has not been present. There is barely no one to teach insightful thoughts and equipping the student on how to grow up, making good decisions that would be helpful in the future. According to Dr. Steinberg, there is need to manage the student's behavior which would help the student learn how to do self-management as they grow.²³⁴ All the same, it is important to note that the world is evolving as the population grows to high numbers. This growth comes with other responsibilities that need added attention and consideration.

Providing for families calls for both parents (where applicable) to work extra to meet the needs. This extra work hours have brought about the issue of unavailability of the breadwinner within the family settings. Even when the parent (breadwinner) is in the house, he/she is tired and exhausted due to the day's activities. This has given a cold shoulder to the child in parental guidance and counseling. Consequently, the child becomes an open target where the predator/enemy comes in masquerading as a helper/guider/trainer who eventually derails the student into unwarranted and evil activities. Some students reported of how they were initiated into witchcraft and occultism without their parents' knowledge.

There is need for parents/caretakers to set time to communicate/dialogue with the student and have a desire to create the connectedness that has been severed within the society. One of the students reported that she only meets with her parents over the weekends if they are not working. This showed that there is no set up schedule where the parents put aside their businesses to have

²³³ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/promotingfactors/nurture-attah/>

²³⁴ <https://www.medicinenet.com/parenting/article.htm>

time with their offspring. According to Vincent, parenting in England is presented in policy as “the way” to ensure the child’s success where parents are positioned as responsible for the child’s emotional, social, educational, and physical development.²³⁵ All the same, there is need to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, so that all other things would be added (Mathew 6:33) ... ³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

The Bible instructs Christians to teach/train up children on the way they should go, and when they get old, they will not depart from it (Joshua 1:8; Proverbs 22:6). Children/students should be taught when in the house, when out in the field, when they lay down and when they rise (Deuteronomy 11:19) ... ¹⁹ *You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.* Just as there is an intentional effort to feed a child, provide all the necessary ingredients, and to help them grow and mature up, the parent/guardian or church need to be intentional in preparing the student for the future. The issue of students failing to follow these teachings is alarming and something needs to be done. Other than following through the teachings, the student gives excuses that satisfies their search for freedom. The students then get involved in activities that do not align with the teachings they received from their parents or guardians and decide to go it their own way.

According to most students, they feel they need to make their own choices. They have been left alone in their rooms throughout “their life” making their own choices without any

²³⁵ Vincent Carol. “The Illiberalism of Liberalism: Schools and Fundamental Controversial Values.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, no. 0 (2020): 1-18.

<https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1080%2F09540253.2016.1274387>

guidance or counseling on anything. Again, they feel they are of age and can therefore make their own choices. According to the students, parents have been busy working and really do not have time for them. The students are inquisitive of why these parents/stakeholders want to enter their lives when they already have their live goals fixed. The issue of letting the older kids take care of the younger ones, making them to boss over the young ones has been an issue of contention. This is partly because, the older do take advantage of the younger harassing and even forcing them to do what is unethical.

Most parents have not been there in the bringing up of their children and as such they do not have the bonding that ought to be with their children. The bonding that is experienced when the parent/caretaker is involved in the affairs of the student becomes the bases on how the relationship shapes itself. When the bonding is not there, then the student becomes like an open target, who would be attacked or influenced by whoever come their way as they search for life's meaning. Whatever they therefore need can be available through the internet or from their peers. There are books and magazines out there which can provide the information they would need. It is important to give students influence over how and what they learn in a classroom.²³⁶ To engage students, it is important to give them meaningful and influential choices in the classroom over how and what they learn where teachers should structure learning scenarios that equip students with opportunities to strengthen their autonomy, competence, and relatedness.²³⁷ There is need to help students in acquiring the skills to manage their own learning, not forgetting their interests in their attitudes towards what they learn.²³⁸

²³⁶ <https://kappanonline.org/engage-students-give-meaningful-choices-classroom/>

²³⁷ <https://kappanonline.org/engage-students-give-meaningful-choices-classroom/>

²³⁸ www.oecd.org/education/school/programme-for-international-student-assessment-pisa/33918006.pdf

Today's economy and society require organizations that can quickly adjust course in unpredictable environments at a decisive speed, which are very important qualities.²³⁹ Future winners are thus able to pick up signals faster and synchronize them faster into new services and products, which is a characteristic of sober and morally stable minds/individuals.²⁴⁰ The COVID 19 pandemic that hit the whole world in 2019, is an example that need stable communities/nations that would be able to stabilize situations that befall them. This is a disease caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2.²⁴¹ There is need for critical determinants of strategic success to see strategy as a process that involve dialogue with multiple stakeholders within the education system.²⁴²

As organizations get increasingly involved in interrelationships, new activities are increasingly transparent and often widely shared, an issue that calls for moral and ethical integrity among the society/organization.²⁴³ The world need stable communities with high moral and ethical values that will give the society that confidence of quality services. This would only be achieved when the basic foundation of the society is intentionally laid down with the right materials. There are instances when some of the basics are by-passed, which results in a catastrophic occurrence that affects the livelihood of individuals and other issues. An example is when constructing a building and decide not to use the standards that have been set by the

²³⁹ Gerben Van den Berg and Pietersma Paul (2014). Introduction: Time to Rethink Strategy. London: Kogan, Page Ltd.

²⁴⁰ Gerben Van den Berg and Pietersma Paul (2014). Introduction: Time to Rethink Strategy. London: Kogan, Page Ltd.

²⁴¹ [www.cdc.gov > coronavirus > 2019-ncov](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov)

²⁴² www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-8-steps-to-strategic-success-gerben-van-den-berg/1116159366

²⁴³ Gerben Van den Berg and Pietersma Paul (2014). Introduction: Time to Rethink Strategy. London: Kogan, Page Ltd.

construction/building organizations. Usually, buildings and other structures collapse, after being put up without the stipulated specifications. Many people have been mired, while others have lost their lives as a result of negligence in the construction industry.

After the derailment of the moral and ethical standards of many students, many have turned to drug abuse and alcohol, which has caused many to lose track of their goal and aspirations. Those who are already married have “let go” their responsibilities and have been lost in drugs and alcohol, such that they fail in supporting their families. The truth is that alcoholism causes physical and emotional health problems where those addicted do experiences the brunt of the physical problems while those close to them often share the emotional side effects of the person’s addiction.²⁴⁴ The family members of alcoholics can experience anxiety, depression and shame related to their loved one’s addiction, and may also be the victims of emotional or physical outbursts.²⁴⁵ According to the World Health Organization drinking problems are associated with intimate partner violence, making the frequency and severity of domestic violence worse.²⁴⁶ The truth is that, alcohol use directly affects the cognitive and physical function, reducing self-control and leaving the individual less capable of negotiating or even resolving any conflict within a relationship.²⁴⁷

It is important to note that according to the World Health Organization article, children who witness violence or threats between parents are more likely to display harmful drinking patterns later in life.²⁴⁸ This is to indicate that, in many families, the unruly nature is not

²⁴⁴ <https://www.drugrehab.com/addiction/alcohol/effects-of-alcoholism-on-families/>

²⁴⁵ <https://www.drugrehab.com/addiction/alcohol/effects-of-alcoholism-on-families/>

²⁴⁶ https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/fs_intimate.pdf

²⁴⁷ https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/fs_intimate.pdf

²⁴⁸ Ibid

basically as a result of not guiding or teaching the children on what and how they should do, but it is as a result of what the children see and hear at home. The language they hear at home is at times expressed in school, with the aggressive behavioral actions being displayed to some innocent student who possibly are looking for someone or somewhere they can be accepted and validated. As they look for validation, they get lost in the hands of their peer groups who have been intoxicated with harmful behavioral issues. Validation from others has evolved out of social media and the way people frame themselves and their identity based on how others respond to their posts.²⁴⁹

According to an African Research Journal of Education and Social Sciences, the issue of alcohol abuse in Kenya is deeply rooted and has continued to affect the social and economic well-being of the youthful population.²⁵⁰ Loss of income and family breakdown effects can be devastating for the affected families and neighborhoods, a condition that has no boundary of age, educational background, income level, social, or ethnicity.²⁵¹ Alcohol abuse, for example, is associated with a large number of deaths and disorders with a damaging effect on the brain, which is manifested with a slurred speech, staggering, blurred vision, and impaired memory among other symptoms.²⁵² According to this article, alcohol dependence results into cognitive, social, and physiological tendencies developed after a repeated consumption of alcohol.²⁵³ All in all, the effects of not being founded and prepared for the future by the establishment of pastoral

²⁴⁹ www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/addiction-and-recovery/201907/stop-seeking-validation-others

²⁵⁰ <http://arjess.org/health-and-social-economic-effects-of-alcohol-abuse-in-kenyas-context/>

²⁵¹ <http://arjess.org/health-and-social-economic-effects-of-alcohol-abuse-in-kenyas-context/>

²⁵² <http://arjess.org/health-and-social-economic-effects-of-alcohol-abuse-in-kenyas-context/>

²⁵³ Ibid

counseling sessions has brought about the failure in the morality of the community and the society as a whole.

Other students report that, parents/guardians are control freaks, whose desire is to say and not to listen from their children. Some parents/ guardians usually say they have been there a long time and have seen a lot of which they want to advise about, which is a good thing, but they should know that that was their time, and the children have their time. They feel they can also come up with some points to be considered and since they are not regarded, they chose to get out on their own. They report that parents/guardians do not want the students to experience life on their own, while they feel that they want to get into life and experience it themselves. The parent/guardian gives instructions even when uncalled for, an issue that irritates the student. The students want to have control of their lives and on issues that affect them irrespective of what the parent/guardian feels.

It is important to note that, students' attitudes and behaviors are predicted by the parenting/teaching practices that include the emotional support of the stakeholders.²⁵⁴ According to this article, emotion and personality influence the quality of one's thinking and how much a student learns, where studies also shows that longitudinal studies have strong predictive measure of a student's self-control, emotional stability, persistence, and motivation on health and labor market outcomes in adulthood, which are also predictors of some long-term outcomes.²⁵⁵ As the study indicates, though pastoral counseling may look as a repetition of the same principles, and values time and again, the Bible teaches that there is need of being reminded again and again of the statutes that help mankind to be the person God intended. According to 2 Peter 1:12-15, there

²⁵⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5602565/>

²⁵⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5602565/>

is need for reminding the believers of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. ¹² *For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.* ¹³ *Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you,* ¹⁴ *knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.* ¹⁵ *Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.* Apostle Peter knew that once they believers are reminded, it would take long to forget, an issue that would have caused the “death” of the gospel.

Students need to be reminded of the need to know and understand themselves, why they are in school/college, and where they are going. Though many do not want to be told, the study shows that, they do not want to be told what to do and where to go, claiming that they can figure it out by themselves. To confirm this, many complained of how the parents monitor their activities which, according to the students, is an invasion of their privacy, while it is their own life. One of the students reported that, though the parent might be guiding in good faith, they should also understand it is their life and they should be left to manage it their way. They felt that they should be left alone to “test the waters” on their own. As a result of all these, the students end up rebelling as they seek for calm and favorable environments. They connect with anyone out there who seem to understand their plight, and who can give them a shoulder to lean on.

Some students reported that, some church members are very judgmental, the church is boring, while others blamed nonattendance on the school/college workload. While students are looking for favorable environments where they are accepted as they are, the enemy lays traps for those students, presenting stuff that glitter and enticing them with vanity of vanities where, the students become open targets to be swayed in all directions by the enemy, the Devil (1 Peter 5:8) – *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion,*

seeking whom he may devour". They become like a city without a wall/gate, where the enemy will come and engage in whatever business He want, taking the children captives. The wall that ought to be there to protect and hide the children from outside attacks is pulled down, making the children open targets. The more they become uninvolved with their parents, guardians, and the church, the more they become devoured by the enemy (Matthew 7:15) - "*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*" Hence the need for the implementation of pastoral counseling within the education system to equip and prepare the students.

There is need for students to be ready for those forces out there that are set by the enemy for their downfall. The Bible instructs on putting on the whole armor of God. This is a topic/issue that need to be given priority as one faces life. The challenges out there need someone to be ready and equipped with the right armor. Ephesians 6:10-13¹⁰ *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.* ¹¹ *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* ¹² *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* ¹³ *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* The issue here is being prepared for any eventuality. The student needs to be informed, and with the right tools and equipment, to help in maneuvering through the challenges that will also come in life. Challenges will also come because the ruler of this world is determined to take over all the affairs of men.

According to John Gill's exposition, Ephesians 6:10-13 is "a conclusion of the apostle's exhortations, in which he addresses the saints as his brethren; which appellation he uses, not

merely as a familiar way of speaking among the Jews, but in regard to them as regenerate persons, and of the same family and household of God with himself; and he calls them so, to show his humility, and as a proof of his affection to them, and with a design to encourage them to their duty, as follows: be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; which is directed to, partly on account of the things before exhorted to, which could not be performed in their own strength; and partly with respect to their many and potent enemies hereafter mentioned, against whom they had no might nor power of their own; and therefore the apostle points out the Lord Jesus Christ unto them, in whom are strength, power, and might, even everlasting strength, to enable them to perform their duty, and to fight against every enemy, sin, Satan, and the world; for though they are weak, and strength in themselves, and can do nothing of themselves, and without Christ; yet since there is strength in Him, which is communicable to them, they may expect it from Him, and depend upon it; and they may come at, or strengthen themselves in it, and by it, by meditation on it, by prayer for it, by waiting on Christ in his own ways, by exercising faith upon Him, and through the Spirit, who strengthens them from Him with might in the inward man.”²⁵⁶

There is need for the student to know that there is an enemy out there whose plan is to destabilize, deny, and even pluck out anything of value in the live of a student. This is because the plan of the enemy is evident; a plan to kill, steal and destroy, making one of no value. The word of God encourages His people to be strong, not in their own strength and knowledge, but with respect to the many enemies out there who they have no might nor power over, and therefore encouraged them to depend on the Lord Jesus Christ in whom are strength, power, and might, even everlasting strength to enable them to perform their duty and fight every battle the

²⁵⁶ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/ephesians-6-10.html>

enemy brings to them.²⁵⁷ There are some powers (enemies) who one cannot see or even know the direction they are coming from. But there is a God in Heaven who is “all powerful, all knowing,” who have promised to help in times of need. This God has promised to fight the battles that come to those who trust Him.

The Bible records that, King Jehoshaphat knew deep within himself that, there is a superpower in Jehovah God. When an enormous army gathered to fight him, Jehoshaphat prayed to God, asking for help. In response, God set Judah’s enemies upon each other, and by the time King Jehoshaphat and his men arrived, they saw only dead bodies on the ground (2 Chronicles 20:1-30), ... *It happened after this that the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat.* ² *Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar” (which is En Gedi).* ³ *And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.* ⁴ *So Judah gathered together to ask help from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.....,* ¹⁴ *Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly.* ¹⁵ *And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s.* ¹⁶ *Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the ^[d]brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel.* ¹⁷ *You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!’ Do not fear or*

²⁵⁷ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/ephesians-6-10.html>

be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you.” The moment people recognize and appreciate the Lord God Almighty, and give Him what He desire from them, God has promised victory in all that they do.

Students/children need to hear and know who Jehovah God is, and the plan of God concerning every individual. God has promised to fight for the individual once that person acknowledges God and desires to depend on God. Giving God the first place in one’s heart and desiring to grow in God is the first step to allow God to fight for an individual. In 2 Chronicles 20:22-24, the Bible records ²² *Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.* ²³ *For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.* ²⁴ *So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped....* This indicates that there is need to do and to follow the statutes laid down for God to intervene in the situation (Isaiah 1:19-20)... *If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land; ²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword”; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.* They had to sing and worship God, telling Him of who He is and what He means to them.

The “know” that the students have the one who holds all power and might becomes an anchor, a strong tower, and a pillar to hold on to, gives them the courage to move on. Meditating upon the word of God, and depending on Christ Jesus in His own ways, by exercising faith upon His word and through the Holy Spirit who strengthens them.²⁵⁸ When the children of Israel

²⁵⁸ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/ephesians-6-10.html>

crossed the Jordan river and headed towards Jericho, they had questions within, which would have kept them out of the way. But their faith had been built upon the promise that God gave them and the report they had received from the twelve spies, who had gone to spy the land. The promise that God would give them a land filled with milk and honey kept them going. Though there were thoughts of doubt and discouragements from within and without, there were those who would encourage and admonish them of the faithfulness of God. Students/children need someone who is there to continually encourage and admonish them of the faithfulness of God.

Since the world is changing in significant ways, and the students are accessing different cultures and worldviews through the technology of the day, there is need for the Church/parent or caretaker to up their game by introducing Christianity and the Bible in a more technology-oriented fashion.²⁵⁹ According to Barna Group’s article, many science-minded young Christians are struggling to find ways of staying faithful to their beliefs and professional calling in science-related industries.²⁶⁰ There is need for an intentional curriculum that teaches students how to share their faith with their peers, how to study the Bible on their own, how to defend their faith, and have a place to “refuel” and replenish their faith.²⁶¹ Many of the students are out there looking for electronic gadgets that would keep them entertained and involved. This is an area where the stakeholders need to exploit to get the students engaged with the right materials and information.

²⁵⁹ <https://www.barna.com/research/six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church/>

²⁶⁰ <https://www.barna.com/research/six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church/>

²⁶¹ <https://lifewayresearch.com/2020/09/18/5-simple-steps-to-stop-teenagers-from-dropping-out-of-your-church/>

The caretakers must be intentional in bringing up children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6), knowing that the foundation laid will determine the durability and resilience of the individual students. This is an area that have proved wanting, noting that the morality and the integrity of the coming up generation are at stake. The truth is that communities are shifting very fast to a world where right and wrong do not seem to be different. In the past, the morality of the community was considerably good, where everyone or most children/students respected their seniors, which is now a thing of the past. These days, a senior or a physically challenged person will stand in a gathering where the youth are sitting down comfortably without an aorta respect or honor to the senior person next to them. The need to align the students/children to behave and act with respect and honor towards the elderly and those in authority.

There need to have leaders who undertake the plight of student and be an advocate for them. Leaders who will even involve the students in creating ways of engaging the Bible and those biblical principles and values they would deem appropriate for the students. Allowing the students to chat their way with the guidance of a pastoral counselor would ensure proper and appropriate approach to the presented problem. This would be like a mentor working on his/her students, molding, and making them become the desired product. The mentor establishes patterns of behavior that affects both the student's current and future behavioral patterns. Otherwise, the students will be at the risk of engaging in alcohol and other drug abuse and might even participate in violence or gang related activities.²⁶²

Schools and colleges can promote parental/guardian engagement and be part of a coordinated school/college program which engages family members based on community needs,

²⁶² https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf

resources, and standards with a comprehensive approach modeling healthy behaviors.²⁶³ The engagement of parents/stakeholders in schools and colleges should be a shared responsibility in which community agencies and organizations should be committed to reaching out to engage in meaningful ways to support in the development of this generation.²⁶⁴ Again, the involvement of all the stakeholders in the development of students cuts across and reinforces the students' learning and behavioral aspects in multiple arenas – at home, in school, in and out-of-school programs, and in the community.²⁶⁵ It is important to note that students are establishing patterns of behavior that affect both their current and future wellbeing, putting them in the risk of engaging in tobacco, alcohol, or other drug use, and even initiating sex at an early age.²⁶⁶ All the same, enhancing protective factors, equipping them with information, the presence of intentional measures, and the presence of the parent/guardian can help them avoid behaviors that place them at risk.²⁶⁷

Chapter 5: Conclusion

To maintain and uphold the ethical integrity and the moral aspect of the society, learning institutions (high schools and colleges) need to be intentionally prepared to instill those values into the lives of the students. The lack of commitment and deliberate involvement of care partners in the area of laying down a comprehensive foundation in the upbringing of

²⁶³ https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf

²⁶⁴ Ibid

²⁶⁵ https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf

²⁶⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf

²⁶⁷ https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf

children/students has contributed to the failure of their church attendance. According to Vincent Carol, there need to be some deliberative approaches to address emotive value clashes, and emphasis the importance of schools and colleges as a place where stakeholders would develop mutual and value understandings.²⁶⁸ Parental/stakeholder's engagement in schools and colleges can promote positive healthy behaviors among the students especially when they feel supported by parents/stakeholders.²⁶⁹ Deliberate approaches must be put in place, so that the student should follow through, so that the fine tuning is done for there to be a cohesive learning environment. All in all, the parenting style used usually affects how the student feel about himself/herself and how he/she relates with others.²⁷⁰

According to a WHO (World Health Organization) article, the belief about alcohol and drug abuse can affect the risk of alcohol and drug related violence.²⁷¹ Those who believe this will participate in all kinds of evils, purporting that they have been influenced by alcohol or drug usage. Students plan on how they would demonstrate in college or school, and on how they would use alcohol and other drugs as they perpetrate the planed offense. Some plan on how they are to torch the school property in the pretense of being intoxicated. For some students, the use of those drugs eventually takes over their lives and become addicted, making them dependents of alcohol and other drugs. To prevent this trend, it is important to teach, train and equip students with the right information concerning their engagement. This should take the center role in molding and shaping the individual when they are receptive, because there will come a time

²⁶⁸ Vincent Carol. "The Illiberalism of Liberalism: Schools and Fundamental Controversial Values." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, no. 0 (2020): 1-18.

²⁶⁹ https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf

²⁷⁰ <https://wellnessmind.org/4-types-of-parenting-styles/>

²⁷¹ https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/fs_intimate.pdf

when the practice becomes a habit. The laying of a solid Biblical or spiritual foundation (pastoral counseling) becomes an important tool in preparing students for their next phase in life.

Pastoral counseling becomes a unique source of counseling where the counselors are being equipped to facilitate the healing of the whole person (spirit, soul, and body), through the integration of spirituality and psychology.²⁷² According to this article, pastoral counselors use proven and effective psychological theory, technique, skillful practice, and methods while integrating the counselee's spiritual or religious beliefs as part of holistic treatment of body, mind, and soul.²⁷³ “*Pastoral counseling is an extended and structured conversation focused on the needs and concerns of the one seeking help (Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling).*”²⁷⁴ Letting the student direct their way of live and the course to take would be like a boat in the ocean that has no pilot to direct their route. It is like going into a “hunted house” waiting for any eventuality. There is need to guide and direct the student on the way they should go for them to reach a desired goal. When guiding or counseling students, it is important to identify the concerns that affect them and provide interventions based on their individual needs. This would help the students to see and acknowledge someone who takes time to listen and one who is there for them.

It is important to note that, guidance and counseling are essential elements in behavioral management of those in all societies even the most primate individuals where the society itself could not function without the aspect of counseling.²⁷⁵ Using guidance and counseling to enhance behavioral discipline must be a continuous practice for people to work together

²⁷² <http://institute.soulcareministries.org/what-is-pastoral-counseling/>

²⁷³ <http://institute.soulcareministries.org/what-is-pastoral-counseling/>

²⁷⁴ <http://institute.soulcareministries.org/what-is-pastoral-counseling/>

²⁷⁵ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1102862.pdf>

harmoniously for the achievement of common purpose in life, which can be achieved when teachers, parents and all stakeholders work together.²⁷⁶

Since pastoral care and counseling is rooted in a biblical thought, there is need to form an appropriate praxis where the theology of care necessities first, the laying of a foundation of discipline in the divinely inspired scripture itself.²⁷⁷ Pastoral counseling is a unique form of counseling where counselors are uniquely equipped to facilitate the healing of the whole person; spirit, soul, and body through the integration of spirituality and psychology, which is provided by counselors who are not mental professionals but also persons with an in-depth religious and theological training.²⁷⁸ The pastoral counselor implements the biblical dos and don'ts as a guide as the students engage in their daily activities (Joshua 1:8, Proverbs 22:6). *“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success (Joshua 1:8 New American Standard).”* The basic principle of operation in the process of counseling the students should be guided by the biblical standards. The Bible as the “book of the law” must be the bases of all discussions and practices, even as they participate in games and sports. Pastoral counseling is communal and corporate and not an individualistic venture, hence the teamwork spirit. The book of Hebrews gives a few basic perspectives relating to the context within which pastoral counseling may be offered, including theocentric character of the biblical thought.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1102862.pdf>

²⁷⁷ https://www.academia.edu/20398490/Biblical_Foundations_for_Pastoral_Care_and_Counseling

²⁷⁸ <http://institute.soulcareministries.org/what-is-pastoral-counseling/>

²⁷⁹ https://www.academia.edu/20398490/Biblical_Foundations_for_Pastoral_Care_and_Counseling

Hebrews 12:1-2 shows the author's passion for Christ when he said: "Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."²⁸⁰ *(Hebrews 12:1-2). Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Those who like games like baseball, basketball, football, and the like were to be coached in the same and organize competitions on those sports. Those who like other activities would be addressed too, with a culmination of discussion sessions that involve pastoral counseling. There was the visitation program where students would visit those in rehabilitation centers, jails, and hospitals, to hear and see what the world is offering out there. Since ethics is about personal character that need to be upheld, there is need to use all available resources to uphold this virtue for the well-being of the individual and the community.

Defecting from the decision making/act-centered interests of principles and consequences to the person-centered aspects of character is an act of reaching the inner dynamics of human action.²⁸¹ The article suggests that the interpretation of human life and it's problems directly depend on biblical faith and language of sin, guilt, and forgiveness in the modern language of

²⁸⁰ https://www.academia.edu/20398490/Biblical_Foundations_for_Pastoral_Care_and_Counseling

²⁸¹ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

self-understanding.²⁸² The understanding of who one is and why he or she is on earth is an important part of laying a foundation in one's life. There is therefore need of bringing in the issue of a purposeful life with a goal and a meaning. According to Rev. Gula, ethics is the wellspring of moral living and, without spirituality there would be no foundation on which morality and ethical stability would be founded/embodied, where the process of making decisions engages a common set of principles that include spirituality.²⁸³ According to this project survey, it has been noted that children have been left on their own for too long. They are left to manage themselves while the parents/guardians are busy with other stuff. The participants reported that, this is the time they find their way to other sites where some engage in some initiations that are very traumatizing. Other students engage with sexual and other immoral activities which eventually ruin their lives. These "alone" time becomes an avenue to opening loopholes for any information into their lives, an issue that need to be addressed and reverted.

As parents are busy working, the students are left on their own to do what they want. Some reported that, they engage themselves with the social media, movies, shows, and programs that would be very offensive to their parents. Since they have been left alone for long, they get bored, and the only thing left for them is to engage on whatever is available for them. For social media, they go into any site they want and watch whatever material they want. Others lock themselves in their rooms to go into whatever site, game, movie they want. Those in boarding schools do the same, especially when their roommates do not care what they do. The truth is that children are like a fallow ground which is ready for whatever seed is planted in it. They are

²⁸² https://www.academia.edu/20398490/Biblical_Foundations_for_Pastoral_Care_and_Counseling

²⁸³ <https://www.chausa.org/publications/health-progress/article/july-august-2000/spirituality-and-ethics-in-healthcare>

sober and ready to receive the instructions given them, an issue that makes them susceptible to any creditor that comes their way. Parents/guardians have an obligation to chart the way forward for these children/students and lead the way for them. Children/students do and follow what they see and hear. The most effective way of impacting achievement is to actively engage students in the life of the classroom knowing that their contributions are vital to the learning process.²⁸⁴

According to a Gallup survey, few people have a religious affiliation, while some of those who have are less likely to belong to a church or a place of worship.²⁸⁵ There is a need to purposefully engage oneself with a church where moral and ethical principles are endorsed and adhered to. This will help the congregants to uphold to the teachings instilled in them, which in turn results in the upholding of the ethical principles within the society. The “do not care” attitude of some of the stakeholders on what happens to their children or what they receive out there is an issue that need to be addressed. Giving the student the right to do what they want and when they want it is an area that need to be addressed. Being there to guide and counsel the student toward the right direction and instilling good moral character by being an example would restore back the students.

To enhance the knowledge and skills of handling life challenges, it is important to train and equip the students on how to face the challenges of life. Getting them exposed to relevant and consistent training can help the student improve their performance and understanding the coping mechanism even as face those challenges. As the student proceeds with their learning, new challenges often come their way, but the teachings, preparations, and the equipping they have received will help improve their moral/ethical values as well as their capabilities.

²⁸⁴ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/simple-ways-promote-student-voice-classroom>

²⁸⁵ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/248837/church-membership-down-sharply-two-decades.aspx>

According to research done by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), to meet the society's challenges demands educational excellence that reinvigorates the learning process with alternative technologies that require a skilled populace that is ready for the critical challenge faced by the community.²⁸⁶ This educational challenge calls upon intentional approaches, knowing that the students have diverse supply of information from across the world, and therefore with different world views.

Since parents are recognized as the primary educators, there is need to create a family atmosphere surrounded by love and respect for God and man, in which personal and social education of students is fostered.²⁸⁷ According to this catholic education article, students should be taught from their early years to have the knowledge of God, to worship Him, and love their neighbor, being an experience of the wholesome human society and the church.²⁸⁸ According to Niemela, students develop academic honesty when moral and ethical issues are taught and implemented in the system.²⁸⁹ Niemela informs that when there is no place for reflection and discussion in a home, classroom, or church, there will then be a failure in connecting with the students which brings about the failure of attendance.²⁹⁰ According to Niemela, teaching/counseling is an act of creation, collaboration, and connection where the counselor/teacher seeks to pull diverse viewpoints together, to craft discussion questions and to

²⁸⁶ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519336.pdf>

²⁸⁷ <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/marriage-and-family/parenting/parental-rights-and-responsibilities-in-education.html>

²⁸⁸ <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/marriage-and-family/parenting/parental-rights-and-responsibilities-in-education.html>

²⁸⁹ April Niemela. "Resolve, Reflect, Reconnect: Living a Life of Intention." *English Journal* 106, no. 6(07, 2017): 12-5.

²⁹⁰ April Niemela. "Resolve, Reflect, Reconnect: Living a Life of Intention." *English Journal* 106, no. 6(07, 2017): 12-5.

teach honest, respectful dialogue which eventually ripples outward.²⁹¹ It is therefore necessary to direct students to exhibit acceptable attitude and behavior within and outside the classroom, since this is an identified problem in schools and colleges, which has plagued the learning institutions into a series of unrest, destruction of property, vandalism, sexual abuse, killings and drug abuse, and such like evils.²⁹²

There is a need to create an environment where students will have an opportunity to express and reflect on matters that affect them. According to an article by NCBI (National Center for Biotechnology Information), children/students need care that promotes a positive emotional health, and a sense of well being that support their overall mental health that include a positive sense of self, that would help them cope with the challenges that come their way.²⁹³ Engaging students and letting them participate in issues that affect them will help in motivating them into “being real” and ready for help. The engagement also helps them know who they are and the potential they have in becoming the best of themselves.²⁹⁴ All the same, parent’s attitude toward parenting are a product of their knowledge of parenting, and in this case counseling, and the values and goals they have set for their children/student’s development, which in turn are informed by cultural, social, and societal images, as well as parents/counselor’s experiences and their overall values and goals.²⁹⁵

²⁹¹ Niemela April. “Resolve, Reflect, Reconnect: Living a Life of Intention.” *English Journal* 106, no. 6(07, 2017): 12-5.

²⁹² <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1102862.pdf>

²⁹³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

²⁹⁴ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/project-prompt-student-reflection>

²⁹⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

According to Crystal Frommert, when the stakeholders become true to the students, they enhance the learning environment and improve on what they do.²⁹⁶ The stakeholders should also help promote a culture of self-authenticity for everyone, which promotes student learning and becoming a respectable member of the community. The NBCI study shows that, children who possess basic competence are able to develop and maintain positive relationships with peers and adults, helping them get along with others and with respect even to those of a different race, ethnicity, religion, or economic background.²⁹⁷ As the Bible records (2 Corinthians 3:2) - *2 You are our epistle written in our hearts, known, and read by all men. 2 You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written in your hearts, to be known and read by everybody (Amplified Bible)*. Stakeholders are a written epistle of Christ to be read by all men, which gives them the mandate of guiding and counseling the students. They should therefore be always examples to the students in whatever they do. It's unfortunate to hear students say that the parent/guardian, teacher, or spiritual leader has mistreated, mishandled, or misled them in that which they did or say. The truth is that stakeholders need to rise to the calling and be the model they need to be to the students.

The stakeholders should set time to listen and to mentor the students without pushing the responsibility to someone else. There is need to engage the students with activities of interest which will act as a stepping tool in reaching out for them. According to Cheyanne Freitas, Collaborative learning allows students solve problems, construct explanations, critique other students' reasoning, and engage in rich academic or otherwise discourse.²⁹⁸ This kind of learning/training help

²⁹⁶ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/project-prompt-student-reflection>

²⁹⁷ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

²⁹⁸ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/step-step-guide-teaching-students-work-groups>

students have the confidence, and courage, to solve their problems and allows them to construct meaningful avenues as they engage with their peers.²⁹⁹ This in turn builds the muscle needed as they face life and as they engage in the different situations in life.

The Bible instructs of training the child, not delegating the teaching to someone else (Proverbs 22:6). According to John Gill's Exposition of the Bible, on training up a child in the way he should go, he explains that; *... as Abraham trained up his children, and those born in his house, in the way of the Lord, in the paths of justice and judgment; which are the ways in which they should go, and which will be to their profit and advantage, which is the duty of parents and masters in all ages, and under the present Gospel dispensation, even to bring such who are under their care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, (Ephesians 6:4); by praying with them and for them, by bringing them under the means of grace, the ministry of the word, by instructing them in the principles of religion, teaching them their duty to God and man, and setting them good examples of a holy life and conversation. This is to be done according to their capacity, and as they are able to understand and receive the instructions given them: "according to the mouth of his way", as it may be literally rendered; as soon as he is able to speak or go, even from his infancy; or as children are fed by little bits, or a little at a time, as their mouths can receive it; and when he is old he will not depart from it; not easily, nor ordinarily; there are exceptions to this observation; but generally, where there is a good education, the impressions of it do not easily wear off, nor do men ordinarily forsake a good way they have been brought up in; and, however, when, being come to years of maturity and understanding, their hearts are seasoned with the grace of God, they are then enabled to put that in practice which before they*

²⁹⁹ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/step-step-guide-teaching-students-work-groups>

*had only in theory, and so continue in the paths of truth and holiness.*³⁰⁰ John Gill indicates that, there should be no slackness in guiding, teaching and instruction on what should be done. The “don’t care” attitude has no room in bringing up children and making them to be people with good ethical and moral standards. It is important to create time to talk with the children/students about their problems and their inner challenges and involve them in chartings ways of solving those problems, or how to maneuver their way through the challenges.

For many students, going to college means leaving their comfort zones or a place of “dos” and “don’ts” to an environment that require them to meet the demands ahead of them and leave their previous understanding of the world behind.³⁰¹ As a parent/teacher, or Church, Niemela insists on the need to consider becoming a role model by channeling optimism in the face of despondency and speak difficult truths with kindness and compassion to the students.³⁰² This will make them feel valued and appreciated hence desire to emulate the parent or church. According to a College Ministry article, parents/caretakers have every right and responsibility to look to the spiritual welfare of students.³⁰³ It is therefore an obligation to the parent, guardian, and the Church to make a concerted effort to train, counsel and equip these students with the right information which will help them become the people that God intend them to be.

For a behavior modification process, a person’s attitude often determines whether he/she will use knowledge and transform it into practice, an act that need to be used by stakeholders as they work with students.³⁰⁴ This indicates that, some teachers/stakeholders are at times pushed

³⁰⁰ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/proverbs-22-6.html>

³⁰¹ Lantieri Linda, 22.

³⁰² April Niemela, 15.

³⁰³ <https://collegeministry.com/why-college-freshmen-drop-out-of-church/>

³⁰⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

back by the way the student behaves or reacts when asked to participate in a certain project. Parenting knowledge, attitudes and practices are influenced by the contextual factors, including the student's characteristics of gender, temperaments, and the parent/counselor's experiences, learned from others, social networks, and cultural systems.³⁰⁵ This calls for trained caretakers/counselors who are well equipped and ready for the task. According to NCBI, the contextual factors that influence parenting/counseling knowledge, attitudes, and practices include the support available within the larger community and the support provided by the policies that affect the nature and availability of supportive services.³⁰⁶

Student outcomes are interconnected within and across diverse domains of development enhanced by early positive and supportive interactions with parents and other caregivers, which can have a long-lasting ripple effect on the development across their course of life.³⁰⁷ According to the NCBI article, students need care that promotes positive emotional health and well-being and a care that supports their overall mental health, including a positive sense of self, and the ability to cope with stressful situations and behavioral management.³⁰⁸ Stakeholders serve the role of care takers by providing positive affirmations conveying love, respect, and support as they equip the students/children with the necessary tools.³⁰⁹ Having a positive attitude towards the students as they go through the training/learning creates a bonding that helps in instilling the right material into the life of the students. Though there are challenges from some students, who

³⁰⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

³⁰⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

³⁰⁷ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

³⁰⁸ Ibid

³⁰⁹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

might feel that they cannot receive instructions from other quaters other than their peers, the positive attitudes become a shield even as one direct on what need to be done.

This project then becomes a sensitizing agent or wake-up call to the parents/caretakers to take their place in instilling a spiritually firm foundation that the Bible insists (Proverbs 22:6..... *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it*).

Parents/caretakers must develop in depth knowledge ranging from being aware of developmental steps and norms that help students keep safe, healthy (mentally and emotionally), and understand the role of everyone who is involved in the learning of their children/students.³¹⁰ According to Deuteronomy 6:5-9⁵ *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.* ⁶ *“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.* ⁷ *You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.* ⁸ *You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.* ⁹ *You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Students need to be cared for in a way that promotes their ability to thrive and to ensure their survival, and protection from any predators out there.³¹¹ All in all, the best predictor of student success is the extent to which caretakers encourage learning, and their involvement in the learning process and the student’s school live.³¹² *No matter how strong their determination to do right, the people would be unable to keep God’s law unless they first had a strong and genuine love for God himself. Love for him would give them the inner power to walk in his ways (6:1-5).*

³¹⁰ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

³¹¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

³¹² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

*As well as keeping God's commandments themselves, they had to teach their children to do likewise. Their family life was to be guided by the knowledge of God's law. Their house was to be known as a place where people loved God's law and lived by it (6-9).*³¹³ According to the NBCI article, parent/caretaker engagement in their student's school/college life helps the student to finish their assignments and develop a love for growth.³¹⁴

The time spent in school/college is a preparation period where the outlook of one's life is shaped. It is therefore important to learn the most important lesson of knowing how to handle the outside influence and situations that bombards everyone in a new environment. The need for a helping hand to guide and counsel is crucial since this is a new environment. The environment in the house and those that are of that house need to be conducive and favorable to all that reside within the environment. The weather for the planting season has to be favorable to the seed that is to be planted, otherwise the seed will rot before it germinates, cutting its vision to grow to maturity. Those involved in creating a favorable environment need to be intentional, prepared, and ready for the task, knowing that the Lord God Almighty has entrusted them the task and He is there for them. God has promised to be part of the process as He guide, strengthen, and direct their paths, (*Isaiah 40:31; But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint*). It is important to know that for students to learn, they must feel safe, engaged, connected, and supported, an issue that creates a conducive learning environment, helping them to achieve success in their endeavor.³¹⁵

³¹³ <https://www.studydrive.net/commentary/deuteronomy/6-5.html>

³¹⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402020/>

³¹⁵ <https://all4ed.org/blog/four-elements-for-creating-a-positive-learning-environment/>

According to Caroline Waldman, to build a positive school climate and to ensure that students are ready to learn requires school district codes of conduct that promote positive parent/caretaker and student relationships and work to keep more students in the classroom.³¹⁶ The involvement of parents, caretakers, and teachers creates a learning environment that support and foster the students' success in their learning/training process that meets the academic, social, and emotional needs of the student, creating a positive learning climate.³¹⁷ As the stakeholders involve themselves, it is important to know of the assurance that God has bestowed upon the parent/caretaker. James 1:5 informs that, *⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.* Though there are many challenges in the bringing up and the training of students/children, the Lord God Almighty has promised of His help in the whole process. Philippians 4:6-6; *⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* In Isaiah 43:16-21; *¹⁶ Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea and a path through the mighty waters, ¹⁷ Who brings forth the chariot and horse, the army, and the power. (They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick): ¹⁸ "Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. ¹⁹ Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. ²⁰ The beast of the field will honor Me, the jackals, and the ostriches, because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My*

³¹⁶ <https://all4ed.org/blog/four-elements-for-creating-a-positive-learning-environment/>

³¹⁷ Ibid

chosen. ²¹ *This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise.* There is the need of presenting that issue to God, who knows and understands all things, and has a way out in every situation. Therefore, the international involvement of the parent will create a favorable teamwork spirit for the benefit of the student.

Official IRB Approval

April 5, 2021

John Mburu

Mario Garcia

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY20-21-399 Why Many High School and College Students at Light of Life Restoration Church Fail to Attend Church Services

Dear John Mburu, Mario Garcia:

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(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) 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(s) 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.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

Research Ethics Office

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