NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SPIRITUAL
DEVELOPMENT OF TEENAGERS
IN NEGST STUDENT HOMES

BY

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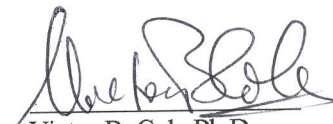
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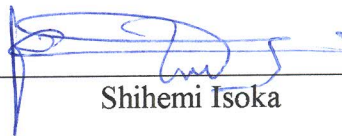Suraja Raman Ph.D.,

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Declaration

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF

TEENAGERS IN NEGST STUDENT HOMES

I declare that this is my work and has never been submitted to any other college or
university for academic credit

Signed _____

Shihemi Isoka

June 1999

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify and explain the factors that contribute to adolescent spiritual growth and the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers.

A research was conducted and responses obtained from thirty NEGST student parents and twenty-seven teenagers. Data were collected through closed- and open-ended questionnaires which inquired into the factors which contribute towards the spiritual development of teenagers in the Christian home and the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented them in the spiritual nurture of their teenagers. The closed-ended items on the questionnaires were rated on the Likert Scale. These items were then analyzed quantitatively. The open-ended items were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively by determining frequencies and percentages.

The findings of this study revealed that the home is a major contributing factor in the spiritual development of the teenager and that parents have a big stake in giving their teenagers the required spiritual tempo. The important aspect of this study is the implications it makes upon the home in the endeavor of spiritual nurture.

Dedicated to:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, my wife Emily, our daughter Prenier, my Parents,
and NEGST
For Making this Study Possible

————————————

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The entire M.A.C.E. graduating class for showing concern as we shared a common cause and their in-house encouragement in the course of the writing. And indeed, all the students, faculty and staff of NEGST for their prayers, love, gifts and concern for me and my family.

My parents who have always supported my cause of ministry and the Overseas Council whose tuition scholarship made it possible for me to see the doors of NEGST.

Finally, my dear wife Emily, who bore with me and encouraged me as I stayed away from time to time working on the thesis. And our daughter Prenier who kept inquiring about the progress I was making and kept promising her support in prayer for the successful completion of the work.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Spirituality is the backbone of human relationships with God and with the environment. The human person was created to bring glory to God. Such glory is brought in terms of one's relationship to the creator. As long as one's vertical relationship with God is maintained spirituality is guaranteed. The vertical relationship determines the horizontal relationship with the environment and with other human beings. Thus, spirituality determines one's motives, drives, and finally destiny. God knew that the way to preserve a people who fear him would be through parental spiritual nurture. So, he commanded the Israelites to train their children in the home [Deut. 6 : 5 - 9].

God is perfect and his standards are high. Attainment to these standards is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ his Son. Such attainment means fulfillment in life and eternity with God. If our adolescents can be encouraged to seek Christ and nurture a relationship with him, part of their struggle for identity will be resolved. The Bible rightly assumes parental responsibility for spiritual development in the home. Paul alludes to this when he says, "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into the kingdom of glory" [1Thess. 2:11-12]. The home greatly influences a child's processes of socialization and maturation. Because the role of the home is to facilitate, aid, help and teach in its bid to nurture, it is proper to

explore it and investigate its patterns and processes of spiritual formation for the teenager.

Statement of the Problem

This research sought to identify and explain the factors that contribute to adolescent spiritual growth in Christian homes and the extent to which the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology [to be abbreviated as NEGST in the rest of the thesis] student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers.

Significance of the Study

This research study was considered significant because it would contribute to parental adolescent spiritual nurture in Christian homes. Teenagers are a great asset to the family, to the church of Jesus Christ, and to the state at large because they are the ones that carry on the family name and are indeed the church and the state of tomorrow. Their spiritual formation contributes much to determining the future homes, the future church and to a large extent, the future state.

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the factors which contribute to the spiritual development of teenagers and the extent to which NEGST student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their adolescent children. The study hoped to contribute to a developing body of locally generated material on the subject of teenage spiritual formation.

Research Questions

With respect to the above stated problem, the following research questions were asked:

RQ1   What are the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of teenagers?

RQ2   To what extent have the NEGST student parents implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers?

These questions served as the basis for the identification and description of the factors that bring about the spiritual growth of teenagers in the Christian home.

Research Hypotheses

In response to the research questions two directional hypotheses were generated. These hypotheses were:

H_1:1 The home will be a major contributing factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

H_1:2   Parents at NEGST have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

Since there are different factors which contribute towards the spiritual development of teenagers as revealed in the literature, two null hypotheses were generated as a test for the major factors which contribute towards teenage spiritual development and the extent of implementation of these factors in NEGST student homes. These are:

H_0:1   The home will not be a major factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

H_0:2 Parents at NEGST will not have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

In testing these hypotheses, a critical cut-off point which represented the opinion of at least 60% of the respondents was set. Percentages of score values for the corresponding entries were then established. If more than 60% of the respondents subscribed to a factor as contributing to the spiritual development of the teenagers or to a discipline as being encouraged by parents respectively, then the hypothesis was considered accepted. If only 60% of the respondents or less subscribed, then the hypothesis was considered rejected.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to teenagers of ages ranging from 12-19 years whose parents were students at NEGST.

Definition of Concepts

In order to provide a relatively undisputed comprehension of the terms used in this study, the researcher gave some definitions as they are used in the context of the study:

Adolescent

This term is used interchangeably with teen, teenager, and youth to refer to children between ages 12 to 19 years. Collins [1988, 167] subdivides adolescence into three categories:

1) Preadolescence beginning around age eleven to fourteen;

2) Middle adolescence which ranges between ages fourteen to eighteen;

3) Late adolescence which comes in the late teens to early twenties

However, this research is limited to children within the age range of 12-19 years. Twelve is the entry point to teenage, especially for early maturers.

Christian Family/Home

A family or home whose parent(s) believe and partake of the saving grace of Jesus Christ. The term, home is used in some places in the study to signify the environment set by parents for the spiritual development of their teenagers.

Choices

In teenage life the adolescent is faced with a range of alternatives to select from. These alternatives may be in the spiritual or in the physical realm. The adolescent has to pick one of these alternatives. For example, he/she may have to choose between promiscuity and sexual purity. What he/she chooses in the physical realm will greatly affect his/her spirituality and vice versa.

Nurture

The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines nurture as "The process of bringing up or training a person, especially a child..."

Development

The growth of children into the expected adults

Spirit

James Oliver Buswell defines spirit as a noun "...denoting the non-material ego in special relationships. The self is called spirit in contexts where the body, emotional

and intellectual aspects are not prominent, but the direct relationship of the individual to God is the point of emphasis" [Tenney 1967, 808].

Spirituality

This is the exercise of Christian religion through faith and repentance that is realized through personally experiencing Christ more and more. The emphasis in spirituality is on the individual's relationship with God. So, a constant walk in the Spirit, who is the third person in the Godhead, is desired. This research will adopt Liefield & Cannel's definition of spirituality. They define spirituality as "...a growing desire to know, love and please God that is being actively fostered in the power of the Holy Spirit through prayer and other appropriate disciplines and is actualized in an obedient life that expresses the love of God to others in their own spiritual and social needs [Liefield & Cannel 1992, 244].

Spiritual Nurture

Refers to the process of training and bringing up teenagers so that they can meet the Christian standard through faith and repentance as they personally experience Christ more and more.

Spiritual Development/Formation

Refers to the gradual growth of teenagers into a people that have a good relationship with God; a relationship that clearly spells out unreserved love for their creator. Dettoni's definition of spiritual formation will be adopted for this study. He defines it as, "... an intentional, multifaceted process which promotes the transformation by which Christ is formed in us so that we can become His continually maturing disciples" [Dettoni, 1994, 16].

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The need for spiritually tuned teenagers who desire to know, love and please God is not only the desire of the optimistic parent but of the whole Christendom. The home is the primary place where values are instilled in the teenagers as they come into contact with the outside world. James Slaughter says, "The Scriptures make it abundantly clear God gives parents the primary responsibility for the spiritual training of children" [Slaughter, 1988, 291]. Narramore [1958, 52] argues that life patterns emerge remarkably early in children. Parents are strategically placed to shape the patterns. He cautions, "A child is not an organism left to wander aimlessly until he assumes some kind of philosophy of life." The researcher was exposed to Christian teaching at childhood. When he reached later adolescence, he tried to depart from the fellowship of Jesus Christ. But the biblical verses he had memorized during childhood kept coming back to him. He finally gave in to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and re-accepted the fellowship of Christ.

Spiritual Formation in Adolescence

What Parents Must Know About Adolescents

Brubaker & Clark [1981, 59] argue that there are two transitions in one's life: from childhood activities to adolescence and from adolescence to adulthood. Collins [1988, 167] suggests three overlapping periods of adolescence: early, middle and late adolescence. Early adolescence spans from around eleven to fourteen years of age. Middle adolescence covers ages fourteen to eighteen. And late adolescence is between eighteen to early twenties.

Adolescence is characterized by rapid change in the body, establishing independence, achieving a sense of self-identity, and generally asserting oneself. Brubaker & Clark identify the dilemma of adolescence thus, "The...adolescent is in a world of change and transition. Even though he doesn't understand himself, he must not be misunderstood or ignored by others" [Brubaker & Clark 1981, 60]. Collins also observes, "Nevertheless, adolescents are going through significant change period, characterized first by the need to adjust to a variety of physical changes, second by the influence of great social pressures, and third by the challenge of making life determining decisions about values, beliefs, identity, careers, lifestyles, and relationships with others, including those of the opposite sex" [Collins 1988, 167].

The adolescent also has the problem of socialization. He/she tends to pick trends which the adult society critiques. Sandstrom [1966, 248] thinks that the home, therefore, should really strive to produce the well socialized adolescent since it is "the seed-bed

for the forces that condition the whole socialization process." He also adds, "There is evidence that the liberating process which takes place during puberty is a test of the strength of the organism as a whole: both of what it has inherited and what it has been given by its environment." Parents contribute greatly in choosing and making the environment in which their children grow.

Teenagers need to be helped to adjust. The biological changes in the body may bring with them a psychological effect, the maladjusted sexual behavior may produce guilt; instability as a result of the acquired independence may cause confusion, anxiety and anger; lack of help on value clarification may result in new standards morally and religiously; a struggle with parents over independence may end in tension, frustration, rebellion and persistent power struggles; lacking in social skills may bring self esteem problems; and pressure to make decision that will affect all of life may cause anxiety. All these changes take place in this relatively short life span of the adolescent who was a dependent child just a short while ago. In dealing with the adolescent therefore, adults need to appreciate the struggles he/she is going through.

Balswick & Balswick [1989] have observed that there are adolescent subcultures which have developed as a result of parent-teen disassociation since the parents are kept busy all the day long by their jobs while the teenagers remain in school. In many cases teenagers remain long in school striving for higher academic achievement. This delays their assumption of adult responsibilities and therefore the emerging of a culture to make up for the delayed entry into adulthood. The peer group also plays a role in teenage sub-culture. But this should not cause panic to the parent. Shelly et al. [1982,

55] say, "During these years, the peer group does become more significant than parents in influencing values, however, the values taught in earlier years will probably be maintained. Peers who share these values will be sought for close friendships." This is a challenge for the parent to start early in laying the spiritual foundation for the teenager.

Adolescent Identity and Spiritual Formation

Les Steel [1990, 141] observes that the sense of wanting to belong becomes stronger than ever in adolescence. "Adolescents are looking for a group of peers and significant others that affirm them as belonging to it.... The task of the faith community is to give to adolescents a sense of belonging." The family is instituted by God to be the primary faith community for the children. God says to Israel, "Only be careful and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them" [Deut. 4:9].

James Smith says, "Part of the process of spiritual formation involves developing a sense of our true identity. Our spirits are formed as we take in information about who we really are and as we begin living our lives on the basis of that identity... Christian spiritual formation is coming to the right answer to this question and then living our lives on the basis of that proper identity" [Gangel & Wilhoit 1994, 248]. The need for adolescents to find their identity in the community of faith is crucial. Proper identity is only found in Jesus Christ, the Alfa and the Omega. He is the only friend who can be

with us on Easter Friday and Sunday. He sticks closer than a brother. However, Les Steel [1990, 141] acknowledges that it is difficult for the community of faith to give to adolescents a sense of belonging. He says, "This can be difficult due to the apparent lack of interest in organized religion at this age." To counteract this problem, he uses Erickson's suggestion that we create a sense of identity and competence in the adolescent. This is done by making the teenager have something to contribute to the group to which he/she belongs. This creates a sense of belonging in the teenager and therefore causes him/her to identify with that particular group. "For the church this means learning things that will help the adolescents on their way to maturing faith" [ibid. 142]. Otherwise we may end up having alienated adolescents with nothing to contribute to the life of the church and no sense of freedom and joy in the spiritual disciplines, if we don't instill in them a sense of industry and competence that yields meaningful habits of work and a sense of belonging.

The struggle to belong or not haunts the teenager. At home parents should help them to overcome it. Parents who run the whole scene in the home only help teenagers feel that they do not belong at all. Teenagers want to contribute something to the environment in which they live to satisfy their search for identity. The Balswicks [1989, 137-46] observe that many teenagers are restless because their parents adamantly continue to run their lives. They suggest that the solution to this restlessness lies in appropriate parental empowering of teenage children. "This is the ideal; and when it happens the result is an empowered teenager who assumes responsibility over her or his life.... Parents giving responsibility and adolescents acting responsibly will

mutually reinforce each other." This may bring a sense of belonging which may lead to the adolescent standing for the faith that the parents profess.

Cognitive Development and Spiritual Formation

At adolescence people reach the formal operations stage of cognitive development, which provides them with ability for reflections and formation of theories. Les Steel reckons that with this new ability, adolescents apply formal operations to tasks that do not require them and this may annoy parents. They also exhibit hypocrisy such that they can't link ideals with actual behavior. In addition, they believe that they are not subject to what all others are subject to. And they are hyper self-conscious. This hyper self-consciousness makes them act out their lives because they think they are constantly being watched.

Les Steel concludes that formal operations has the biblical and theological potential of the adolescents seeing themselves in the story of faith rather than just knowing about the story of faith. "The new abilities in cognitive development lead to new possibilities for Christian formation. The task of the educational ministry is to find ways to assist early adolescents in becoming competent Christians and in finding a place to belong" [ibid. 45]. James Plueddemann says "In one important sense, people can have a mature faith at any level of cognitive development, but for a more adequate understanding of Scripture, formal operational thinking is probably needed" [Plueddemann 1995, 54]. Crabb comments on the vulnerability of the youth unto salvation thus:

> Research into the age at which conversion most frequently takes place
> has been made by other writers and it remains overwhelmingly evident

that,... the great age of conversion is the age of adolescence... there can be no denying the supreme importance of this period as a time of decision [Crabb n. d, 9].

Maturing in Christian Faith

What produces a maturing faith in any believer is a diligent search: an ever growing desire to know, to love and to please God. For some adolescents this searching may be counterproductive to Christian formation but it is essential. Les Steel [146] confirms, "Once a level of belonging is achieved, however, it is time to search out all the aspects of one's faith."

Out of identity formation should arise fidelity. Fidelity is a sense of loyalty and duty; of being true and authentic [ibid. 147]. One needs to be loyal, faithful and authentic in order to be a maturing Christian. However, some adolescents may be unwilling to take on any identity. This will affect their Christian maturity.

These psychosocial issues help to make teenage the period of most religious conversions. "Adolescents, in their attempts to form their identities, can turn to the gospel and find something to be devoted to, something that shapes their values and provide a context for self-sameness. Care must be taken not to offer an illegitimate notion of conversion to adolescents" [ibid. 148]. If an illegitimate notion is offered, adolescents may turn out to hate anything to do with Christ. During this time of identity formation the adolescent is busy searching. A healthy search brings spiritual maturity.

Parental Contribution to Adolescent Spiritual Formation

Parent-Teen Relationship

Amalemba *et al.* [1996, 47-62] have three foundation stones for better parent-teen relationship. First, they encourage parents to find some time with their teenagers alone. Parental time is usually taken by work, friends, extended family or even the younger children in the family. This denies the teenager any time with the parent to interact and learn ideals from the best source available. Parents should be fond of teenagers the way they are fond of their infants. They should find time to take them out alone for a walk or a drink. In these moments of relaxation the two will find it easy to confide in each other. Such moments will also be very ideal for either informal or nonformal parental instruction that is completely non-threatening.

Secondly, Amalemba *et al.* encourage parents to be good listeners to their teenagers. The last thing an adolescent wants to receive from a parent is a lecture. Parents should spare their sermons and maintain a conversational approach with their youth. The youth also want to be heard. Their points of view have to be respected if the parent-teen relationship will thrive. Otherwise parental lectures will merely meet deaf ears. Anderson and Russo [1991, 146-7] conclude that our teens do not talk to us because we rush to conclusions and start reprimanding even before listening to the whole story. They quote Solomon who says "He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him" [Prov. 18:13].

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Finally, Amalemba *et al.* encourage parents to discover the gifts God is giving to their children and help fan them into flame. Often times parents set the agenda for their children even before discovering their potential. This is not the right thing to do because it will end up bringing stress to both the parent and teenager. By all means parents should avoid creating this situation. Instead they should encourage the teenagers to take interest in the areas they are most gifted in. This is the mark of true discipling. The goal should be to reveal Christ in the life of the adolescent, not to have him/her do your will. If this is the goal, the Holy Spirit will be present to guarantee its attainment. The Worthingtons say, "The most important task of parenting is to create disciples of Jesus Christ who know God personally and rely on the Holy Sprit within them to guide their lives. If parents can achieve that goal, many other benefits may follow. Whether children develop to parents' expectations, though, parents will have done what is important as parents" [Worthington & Worthington 1995, 79]. Therefore, parents should strive for a relationship that promotes the spiritual atmosphere in the home because it is only in such an atmosphere that the character of God can be moulded in the children.

Mussen, Conger, & Kagan [1980, 59] present three categories of parents in homes. First, is the authoritative parent who values both autonomous self-will and disciplined behavior. Second, is the authoritarian type who promotes absolute standards at the expense of the child's self-will and therefore causes conflict between the child's actions and beliefs, and the parent's 'right conduct.' Third, is the permissive parent who preaches equalitarianism in the home without putting authority on the other side of the

scale to balance it out. The authoritarian parent may be outrightly opposed by the teenager who desires self expression. On the other hand the permissive parent does not stand much of a chance in spiritual nurture since he neither   sets nor maintains any standards. Honor falls on the authoritative parent.

Biblical and Historical Considerations of Parental Spiritual Nurture

Israel was semi-nomadic from the Exodus to Saul's kingdom. The home was the basic social-economic unit and the primary educational agency. Demskey [1971, 389] says:

> An outstanding innovation of biblical pedagogy was the religious home ceremony which became the primary means of conveying cultural values from one generation to another. The Passover home ritual is found at the very inception of Israel's national history [Ex. 12:21-27] and other home rituals were associated with other holidays of the Hebrew calendar [Deut. 16:10-12; 1 Sam. 20:5-6]. The home as an educational institution would become the hallmark of the Jewish people.

Parents were to pass onto their children what they themselves had learned. Education, thus, was geared at cultivating righteousness in the child through the keeping of the law. It expressed the will of God, gave the rules of social life and the rules of worship. From religious instruction, other tenets of life developed.

During the exile, the people feared to lose their identity and the home once again became an important educational institution. The theme of instruction was, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" [Deut. 6:4-5]. After embracing this spiritual truth, parents were asked to impress them upon their children. An

environment was to be created at home in which this spiritual truth would characterize the daily life [Deut. 6;7-9]. Because a more adequate understanding of Scripture is most likely during the formal operations stage, one is tempted to think that the children mainly addressed in the Deuteronomy account are adolescents. However, parents cannot foster the vertical relationship for their children before developing the horizontal relationship. The Hebrew parent received God's revelation about parental nurture and structured the home to be suitable for child spiritual formation.

Parental Example in Spiritual Formation

Our children need to see us read the Bible for what it is worth, live by God's rules, love unconditionally, forgive genuinely, exercise faith unsparingly, and solve whatever problems we may have biblically. [Fryling & Fryling 1991, 116]. Our example will stir them up to live for God more than our verbal admonition and rhetoric. For this is the will of God for all parents of all dispensations.

Andrew Murrey [1975, 236] suggests that for parents to be good examples to their children they must be Spirit filled themselves. Otherwise they will end up breathing into them the spirit of the world and as a result train them into man's religion instead of God's religion that comes by the power of the Holy Spirit. He confirms, "One of the first laws in the science of home education is that it depends far more on example than precept" [ibid. 239].

In their endeavor to be an example to the teenagers, parents should also strive to instill hope in them. We are surrounded with a world that is increasingly pessimistic. Optimism is rare in this generation. People are always preaching and expecting bad news. Campbell's [1981, 109] reaction to this is that, "You could rightly expect a teenager, who knows little about the history of man and less about the great promises of God to succumb to this suffocating, hope-robbing pessimism." Building hope in the supernatural remains the only remedy for the human race. Thank God for Christians whose hope is in the true God.

Campbell suggests two requirements that a child needs from his/her parents: to provide guidance and to set values for him/her [ibid., 111-13]. Christian parents are privileged because they already have a direction. Their life is fulfilled in their Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, they have somebody to whom they can direct their children. They are not like nonbelievers who fumble in the dark looking for a model both for themselves and their children and when they find one they soon discover his/her deficiencies. Parents should not leave spiritual matters to chance in the pretense that they are allowing their children the opportunity to choose what to have after they have learnt about different religions and philosophies. Campbell laments, "A child brought up in this manner is to be pitied. Without continual guidance and clarification in ethical, moral and spiritual matters, he will become increasingly confused about his world.... More and more organizations and cults are offering destructive, enslaving, and false answers to life's questions. These people would like nothing better than to find a person who was brought up in a seemingly broad-minded way. He is easy prey for any group offering

concrete answers, no matter how false or enslaving" [ibid., 114-5]. As the parent educates for skill he/she should also invest heavily in the spiritual formation of the teenager. Spirituality should be the crown of the heritage a parent passes on to his/her children. However, this heritage should be passed on by example. Parental example is the best way to instill values in children.

Some parents have been known to pass over the responsibility of spiritual nurture to their church. Campbell reacts to this by saying, "...nothing influences a teenager more than his home and what he is exposed to there. Parents need to be actively involved in a teenager's spiritual growth. They cannot afford to leave it to others, even superb church youth workers" [ibid.]. And James Slaughter says, "Local churches and Christian schools can reinforce the teaching of children at home but never should they be called on to supplant the family in this responsibility" [Slaughter 1988, 291].

For the doubting adolescent to be able to take the parental values as his own, he needs a demonstration of unconditional love from the parents. Christian parents should tap the unconditional love of God and lavish it upon their children. Because no one can resist love the children will naturally reciprocate by embracing Christian values vocalized and lived by the loving parents.

Campbell [1981, 114] argues that teenagers are close to emotion than they are to the cognitive. Emotion and spirituality are closely related. Campbell concludes, "...if parents want to help a child spiritually, they must care for him emotionally" [ibid.]. The emotion of love is likely to make the discipline of spirituality easier in the home.

Dettoni [1994, 18] acknowledges that spiritual maturity comes from God but says, "Those involved in true spiritual formation are keenly aware that the disciplines are a catalyst for, but not the cause of spiritual transformation." As part of their example, parents should find a way of redirecting all activities in the home to the glory of God. Paul comments upon this when writing to the Colossians by saying, "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" [Col. 3:17].

Nevertheless, there are some spiritual disciplines which parents can use at home to help maintain the direct relationship with God. Richard Foster [1978] categorizes these disciplines as inward [comprising of meditation, prayer, fasting, and study], outward [comprising of simplicity, solitude, submission, and service], and corporate [comprising of confession, worship, guidance, and celebration]. However, he does not isolate these spiritual disciplines from our normal life but says they are best exercised in the midst of our normal daily activities. He then hastens to warn, "The spiritual disciplines are an inward and spiritual reality, and the inner attitude of the heart is far more crucial than the mechanics for coming into reality of the spiritual life" [ibid. 3].

Narramore [1958,51-73] suggests various ways parents can use to bring about spiritual formation in their children. He gives a special place to family devotions which he says have no replacement. In the family devotions the parents set the standards for the home besides reinforcing the church teachings and creating an environment in the home for the exercise of the fear of the Lord. Next to devotions is Scripture memorization which

will keep drawing the teenager to the way of the Lord. The children should, of course, be attending a Bible believing church. Narramore cautions, "Never risk sending them to a church or Sunday School where the clear simple plan of salvation is not presented. There may be temptations to compromise, but remember, your children's souls are at risk" [ibid. 58]. Children should be exposed to the right music, and the right picture, the right program, and the right media. They should also be encouraged to have Christian friends as much as possible apart from times when they are witnessing for Christ, and to attend community classes and Christian camps that will impact their lives for the glory of God. If this be the environment at home the adolescent may be forced to respond to the Christian ideals positively early in childhood, in teen life, or later without much convincing because spirituality was presented to him/her as a lifestyle.

Methodological Literature

This study focused on the factors that contribute to the spiritual development of teenagers in Christian homes and attempted to evaluate the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented them in their effort towards spiritual nurture of their teenagers. Paul Makai [1998] did a study among the student families of NEGST to establish some biblical teaching on child discipline in the family and to test the extent to which these biblical teachings were adopted by the student community. His emphasis was on discipline for all children. He did not single out a particular age group for study. This study pursues his recommendation that, "Since there are developmental stages, it would be advisable for future research in this field to concentrate on a specific age group" [ibid. 72]. This research, however, deviates from

the study of discipline to study factors contributing to teenage spirituality and parental nurture in the NEGST student community.

Onesiphore Nzigo [1997] did a replication of Lamport's study on the adolescent age of conversion and spiritual development in selected Christian Universities in Kenya and its implications for youth ministry. His emphasis was on the age of conversion among current Christian University students and what factors influenced such a conversion and the subsequent spiritual growth. This research studies the factors influencing teenage spiritual development with a focus on the extent to which these factors are implemented by the parent in the Christian home to actually bring the desired spiritual development to the teenager.

This researcher used the questionnaire instrument. He developed both open-ended and closed-ended questions for the questionnaires. The closed-ended part of the questionnaire was used for items that merely need scoring out while the open-ended part targeted areas that required freedom of expression. Best says, "A questionnaire is used when factual information is desired" [Best 1981, 168]. He also commends the objectivity of the closed-ended items of the questionnaire and the expressiveness of the open-ended items. He therefore says, "Many questionnaires include both open- and closed-type items. Each type has it's merits and limitations, and the questionnaire builder must decide which type is more likely to supply the information he or she wants" [ibid. 169].

The following groups completed the questionnaires: both parents of teenagers who are students at NEGST and the teenagers of these parents. This instrument was administered personally to these two groups. Best agrees that,

> The person administering the instrument has an opportunity to establish rapport, to explain the purpose of the study, and to explain the meaning of items that may not be clear. The availability of a number of respondents in one place makes possible an economy of time and expense and provides a high proposition of usable responses [ibid. 167].

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This was a field research to ascertain the factors contributing to spiritual growth in Christian homes and to evaluate the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented them in the spiritual nurture of their teenagers. The objective of this chapter, therefore, is to explain the criteria for data collection and analysis. The researcher did a literature review from libraries. Best says that, "... the search for related literature is one of the first steps in the research process. It is valuable to defining the problem, recognizing its significance, suggesting promising data gathering devices, appropriate study design and sources of data" [Best 1981, 41]. The information gathered in the literature review was used as the basis for a field research among families with teenage children at NEGST. The data from the field research were analyzed and interpreted.

Entry

The researcher requested permission to carry out the research among the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology students from the Academic Dean. After the permission was granted, the researcher approached the parents and their children personally and requested them to participate in the research by completing questionnaires.

Research Design

This study employed the descriptive method of research. Best says,

> A descriptive study describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. It is primarily concerned with the present, although it often considers past events and influences as they relate to current conditions [ibid., 93].

Following this method, therefore, data were collected from the parents and the teenagers using questionnaires in appendixes A and B respectively in the thesis.

Both parents and teenagers responded to the research questions. The research questions sought to identify the factors which contribute towards the spiritual development of teenagers and the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual development of their teenagers.

The parents identified the factors that had brought forth spiritual formation in their teenagers, and the contribution of the home. The teenagers identified the contexts of their spiritual formation and the contribution of the home towards their spirituality.

The responses of the parents were organized alongside those of the teenagers and conclusions were drawn following the analysis and interpretation of data from both groups.

Population

The study had two sets of population. The first population was made up of parents with teen-age children. There were thirteen student couples residing at NEGST who had children ranging from ages twelve to nineteen. One other student who had teenage children was a widower and the remaining six students who participated in the study did not reside together with their spouses on campus. Five of the six lived singly on campus while one student commuted to school daily. All these student parents were Africans from seven African countries as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1: Countries of Origin of the Student Parents

Country	Kenya	Rwanda	Sudan	D.R.C.	Ethiopia	Mozambique	Tanzania
No. of parents	10	8	7	6	4	2	2

Since both parents participated in the study, a total of thirty-nine parents were expected to complete the questionnaire.

The second population was made up of teenagers. A total of thirty-seven teenagers were expected to participate in the study. They ranged between twelve to nineteen years of age and they were of mixed sexes [male and female]. The majority of them were in their upper primary school.

Sampling

There was no sampling because the targeted population was manageable. An attempt was made to collect information from all the thirty-eight parents and the thirty-seven

teenagers. The target population was parents with teen-age children and their teenagers of the age range of twelve to nineteen years.

Instrument Design

Self-administered questionnaires were used to gather information from each population. The questionnaire for parents is appendix A and that of the teenagers is appendix B in the thesis.

Both the questionnaires for parents and teenagers are divided into three parts. The first part of both questionnaires solicits demographic information such as age, country of origin, and denominational background. The second part of appendix A for parents consists of two items inquiring into the factors that contribute to the spiritual development of the teenagers. This part concerns research question 1:

> RQ1   What are the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of
>
> teenagers

The third part carries seven items, inquiring into the home environment and the parent-teen relationships that foster spiritual formation of the teenager. This is in response to research question 2:

> RQ2   To what extent have the NEGST student parents implemented these
>
> factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers?

From the literature review the researcher came to the conclusion that the sense of wanting to belong becomes stronger than ever in adolescence. The researcher also

realized that the family can be the primary community with which the teenager can identify.

The second part of appendix B for teenagers consists of four items. These items inquired into the spiritual discipline of the teenagers and the agencies which the teenagers thought were influencing their spiritual development. These items covered research question 1. The third part of appendix B contains four items. These items are in response to research question 2. Behavioral indicators such as spiritual discipline passed onto the teenager either by the parents through the home life or by any other socializing agent clearly come out in this section.

The construction of the questionnaire went through four stages. First, the researcher interacted with the related literature. The literature indicated that the adolescents were constantly in search of identity. The factors that contribute to their spiritual development are love and example from their molders and mentors, spiritual disciplines that the teen picks up as he/she interacts with the spiritual environment, acceptance and appreciation, and being given responsibility. After being informed by these indicators in the literature, the researcher raised research question 1.

On the other hand parents can contribute to the spiritual development of teenagers by: understanding the developmental changes and helping the adolescent to adjust, creating a sense of industry and competence in the adolescent, guiding the choices of the teenager and not making them, giving time and a listening ear to the teenager, and

being an example to the adolescent in Christian life and discipline. It is from these indicators that research question 2 was raised.

In connection with the research questions, two directional hypotheses were generated. These hypotheses were tested for acceptance or rejection.

The questionnaires had both open-ended and closed-ended questions. This was in response to Paul Makai's [1998, 72] recommendation that, "In designing the instrument for a similar study, preference should be given to a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questionnaire..." The closed-ended part of each questionnaire was used for items that merely needed scoring out while the open-ended part targeted areas that required freedom of expression without confinement.

Second, the researcher looked at the school's viewpoint on spiritual growth as outlined in the 1998 NEGST Student Handbook, and 1998-2000 NEGST Prospectus. The statement, "Here at NEGST theological discussion is coupled with warm spiritual atmosphere," [NEGST Student Handbook 1998, 1] made the researcher particularly keen to find out whether this spiritual atmosphere ends in the class or it is carried over to student homes and shared with their families, especially with the teenagers who are at the point of making formal decisions. This statement and the fact that one of NEGST's community life policies is to maintain the unity of the body [NEGST Prospectus 1998-2000, 10] prompted two preliminary questions to student parents:

1) How do student parents maintain the spiritual atmosphere fostered in school in their families?

2) How do teenagers from NEGST student homes conform to the body life, whose major characteristic is spiritual growth?

These preliminary questions helped to emphasise some of the factors found in the literature and to formulate the research questions from which the questionnaires were drawn.

Jury Procedure and Validity of the Instrument

Third, a jury of two thesis writing students who were well informed about instrument formulation was called. After reviewing the items on the two instruments thoroughly, they closely questioned the researcher to see whether the items on the questionnaires were a good response to the research questions. The research questions and the hypotheses were laid side by side with the items and the researcher asked to explain his reason for picking particular items to be included on the questionnaires, what he exactly wanted to test, and whether the items were relevant to the study. The jurors refined some of the items by suggesting alterations in construction and by suggesting alternative and additional items to ensure validity.

Fourth, to further establish the validity of the tools of this study, two professors from NEGST, who are experts in the area of child psychology and pastoral counseling, respectively, by virtue of teaching experience and research and are currently parents of teenage children, were approached to validate the research instruments. These experts

were expected to reveal some ambiguities and single out the items that did not seem to contribute to the purpose of the investigation so that they could be removed. The suggestions of the experts were fully incorporated in the revised instruments which were used for the actual study.

Pilot Testing

The questionnaires were pilot tested with one former NEGST couple and their teenagers, one NEGST student parent who had teenagers, a wife of a faculty member who is a mother of teens, and a faculty member along with her teenage children. This was an ideal group with which to test the instruments of the study because it closely shared the characteristics of the target population of the study. All these families had at one time lived at NEGST or were living there at the time of the study. Both parents and teenager[s] were approached to complete the instrument for the purpose of pilot testing. Each parent received the questionnaire [Appendix A] for the parents and each teenager received the questionnaire [Appendix B] for teenagers.

Administration of the Instrument

After pilot-testing and making the necessary corrections on the instruments, they were ready for administration to the universe. Because there were three groups [mothers, fathers, and teenagers] within the universe, the instrument was administered over a period of three weeks to avoid duplication of responses. The researcher personally administered the instrument to the populations.

The first group to be given the chance to complete the questionnaire was the youth. The researcher contacted the youth personally and asked them to meet him on a particular day, time, and at a chosen meeting place. On that day, as the teenagers had gathered as a group, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and requested them to complete the questionnaire during that sitting. Later the researcher contacted the youth who had not turned up for this meeting and personally requested them to participate in the study.

The next group was that of the mothers of the teenagers. All ladies at NEGST have a fellowship every Thursday afternoon during school session. A week after the youth had completed their questionnaire, the researcher went to the ladies' Thursday meeting after making early arrangements with the leaders. He requested the leaders, at the end of the meeting, to read out the names of the ladies who are mothers of teenagers and request them to remain behind. The researcher then explained to them the purpose of the investigation and gave them the questionnaire, which he requested them to complete and hand over to him at the end of the meeting.

A week after the mothers had completed the questionnaire, the researcher personally approached each father of the teens with an introductory letter explaining the purpose of the study and a questionnaire for them to complete at their own time in the course of the week and return to him either by mail or personally, whatever was convenient.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation of findings form chapter four of the thesis. The data collected from the research were analyzed with the aim of providing responses to the research questions and also as a base for testing of the research hypotheses.

The second part of appendix A for parents and appendix B for teenagers deals with research question 1: "What are the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of teenagers?" Along with this question hypothesis $H_1:1$ "The home will be a major contributing factor to the spiritual development of the teenager," was put forward. To test this, the null hypothesis $H_0:1$ "The home will not be a major factor to the spiritual development of the teenager," was generated.

This hypothesis was tested using item 2 of part two of appendix A. In testing this hypothesis, the researcher determined the percentages of all score values for the entries which the respondents made in response to the item. A critical cut-off point which represented the opinion of 60% of the respondents was then set. If more than 60% of the respondents subscribed to a factor as contributing to the spiritual development of the teenagers, then that was considered to be the major factor. If the percent respondents was at or below 60%, the factor was considered to be minor.

The third part of appendix A and of appendix B deals with research question 2: "To what extent have the NEGST student parents implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers?" Along with this question hypotheses $H_1:2$ "Parents at NEGST have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the

home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity," was put forward. For purposes of testing, the null hypothesis $H_0:2$ "Parents at NEGST will not have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity," was generated.

This hypothesis was tested with item 1 of part three of appendix A. The hypothesis was tested by determining the percentages of score values that were at and below the critical cut-off point of 75 [which was equivalent to 62.5%] and those which were above it. If the scores of the entries for this item were at or below the cut-off point, then the hypothesis was rejected. If the score was above the cut-off point, then the hypothesis was not rejected.

Most of the closed-ended items on the questionnaire were rated on the Likert Scale. These items were then analyzed quantitatively. The open-ended items on the questionnaires were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively by determining frequencies and percentages. The statistical findings and the discussions are fully elaborated in chapter four. From the data analysis, interpretations were made and conclusions drawn regarding the place of the Christian home in matters of teenage spiritual growth.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations form chapter five of the thesis. These include implications and foresight into researchable areas in the future. These conclusions and

recommendations will be of great help to Christian parents, who wish to pattern the lives of their teenagers after Christ; church and para-church administrators, who wish to partner with the parents in the task of teenage spiritual development; and scholarship by bolstering locally generated literature in this area.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The research questions form the component parts in which the data was analyzed and interpreted. The data analysis and interpretation of findings will, therefore, be discussed under the headings: 'Factors contributing towards spiritual development of teenagers' and 'Implementation of the factors in NEGST student homes.'

Questionnaire Returns

Table 2 below shows the rate of returns on the questionnaires. Thirty-six questionnaires were distributed among the parents. Both the mother and the father were targeted for the study. Fifteen mothers and fifteen fathers eventually completed and returned their questionnaires bringing the total number returned to thirty which is rated at 83.3%.

Thirty-six questionnaires were distributed to the teenagers. Only twenty-seven completed and returned them. Therefore, 75.0% of the questionnaires for the teenagers were returned.

Table 2: Questionnaire Returns

	Number sent out	Number returned	Percentage returned
Parents	36	30	83.3
Teenagers	36	27	75.0

Demographic Statistics

Duration of Parents in the Faith

All the parents who participated in the study were from an evangelical background. However, their duration in the faith was put in three groups for analytical purposes. Group A consisted of parents who had been in the faith for 1-10 years. This group was classified as having spent comparatively less time in the faith. Group B consisted of parents who had been in the faith for 11-20 years. This group of parents was considered to have comparatively spent average time in the faith. Group C consisted of parents who had been in the faith for 21 years and above. This group of parents was classified as having been in the faith for a long time. [See table 3].

Table 3: Duration of Parents in the faith

	Frequency	Percent Respondents
1-10 years	0	0.0
11-20 years	5	16.7
21 years & above	24	80.0
No response	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

N=30

No parent had been in faith for less than 10 years. 16.7% had spent average time and 3.3% did not indicate their duration in the faith. 80% of the population had been Christians for a long time

Ministerial Involvement

Out of the 30 parents who returned the completed questionnaire, 63.3% had been involved in full time ministry before coming to NEGST. 33.3% had other forms of employment and 3% gave no response. Table 4 displays this information.

Table 4: Previous Employment of parents

	Frequency	Percent respondents
Full time ministry	19	63.4
Other employment	10	33.3
No response	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

N=30

Summary of Profiles for the Teenagers

Age

All the teenagers who participated in the study were put into three groups in order to categorize their ages. These groups were: early teens which attracted teenagers of ages 12-13 years, middle teens which covered those of ages 14-16 years, and late teens which covered ages 17-19 years. [See table 5].

Table 5: Age Distribution of the Teens

	Frequency	Percent respondents
Early teens	8	29.6
Middle teens	14	51.9
Late teens	5	18.5
Total	27	100.0

N=27

51.9% of the respondents were in middle teens. Teenagers in early teens were 29.6% while those in late teens were only 18.5 % of the population. The median for the age distribution of the teenagers fell in middle teens.

Gender

The teenage population under study was made of both male and female children. 63% of the respondents were male and 37% were female. [See table 6]

Table 6: Distribution of the Teens by Gender

	Frequency	**Percent respondents**
Male	17	63
Female	10	37
Total	27	100

N=27

Country of Origin

29.7% of the teenage respondents were from Rwanda, 22.2% from Sudan, 18.5% from Kenya, 14.8% from the Democratic Republic of Congo [D.R.C], 7.4% from Ethiopia, and 3.7% each from Mozambique and Tanzania. This distribution is shown in table 7 below.

Table 7: Distribution of the Teens by Country of Origin

	Rwanda	Sudan	Kenya	D.R.C	Ethiopia	Mozambique	Tanzania
Frequency	8	6	5	4	2	1	1
% respondents	29.7	22.2	18.5	14.8	7.4	3.7	3.7

N=27

Factors Contributing Towards the Spiritual Development of Teenagers

Research question 1 was designed to inquire into this area of the study. It states:

RQ 1: What are the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of teenagers?

One directional hypothesis was cast to answer this question. It states:

H_1:1 The home will be a major contributing factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

Along with this, a null hypothesis was generated. It states:

H_0:1 The home will not be a major factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

All the items under part two of the questionnaires for parents and teenagers in appendices A and B respectively were designed to answer this question.

Relationship with Jesus

Item 2 of part two in appendix B was the response to this part of the study. 77.8% of the respondents had given their lives to Jesus and related to him as a good friend. 7.4% had not surrendered their lives to Jesus and did not consider him as a good friend as such. 14.8% gave no response as pertains to their relationship with Jesus Christ. Table 8 displays these responses.

Table 8: Teens' Relationship with Jesus

	Frequency	Percent respondents
Saved	21	77.8
Not saved	2	7.4
No response	4	14.8
Total	27	100.0

N=27

Parents' perception of their Teenagers' Spiritual Life

Item 1 in appendix A deals with this. 56.7% of the parents were positive that their teenagers have given their lives to Jesus Christ. 20% had some teenagers who had given their lives to Jesus and some who had not. 3.3% had teenagers who had not given their lives to Christ. 20% of the parents did not know the stand of their teenagers in Jesus Christ. [See table 9].

Table 9: Parents' Perception of their Teenagers' Spiritual Life

	Frequency	Percent response
All saved	17	56.7
Some saved, some not	6	20.0
Not saved	1	3.3
Don't know	6	20.0
Total	30	100.0

N=30

Parents' Perception of Factors Contributing to the Teens' Present Spiritual Life

Item 2 of part two in appendix A was designed to respond to this area of the study. This was an open-ended question. Parents indicated various factors. The frequency of these factors appear in table 10.

Table 10: Parents' Perception of Factors Contributing to the Teenagers' Present Spiritual Life

	Frequency	Percent respondents
The home	25	83.3
The church	14	46.7
The school	4	13.3
Youth camps	3	10.0
The peer group	2	6.7
No response	5	16.7

N=30

As shown in table 10, the home is the most contributing factor towards the teenager's spiritual state according to the parents. The researcher did not suggest any factors to the parents. Yet 83.3% listed the home as a factor contributing to the spiritual development of the teenager. Under the home were elements such as family devotions, parental example, parental love, and parental discipleship. 46.7% listed the church as a factor while 13.3% thought the school had contributed to the spiritual development of

their teenagers. The youth camps and the peer group scored 10% and 6.7% respectively. 16.7% of the parents gave no response.

Teens' Perception of Agents of their Spiritual Life

As a follow-up on the factors contributing to the teens' present spiritual life, the researcher set out to investigate the teens' perspective of the agent that has greatly influenced their spiritual lives. Table 11 shows the distribution of the agents' influence on the teenagers' spiritual life.

Table 11: Teens' Perception of the Agents' Influence on their Spiritual Life

	Frequency	Percent respondents
Parents	21	77.8
Church	5	18.5
Peer group	0	0
Others	1	3.7
Total	27	100.0

N=27

77.8% of the teens chose parents as the group which has influenced their spiritual life the most. This was followed by the church, which scored 18.5%. The peer group had had no influence upon the teenagers' spirituality. 3.7% of the teenagers thought there were other agencies which had influenced their spiritual life.

Teens' Perspective of the Type of Influence

A further investigation was carried out among the teenagers to find out the type of influence which the key agent [in this case, the parents] had impressed upon them. Table 12 shows the distribution of the types of influence.

Table 12: Teenagers' Perception of the Types of Influence upon their Spiritual Life

	Frequency	Percent respondents
Example	11	40.7
Offering security	2	7.4
Meeting spiritual needs	14	51.9
Others	0	0
Total	27	100.0

N=27

51.9% of the respondents felt that the the agent was influencing them through meeting their spiritual needs. 40.7% said the agent had influenced them by example. 7.4% thought the agent influenced their spiritual life by meeting their need for security.

Teens' Perception of the Spiritual Disciplines they Exercise

The teenagers were asked to indicate on a four-point scale the frequency with which they practiced various spiritual disciplines in response to item 2 of part two of their questionnaire. The frequency counts from the respondents were then tabulated by inverse weightings. The scale used is:

Always   4

Usually   3

Seldom   2

Never   1

Using the respondent returns of 27, the maximum response at each point on the scale is:

27 x 4 =108

27 x 3 = 81

27 x 2 = 54

$$27 \times 1 = 27$$

The median for these maximum scores was then taken. It stood at 67.5. A response rated above 67.5 was therefore, considered to be the adopted practice of the population. A score at or below 67.5 was considered as not having been adopted by the population. The tabulation for the scores is shown in table 13.

Table 13: Teens' Perception of the Spiritual Disciplines they Exercise

	Always	**Usually**	**Seldom**	**Never**	**Total**
Individual prayer	[14] 56	[10] 30	[3] 6	[0] 0	[27] 92
Individual study of Scripture	[4] 16	[15] 45	[8] 16	[0] 0	[27] 77
Family devotions	[11] 44	[10] 30	[6] 12	[0] 0	[27] 86
Going to church	[17] 68	[10] 30	[0] 0	[0] 0	[27] 98
Attending Christian youth group activities	[13] 52	[11] 33	[3] 6	[0] 0	[27] 91
Listening to &/or watching Christian programs	[10] 40	[7] 21	[10] 20	[0] 0	[27] 81
Listening to Christian music	[14] 56	[7] 21	[6] 12	[0] 0	[27] 89
Reading Christian literature	[10] 40	[10] 30	[7] 14	[0] 0	[27] 84
Others	[4] 16	[0] 0	[0] 0	[0] 0	[4] 16

N=30

Key: All upper entries in brackets are frequency counts. All the lower entries are the score values.

The result in table 13 seems to suggest that teenagers at NEGST had adopted the listed spiritual disciplines as part of their life-style. All the disciplines scored higher than the median point of 67.5. Four teenagers made entries in the 'others' column.

Rating Order of the Spiritual Disciplines According to the Teens

Percentages of the scores of the spiritual disciplines were also determined and rated according to their numerical value as shown in table 14 below. To attain the percentages, the obtained total score for each activity was divided by the total score possible [108] to arrive at the percentage for each discipline.

Table 14: Distribution of the Rates of the Spiritual Disciplines According to the Teens

	Total score value possible	Total score value obtained	Percentage
Going to Church	108	98	90.7
Individual Prayer	108	92	85.2
Attending Christian youth group activities	108	91	84.3
Listening to Christian music	108	89	82.4
Family devotions	108	86	79.6
Reading Christian literature	108	84	77.8
Listening to and watching Christian programs	108	81	75.0
Individual study of Scripture	108	77	71.3
Others	108	16	14.8

The teenagers had adopted the discipline of going to church to a great extent. They did it almost always. The other disciplines followed closely. All the disciplines listed scored higher than the median of 67.5 which is equivalent to 60.6%.

Testing the Hypothesis

The first research hypothesis was tested using item 2 of part two of appendix A. It states:

H_0:1 The home will not be a major contributing factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

In testing this hypothesis, the researcher determined the percentages of all score values for the entries which the respondents made in response to the item. A critical cut-off point which represented the opinion of 18 respondents out of 30 was then set. The cut-off point was equivalent to 60%. If more than 60% of the respondents subscribed to a factor as contributing to the spiritual development of the teenagers, then that was considered to be the major factor. If the percent response was at or below 60%, the factor was considered to be minor.

The home as a factor in the spiritual development of teenagers was mentioned by 83.3% of the parents [see table 10]. None of the other factors scored more than the cut-off point of 60%. Therefore, the hypothesis was considered rejected. This means that the home was rated by the parents as a major contributing factor to the spiritual development of the teenagers.

Discussion

80% of the parents had been in the faith for a long time. Another 16.7% had been in the faith between 11-20 years. 63.3% of the parents were involved in full time ministry before coming to NEGST. Only 33.3% had other forms of employment. This may suggest that the majority of the NEGST student parents of teenagers have a good understanding of parental spiritual nurture by virtue of their duration in the faith and the biblical demand of an exemplary parental life [1Tim. 3:4] in ministerial service. The

literature reveals that parental spiritual nurture is very instrumental in adolescent spiritual development. The literature also considers Christian parents privileged because they already have a direction that they cause their teenagers to take. The fact that the majority of the parents had not only been in the faith for a long time, but that they were ministers of the gospel before coming to NEGST means that they were better placed to nurture spiritually.

77.8% of the teenagers were positive that they had given their lives to Jesus Christ. 56.7% of the parents perceived that their teenagers were saved. 20% said that some of their teenagers were saved while some were not. Another 20% did not know the stand of their teenagers in the faith. Therefore, there wasn't a very big difference between the result from the parents and that from the teenagers [see tables 8 and 9] as concerns those who had given their lives to Jesus Christ. Most of the teenagers seemed to know the Lord. This means that the majority of the teenagers in the NEGST student homes were open to the gospel and the salvation experience.

83.3% of the parents picked on the home as the major factor which had influenced their teenagers' present spiritual life the most. In comparison, 77.8% of the teenagers felt that they owed their present spiritual state to their parents who were the major agency of their spiritual life. The parents' picking on the home and the teenagers' choice of the parents leads us to the conclusion that the two groups thought the home was the major factor which contributed to teenage spiritual nurture. This is because the parents are the ones who set the spiritual tempo in the home. This suggests that the

parents are the ones who set up the home for the spiritual development of the family. And that, the spiritual development of the teenager depends on how the home is set for such growth. The literature pointed out that parents are the ones to whom the teenagers look for guidance and standard of values. If parents establish a tradition of a desire for spiritual development in the home, it is likely to be followed.

Following this result, the teenagers rated their practice of spiritual disciplines high. All the disciplines which were listed scored higher than the median [67.5] which was equivalent to 60.6%. The exercising of these spiritual disciplines is reportedly linked to the home environment and the choices that are availed by the God fearing parents. This means that the teenagers from God fearing homes have an advantage over those from pagan homes over matters of spiritual nurture and maturity. Those from God fearing homes are spiritually nurtured while those from non-God fearing homes may not be nurtured so.

Implementation of the Factors

Research question 2 was designed to investigate the implementation of the factors which contribute to the spiritual development of teenagers in NEGST student homes. It states:

> RQ 2 To what extent have the NEGST student parents implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers?

The first research question inquired into the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of teenagers. Research question two was following up on the factors established through research question one with a view to finding out the extent to

which the NEGST student parents were implementing these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers.

One directional hypothesis was generated to answer this question. It was:

H_1:2 Parents at NEGST have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

Along with this, a null hypothesis was cast. It states:

H_0:2 Parents at NEGST will not have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

All the items under part three of both the questionnaire for parents [appendix A] and the questionnaire for teenagers [appendix B] were designed to respond to this research question.

Disciplines Parents Encourage Teens to Practice

The parents were asked to indicate on a four-point scale the frequency with which they encourage their teenagers to practice various spiritual disciplines as a response to item 1 of part three in appendix A. The frequency counts from the respondents were then tabulated by inverse weightings. The scale used is:

Always	4
Usually	3
Seldom	2
Never	1

Using the respondent population of 30, the maximum response on each point on the scale is:

$$30 \times 4 = 120$$

$$30 \times 3 = 90$$

$$30 \times 2 = 60$$

$$30 \times 1 = 30$$

The median for this maximum scores was then taken. It was 75. A response rated above 75 was considered to be the discipline the parents subscribe to in dealing with their teenagers. A score at or below 75 for a discipline was interpreted to mean it was of low priority to parents, so they were not encouraging it among their teenagers. Table 15 displays the findings.

Table 15: Disciplines Parents Encourage their Teenagers to Exercise

	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never	Total
Individual prayer	[18] 72	[9] 27	[1] 2	[2] 2	[30] 103
Individual study of Scripture	[11] 44	[15] 45	[3] 6	[1] 1	[30] 106
Family devotions	[17] 68	[12] 36	[1] 2	[0] 0	[30] 106
Going to church	[27] 108	[3] 9	[0] 0	[0] 0	[30] 117
Attending Christian youth group activities	[16] 64	[9] 27	[3] 6	[2] 2	[30] 99
Listening to &/or watching Christian programs	[11] 44	[9] 27	[5] 10	[5] 5	[30 86
Listening to Christian music	[17] 68	[6] 18	[3] 6	[4] 4	[30] 96
Reading Christian literature	[10] 40	[14] 42	[6] 12	[0] 0	[30] 94
Others	[1] 4	[3] 9	[0] 0	[0] 0	[4] 13

N=30

The results in table 15 indicate that parents at NEGST reportedly encourage their teenagers to practice the listed disciplines for the benefit of their spiritual maturity almost always. All the disciplines scored higher than the stipulated median point of 75. Only four respondents made entries in the 'others' column.

Rating Order of the Disciplines Encouraged by Parents

Percentages of the scores were also determined and rated according to their numerical

value as shown in table 16. To attain the percentages, the obtained total score for each

activity was divided by the total score possible [120] to attain the percentage for each

discipline.

Table 16: Rating Order of the Disciplines Encouraged by Parents

	Total score value possible	Total score value obtained	Percentage
Going to church	120	117	97.5
Family devotions	120	106	88.3
Individual study of Scripture	120	106	88.3
Individual prayer	120	103	85.8
Attending Christian youth group activities	120	99	82.5
Listening to Christian music	120	96	80.0
Reading Christian literature	120	94	78.3
Listening to &/or watching Christian programs	120	86	71.7
Others	120	13	10.8

97.5% of the parents reported that they encouraged their teenagers to go to church.

88.3% said they encouraged the teens both to attend family devotions and study the

Scriptures. 85.8% said they encouraged them to have individual prayer, while 82.5%

chose youth groups as a better way of spiritual development. 80% and 78.3% said they

encouraged listening to Christian music and reading Christian literature respectively.

Another 71.7% said they encouraged listening to and/or watching Christian programs

while 10.8% looked to other disciplines as a source of spiritual development.

Discussing Physical and Spiritual Development with Teenagers

The literature revealed that the major characteristics of adolescence are the rapid changes in the body and in the environment. These changes throw the adolescent into a dilemma. Because of this, the researcher designed items 2 and 3 of part three in appendix A to inquire into the frequency with which parents at NEGST discuss physical changes and spiritual growth with their teenagers as their contribution towards resolving the dilemma. The teenagers are in urgent need of information that will make them cope with the changes. Their parents are the best and most reliable source of that information.

The parents were asked to indicate on a five-point scale the frequency with which they discussed matters related to the physical changes of the body and spiritual growth with their teenagers. The frequency counts were then tabulated by inverse weightings. The scale used is displayed below.

Very often   5

Often   4

Not often   3

Hardly   2

Not at all   1

Using the respondent figure of 30, the maximum response at each point on the scale is:

$$30 \times 5 = 150$$

$$30 \times 4 = 120$$

$$30 \times 3 = 90$$

$$30 \times 2 = 60$$

$$30 \times 1 = 30$$

A response which was rated above 90 was considered to be reportedly the adopted practice by the parents. A score at or below 90 was rated as reportedly not having been adopted by the parents as something they practiced often. The tabulations appear on table 17.

Table 17: Frequency of Discussions Between Parents and Teenagers

	Very often	Often	Not often	Hardly	Not at all	Total
Physical changes	[5] 25	[8] 32	[10] 30	[3] 6	[4] 4	[30] 97
Spiritual growth	[14] 70	[13] 52	[3] 9	[0] 0	[0] 0	[30] 131

N=30

Key: All the upper entries in brackets are frequency counts. All the lower entries are score values.

Discussion of matters to do with spiritual growth scored higher than discussion of matters related to the physical changes of the body. However, results in table 17 suggest that parents at NEGST had adopted the practice of discussing physical development with their teenagers at least often and discussing spiritual development with their teenagers, very often. Both items scored higher than the critical cut-off point of 90.

Rating Order of Parent/teen Frequency of Discussion

Percentages of the scores of the physical change and spiritual growth were also determined and rated according to their numerical value. This is displayed in table 18.

To attain the percentages, the obtained total score for each activity was divided by the total score possible [150] to get the percentages for each developmental discussion.

Table 18: Rating Order of Parent/teen Discussion

	Total score value possible	Total score value obtained	Percentage
Spiritual growth	150	131	87.3
Physical changes	150	97	64.7

Spiritual growth, which scored 87.3%, was far above the critical cut-off point of 60%. Physical development scored 64.7%.

Time Together with Parents

As a follow-up on discussions between the parent and the teenager, the researcher set out to discover whether parents spent quality time together with their teenagers in spiritual nurture, which is the area of interest of this study. To inquire into this, items 1 and 2 of part three in appendix B for teenagers were developed. Teenagers were asked the extent to which they had benefited spiritually from their time together with their mothers and fathers respectively.

For these two items and item 3 of part three of appendix B, the teenagers were asked to indicate on a five-point scale the extent to which they had benefited spiritually from their time together with their parents and the extent of freedom given to them by their parents. The frequency counts were then tabulated by inverse weightings. The scale used is:

Very great extent   5

Great extent	4
Not at all	3
Small extent	2
Very small	1

Using the respondent population of 27, the maximum response at each point on the scale was:

$$27 \times 5 = 135$$

$$27 \times 4 = 108$$

$$27 \times 3 = 81$$

$$27 \times 2 = 54$$

$$27 \times 1 = 27$$

A response which was rated above 81 was considered to be the reported adopted practice of the population. A score at or below 81 was rated as not having been adopted by the population as a beneficial practice.

The literature hinted on the importance of parents allocating time to their teenagers. This will provide them with the chance coveted to pass on to the teenagers some useful information about their changing roles. Table 19 presents a statistical display of the spiritual benefit of parent/teen time together.

Table 19: Spiritual Benefit of Parent/teen Time Together

	Very great extent	Great extent	Not at all	Small extent	Very small extent	Total
Benefit from mother	[15] 75	[7] 28	[2] 6	[2] 6	[0] 0	[27] 115
Benefit from father	[15] 75	[9] 36	[0] 0	[3] 6	[0] 0	[27] 117

N=27

The result of table 19 indicates that teenagers had benefited spiritually to a very great extent from their time together with both parents. Both parents scored higher than the critical cut-off point of 81. Father scored 117 while Mother scored 115.

Teens' Rating Order of the Spiritual Benefit of Time Together

Percentages of the scores of the spiritual benefit of parent/teen time together as perceived by the teens were also determined and rated according to their numerical value as shown in table 20.

Table 20: Percent Rates of Time Together according to the Teens

	Total score value possible	Total score value obtained	Percentage
Benefit from mother	135	117	86.7
Benefit from father	135	115	85.2

86.7% of the teenagers said they had benefited spiritually from their time together with their fathers while 85.2% said they had benefited from time together with their mothers.

Teens and Independence

In the literature, it was discovered that parents who continue to run their children's lives in the teenage years only frustrate the teenagers' search for identity. Teenage is a time of asserting oneself. To be able to do this, the teenager must be given some freedom so as to learn to be responsible. Armed with this discovery from the literature, the researcher designed item 3 of part three in appendix B to inquire from the teenagers the extent of freedom given to them by parents to make decisions about their lives. [See table 21].

Table 21: Extent of Freedom Given to Teenagers by their Parents

	Very great extent	Great extent	Not at all	Small extent	Very small extent	Total
Extent of freedom	[7] 35	[7] 28	[1] 3	[12] 24	[0] 0	[27] 90

N=27

Table 21 indicates that the teenagers perceived that their parents gave them freedom to make decisions about their lives at least to a great extent.

Reason for Freedom

The teenagers were asked to give the reasons why their parents gave them the extent of freedom that they said they were given. Nine of the respondents said their parents gave them the stated extent of freedom because they thought they were still young and irresponsible. Five said such an extent of freedom was given as a demonstration of parental love for them. Four consented to parental expertise in life and said their parents knew better. So, it was good for them to guide their teenagers in making major

decisions. Three respondents gave no response. The frequencies of these reasons are displayed in table 22.

Table 22: Reasons for Teen Freedom

	Frequency
Fostering responsibility	9
Parents know better	4
A demonstration of parental love	5
Lack of trust	7
No response	3

Parental Spiritual Guidance to Teens

In order to find out the challenges parents face in giving their teenagers spiritual guidance, item 6 of part three in appendix A was included in the questionnaire for parents. Table 23 gives the distribution of the problems and challenges parents at NEGST face as they nurture their teenagers spiritually. Eight different entries were made by various parents as problems and challenges they incur. Seven parents said they had no problems with their teenagers.

Table 23: Problems and Challenges to Parental Spiritual Guidance to Teens

Problem	Frequency	Percentage
Application of spiritual truth	6	20.0
Parental non-creativity	2	6.7
Disobedience	3	10.0
Lack of example	3	10.0
Conflicting interests	5	16.7
The abstract nature of the Gospel	1	3.3
Fight for independence	2	6.7
Lack of freedom of expression	1	3.3
No problem	7	23.3
Total	30	100.0

N=30

20% of the parents said they had problems with the way their teenagers applied spiritual truth. 16.7% of the parents said they had conflicting interests with their teens. 10% thought they were not as exemplary to their teenagers as they should. They also thought their environment did not reflect a very good Christian picture. Another 10% of the parents said they had a problem with their disobedient teenagers. 6.7% of the parents said they lacked creativity in presenting the Gospel truth to their teenagers, while a similar percentage said they were bothered by their teenagers' desperate fight for independence. 3.3% of the parents thought there was lack of freedom of expression between them and their teenagers, while another 3.3% said they had a problem with the way the teenagers treated the Gospel as abstract truth.

Method of Problem Resolution

In the literature there were many suggestions for resolving the stalemate between parents and teenagers in the parental endeavor to nurture spiritually. Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to include item 7 of part three in appendix A to inquire into the way the student parents at NEGST were resolving the problems they encounter in giving spiritual guidance to their teenagers. A display of the frequencies of the suggestions from the parents appears in table 24.

Table 24: Methods of Problem Resolution

Method of resolution	Frequency
Prayer	9
Discussion of the problem	7
Discipline	3
Scriptural counsel	9
Insistence on application	3
Example	1
No method applied	8

Nine parents said they solved the problem by praying with the teenagers while nine others resolved to be giving Scriptural counsel. Eight parents had no method of resolving the problem but seven chose to discuss it with the teenager unto a resolution. Three parents confessed that they resolved the problem by the use of the rod on their teenagers while another three said that they just insisted on application until it came. Only one parent said he/she purposed to be an example to the teenager[s] as a strategy to resolving the problem.

Church Attendance

Item 4 of part three in appendix A was designed to investigate whether both parents and teenagers go to the same church. The literature made clear the fact that it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their children go to a Bible believing church. The assumption here is that the church which the parents have chosen to attend is sound in doctrine and is, therefore, suitable for their teenagers. Besides, if parents and their teenagers attend the same church, it will be easier for them to monitor the teenagers' spiritual development. Table 25 shows the distribution of church attendance as reported by the parents.

Table 25: Distribution of Church Attendance

Church attended	Frequency	Percentage respondents
Parents' church	23	76.7
Church of own choice	7	23.3
No church	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

N=30

76.7% of the teenagers attended their parents' church. Only 23.3% went to churches of their own choice.

Reasons for Attending a Different Church

The 23.3% of the parents who said their teenagers went to churches of their own choice were also asked to give reasons why this was so. They gave two reasons for this. First, was the question of transport. Parents who had to use public means to church found it difficult to go with their children since public transport to and from NEGST is unreliable and expensive. Secondly, teenagers would rather go to church with friends than with parents. So they attended churches with peers. [See table 26].

Table 26: Reasons for Attending Church of Own Choice

	Frequency
Transport	7
Peer influence	2

Hypothesis Testing

The second research hypothesis was tested using item 1 of part 3 in appendix A. It states:

H_0:2 Parents at NEGST will not have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

This hypothesis was tested by determining the percentages of score values that were at and below the critical cut-off point of 75 [which was equivalent to 62.5%] and those which were above it. If the scores of the entries for this item were at or below the cut-off point, then the hypothesis was rejected. If the score was above the cut-off point, then the hypothesis was not rejected.

The results of the item testing the hypothesis were analyzed and tabulated in tables 15 and 16. All the disciplines scored above the percent cut-off point of 62.5%. The percent score for the lowest discipline encouraged by parents was, in fact, 71.7% [see table 16]. This suggests that parents at NEGST seemed to have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encouraged in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

Following the response of the teenagers on the frequency with which they practiced spiritual disciplines, the researcher wanted to find out the role of the parents in encouraging these spiritual disciplines upon their teenagers. So Parents were asked to report on the spiritual discipline they encourage their teenagers to practice. All the disciplines they reported on scored higher than the median point of 75, which was calculated at 62.5% [see table 16]. This was a clear indication that the parents reportedly encouraged their teenagers to a great extent to keep these disciplines in order to mature spiritually. This suggests that teenagers in Christian homes have the advantage over those of pagan homes of being exposed to the means of spiritual growth.

Through these disciplines, the teenagers are able to develop in their spirituality by seeing, hearing, and doing. These are the main gate ways that Satan may use to capture the teenager. So if they are well engaged for kingdom growth the devil may not have a

foothold. The literature pointed out the fact that it is the parents who have to encourage various disciplines upon their teenagers for purposes of spiritual formation.

These parents not only encouraged their teenagers to exercise spiritual disciplines but also discussed physical changes of the body and spiritual development with them. 87.3% and 64.7% of the parents reportedly discussed spiritual and physical development respectively with their teenagers. This means that the teenagers have a chance not only to ask questions and get clarification on developmental issues, but they are also privileged to get information from the best source available. During discussions, both groups get the chance to learn about each other and improve their relationship. This is the time during which the parents may seize the opportunity availed to guide their teenagers through identity crisis. If the teenagers happen to discover who they really are at this moment in time, they will be on their way to a great future. This may suggest that the teenagers of the NEGST student parents are better placed to resolve their identity crisis since their parents are available for them to supply the parental information needed at such a time as this.

To compare the results of the parents as concerns discussions of developmental issues with a response from the teenagers, the teenagers were asked whether they had benefited spiritually from their time together with their parents [see table 19]. They reported that they had benefited to a very great extent from their time together with both their fathers and mothers. This means that the parents did not only discuss spiritual and physical development but they spent quality time with their teenagers,

mentoring them spiritually. The literature strongly recommends this contribution from parents towards teenage spiritual nurture. As a result of this quality time together with parents, most of the youth of this study might have made the choice to follow Jesus.

The literature also points out the need for the parents to give freedom of decision making to their teenagers. It asserts that parents who continue to run their children's lives in the teenage years only frustrate the teenagers' search for identity. Teenage is a time of asserting oneself. To be able to do this, the teenager must be given some freedom so as to learn to be responsible. The results of the study [see table 21] show that parents at NEGST had acted true to the recommendations in the literature and given their teenagers freedom of decision making. The teenagers perceived that their parents gave them freedom to make decisions at least to a great extent. The deduction is that, although the parents in the study were believers and had set the spiritual tempo in their homes, they did not force spiritual decisions upon their teenagers. Instead, they gave them sufficient freedom to choose for themselves whom they will serve and what to do in order to continue growing in the desire to know, love and please God. The sole duty of the parents was to ensure a conducive home environment for spiritual development.

However, the parents still faced problems and challenges in their spiritual nurture of teenagers [see table 23]. The existence of problems and challenges in spiritual nurture confirms what was presented in the literature: that spiritual growth is brought forth by God, parents are only agents in this endeavor. This is a very humbling thought.

Nevertheless, the target population of parents in the study reported that they were trying to resolve these problems and challenges. The interesting thing is that their methods of resolution showed a high dependence on God [see table 24]. They did not lean on their own understanding. Even those who had methods such as discussion of the problem, discipline, and insistence on application still expected God to intervene in resolving the problem.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to identify and explain the factors that contribute to adolescent spiritual growth and the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers. This chapter gives a summary of the findings based on the statement of the problem, and also makes recommendations for further study.

Statement of the Problem

Scholars have observed that the sense of wanting to belong becomes stronger than ever in adolescence. They have also argued that part of the process of spiritual formation involves developing a sense of true identity. Christianity associates true identity with the person of Jesus Christ. According to the literature, Christian scholars say that coming to the right answer on the question of identity and then living our lives on the basis of this proper identity is the sum total of spiritual development. The issue is, [in a Christian environment such as NEGST where future African church leaders are being trained] to what extent do they implement factors leading to spiritual maturity among their teenagers as their contribution to helping them find true identity?

Purpose of the Study

This research aimed at identifying and explaining the factors that contribute to adolescent spiritual growth and the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers. This was done through asking and finding answers to two research questions. The research questions were:

RQ1   What are the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of teenagers?

RQ2   To what extent have the NEGST student parents implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers?

Significance of the Study

The study unfolded the factors that seem to contribute to adolescent spiritual development and the role of the home in this development. Only God has a better plan for the teenagers [Jeremiah 29:11]who are an asset to the family, the church, and the state. Knowledge of the factors which contribute to their spiritual development will help parents to positively contribute to the teens' spiritual formation. Tangible spiritual formation in adolescence means a strong home in the future, a spiritual church in the future, and a morally stable state in the future.

Research Design

The population of the study was manageable so no sample was drawn. The study employed the descriptive method in gathering data on reported factors contributing

towards the spiritual development of teens and the implementation of such factors in the spiritual nurture of teenagers. The instrument used to gather the data was the open- and the closed-ended questionnaire. The researcher was informed through preliminary study and literature review as he developed the instrument. The instrument reflected the research questions from which it had been developed. It sought answers to the problem statement.

Summary of Findings

Factors Contributing Towards Teenage Spiritual Development

RQ1   What are the factors contributing towards the spiritual development of teenagers?

One directional hypothesis was cast as a basic assumption to answer this question. It states:

H_1:1   The home will be a major contributing factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

Along with this, a null hypothesis was generated. It states:

H_0:1   The home will not be a major factor to the spiritual development of the teenager.

This hypothesis was tested and rejected. 83.3% of the respondents reported that the home is a major contributing factor in the spiritual development of the teenager. This further confirmed what was stated in the literature that providing the right environment for the teens fosters spiritual development.

Implementation of the Factors

RQ2 To what extent have the NEGST student parents implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers?

Another directional hypothesis was cast as a basic assumption in answering this question. It states:

H_1:2 Parents at NEGST will have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

Along with this, another null hypothesis was cast. It states:

H_0:2 Parents at NEGST will not have a clear set of spiritual disciplines that they encourage in the home for the benefit of their teenagers' spiritual maturity.

This hypothesis was also tested and rejected. Between 97.5% and 71.7% of the respondents reportedly encouraged their teenagers to carry out various disciplines to aid their spiritual growth. This also confirms what was stated in the literature that parents have a big stake in giving the teenager a spiritual tempo.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The questions posed at the beginning of this study sought to identify and explain the factors that contribute to adolescent spiritual growth and the extent to which the NEGST student parents had implemented these factors towards the spiritual nurture of their teenagers. Various conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study:

The majority of the parents [80%] had spent a long time in the faith. Most of them [63.4%] had also been in full time ministry before coming to NEGST. The duration of these parents in the faith and their ministerial involvement seems to have a link with spiritual nurture in the home. Their maturity in the faith may be reflected in the way they seem to have guided their teenagers to follow Christ and grow spiritually by making an effort to pass to them a Christian heritage. They have made the home conducive for this kind of growth. This confirms what the literature impresses upon us concerning the will of God on spiritual nurture in the home. The Israelite parents were called upon to teach their children to love God. The target population of parents in this study seem to have acted true to Scripture as concerns the passing on of the Christian heritage to their teenagers.

All the above conclusions point to the fact that the home has a great contribution towards the teenager's spiritual choices and development. The spiritual direction and structure of the teenager depends on his/her home environment to a great extent. The age old assumption that other factors [such as the peer group] have the greatest influence upon the teenager's spiritual life seem not to be confirmed by this study. Therefore, as the literature asserts, it seems true that teenagers maintain values taught to them in their early years. If the home has been very emphatic in spiritual development, its influence will be felt by the children even in teenage years.

The literature points out the importance of parents discussing matters to do with growth and development with their teenagers. This would help ease the tension created

by identity crisis which is a characteristic of teenage years. The parents in this study seem to have acted true to this advice. That is why their teenagers seem to have found their identity in the Lord Jesus Christ and are able to nurture their relationship with God through the spiritual disciplines that make them love and experience him more and more. 77.8% of the teenagers [see table 8] seemed to indicate that they had had the conversion experience, and 56.7% [see table 9] of the parents seemed to indicate that their teenagers were saved. There is, therefore, need for these discussions between the parent and the teenager.

However, spiritual growth is not something that can be forced upon the teenager by the parent. He/she must be given enough freedom [as depicted by the results of this study displayed in table 21] to choose the way to go. The parent's duty is to set the values that will guide the teenager towards spiritual growth. In such an environment, God will cause spiritual growth. This conclusion was further strengthened by the fact that the targeted parents in this study confessed to having had problems and challenges in the course of their endeavor in spiritual nurture, despite their faith and their ministerial experience.

As concerns the questions raised by this study from the beginning, there was insignificant variation in reporting either by group or by practice inquired into, to warrant discussion. All the practices leading to spiritual development scored out by the respondents were rated higher than 60%, which was equivalent to an adoption to at least a great extent. However, some parents showed reluctance in discussing physical changes of the body with their teenagers. Only 64.7% of the parents reportedly

discussed these changes with their teenagers. The literature voices the need to help teenagers to adjust to the biological changes in their bodies, on which the other changes are hinged. This will save the teenagers from falling prey to unreliable sources of information. Discussing only spiritual growth when the teenager is even struggling with issues such as value clarification as a result of the many changes that have come upon him/her is not sufficient. Therefore, there is need for all parents to take the initiative of discussing teenage physical changes with their teenagers.

The parents who said they did not go to their churches with their teenagers said transport was the hindering factor. NEGST should think of providing means of transport for the families, at least from the school to the churches along Ngong Road. This will be the school's demonstration of solidarity with the nurturing parents, and its contribution towards teenage spiritual development.

Teenage spiritual formation should be emphasized because it is very central in ensuring a God fearing future generation. Therefore, there is need for NEGST to design and facilitate a youth ministry on campus to supplement and support the efforts already being undertaken by the parents. Because the school is an international community, such a ministry will meet the varied needs of the youth from the different parts of the world.

Recommendations for Further Research

God does not desire a dichotomy between the secular and the sacred. All things in his creation are meant to bring glory to his name. The whole of life of the teenagers should

be studied as a unit in the endeavor to investigate the factors that contribute to their spiritual development and the implementation of these factors in the Christian home.

In designing the instrument for a similar study, the items on both questionnaires for the parents and the teenagers should correspond to each other to allow comparison of the results and comprehensive conclusions.

This study was conducted among the NEGST students with teenage children. NEGST students are deemed to be mature Christians who are undertaking graduate studies in preparation for leadership roles in the church in Africa. The result of this study may therefore not reflect the true picture of the general Christian congregations. Due to this, there is need to broaden the scope and undertake this research among church congregations.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Dear Parent,

The following is a questionnaire to investigate the factors which contribute to spiritual development of teenagers. This study is considered significant because it is hoped that it will suggest the appropriate input for the Christian home in teen-age spiritual formation.

Kindly complete this questionnaire as frankly as possible by putting a tick [✓] by the appropriate response and also filling in the blank spaces.

Part One

1. Country of origin? _____
2. Your denomination? _____
3. For how long have you been a Christian ?_____
4. How many teenagers do you have? _____
5. What are their ages? _____
6. What was your full time job before you came to NEGST? _____

_____

Part Two

1. Which of the following best explains your teenager's spiritual life [Please tick one only]?

[ ]   a) he/she has given his /her life to Jesus
[ ]   b) he/she has not given his /her life to Jesus   .
[ ]   c) some have given their lives to Jesus
[ ]   d) all have given their lives to Jesus
[ ]   e) all have not given their lives to Jesus
[ ]   f) it is hard to tell his/her/their stand on salvation

2. What do you think has contributed to the spiritual state [of the teenager] you just ticked in question 1?_____

_____
_____
_____

Part Three

1. How often do you encourage your teenagers to do the following:

Discipline	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
Individual Prayer				
Individual study of Scripture				
Family devotions				
Going to Church				
Attending Christian youth groups activities				
Listening to &/or watching Christian programs				
Listening to Christian music				
Reading Christian literature				
Others [please specify]				

2. How often do you discuss matters related to the physical changes of the body of your teenager[s]? [tick one]
[ ] a) Very often   [ ] b) Often
[ ] c) Not often   [ ] d) Hardly
[ ] e) Not at all

3. How often do you discuss matters pertaining spiritual growth with your teenager[s]? [tick one]
[ ] a) Very often   [ ] b) Often
[ ] c) Not often   [ ] d) Hardly
[ ] e) Not at all

4. Which church do[es] your teenager[s] attend regularly? [tick one]
a) Parents' church [ ]   b) Church of their own choice [ ]
c) Does not attend any [ ]

5. If your teenager[s] attends a different church from yours, please explain the possible reason why? _____
_____
_____

6. What problems or challenges do you face in providing spiritual guidance to your teenager[s]? _____

_____

_____

_____

7. How are you resolving these problems or challenges?_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEENAGERS

Dear Teenager,

The following is a questionnaire to investigate the factors which contribute to spiritual development of teenagers. This study is considered significant because it is hoped that it will suggest the appropriate input for the Christian home in teen-age spiritual formation.

Kindly complete this questionnaire as frankly as possible by putting a tick [✓] by the appropriate response and also filling in the blank spaces.

Part One

1. What is your age? _____ 2. [ ] Male [ ] Female [check one]
3. What is your country of origin? _____

Part Two

1. How would you explain your relationship with Jesus Christ? _____

_____

2. Please tick how often you do the following:

Discipline	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
Individual Prayer				
Individual study of Scripture				
Family devotions				
Going to Church				
Attending Christian youth groups activities				
Listening to &/or watching Christian programs				
Listening to Christian music				
Reading Christian literature				
Others [please specify]				

3. Which group would you say has the greatest influence upon your present spiritual life?

[ ]   a) Parents   [ ]   b) Church
[ ]   c) Peer group   [ ]   d) Others [Please specify]

4. According to your answer to question 2 how do you think this group has influenced you?

[ ]   a) By example
[ ]   b) By making me feel secure
[ ]   c) By meeting my spiritual needs
[ ]   d) Others [Please specify]

Part Three

1. To what extent have you benefited spiritually from your time together with your mother? [tick one]

[ ]   a) very great extent   [ ]   b) great extent
[ ]   c) not at all   [ ]   d) small extent
[ ]   e) very small extent

2. To what extent have you benefited spiritually from your time together with your father? [tick one]

[ ]   a) very great extent   [ ]   b) great extent
[ ]   c) not at all   [ ]   d) small extent
[ ]   e) very small extent

3. To what extent do your parents give you freedom to make decisions about your life? [tick one]

[ ]   a) very great extent   [ ]   b) great extent
[ ]   c) not at all   [ ]   d) small extent
[ ]   e) very small extent

4. Why do you think your parents give you such an extent of freedom as stated in question 7? _____

_____

_____