

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

*Youth Perception on the Effectiveness of the Youth Ministry at
Destiny Worship Centre Langata in their Spiritual Nurture.*

BY
JUSTUS KATUMO MUTWEIA

*A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Divinity in Christian Education*

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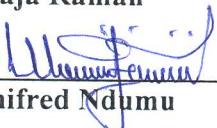
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July, 2006

Student's Declaration

YOUTH PERCEPTION ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE YOUTH
MINISTRY AT DESTINY WORSHIP CENTRE LANG'ATA IN
THEIR SPIRITUAL NURTURE

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Singed) _____

Justus K. Mutweia

July, 2006

ABSTRACT

The study explored the Youth perception on the effectiveness of the Youth Ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Church Lang'ata. The data was collected through face- to -face semi-structured interviews with seven participants, and were recorded and transcribed. Observation was also done in two of the youth meetings and activities.

The findings revealed that there was less effectiveness in the youth ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata, pointing to the activities, programmes and ways the youth ministry is conducted. The study further affirmed that youth need a variant of holistic approach and strategies to be able to attain spiritual growth and nurture in a given setting.

A model of interrelationships between various activities and programs was advanced and recommendations made to the youth, the church, youth leaders, and other concerned persons on the best way to make the program effective to nurturing the youth in their spiritual life. This would lead the youth to evaluate their growth and invoke a closer relationship with God.

To

My brothers: Daniel Mutua, Samson Ngati, and sisters: Joyce Muindu, Tabitha Mutua &
Rose Ngati

Sponsors Cyndi Nolasco and the Rumbergers'

My parents Mr. John Mutweia and Mrs. Christine Kaluki

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The youth form a very important segment in any church. They are, in fact, the group that is expected to lead the church in the future. However, it would seem that there is no proper handling, teaching and discipling of the youth. Most churches lack proper teaching models in their services. In essence, the teaching methods used and how they apply to the various groups involved appears inadequate. Every church that desires to grow should be equipped with a comprehensive teaching team, as well as a proper teaching resource. Teaching ministry has lagged behind and this has slowed down the discipling of the various groups that are present in the church. The teaching ministry is very important in the church, as it enables it's members to grow up and be grounded in the word of God and it's truth. Therefore, this ministry must be strengthened to make it appealing and to meet the needs of the people. Knowing and understanding of the Word of God will advocate for personality and revitalization of the church life itself. This would be the ultimate goal of Christian teaching.

The youth, aged 13 to 25, form the greatest part of a church congregation. This is a challenging group that should be handled with a lot of care and caution. They are very active and sensitive to what is happening around them. They require guidance concerning all potential failures into which they can plunge themselves, spoiling their chances in life. Most churches have not played their part in guiding the youth and therefore, the youth have fallen prey to the world.

Destiny Worship Centre: Background

Destiny Worship Centre is an African independent church that was begun by three pastors who came together and conceptualized the idea. They all belonged to Redeemed Gospel Church of Kenya. The church began as a fellowship in Pastor Nzimbi's House in Lang'ata, Nairobi. Pastor Titus Mbai was chosen to lead the new fellowship. After three months of intermittent prayer and fasting, the name Destiny Worship Centre Ministries came up, and Titus Mbai was given the location of Thika town to plant the first church. The first church came into being in 1998 and this became the headquarters of the entire ministry. Titus Mbai became the bishop and the other brethren were ordained as pastors. Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata came into being in December of 1999. The church began in a slum in Lang'ata estates. Later the church moved to Maasai shopping centre in Lang'ata, and finally in November 2000, went to its current premises, Lang'ata High School Hall.

The incumbent and pioneer pastor of Destiny Worship Centre (DWC) Lang'ata, Pastor Isaac Ndambuki Nzimbi, says that the church was to be different from others in the region, as its major intention and goal was and still is to make the church a true reflection of what Jesus said: that it should be of honor and respect for God's glory. He despises the wrangles for power and division that were predominant in other churches.

The church purposed to generate its own income and avoid being a burden to its members. The church adopted the three selfs: self-propagating, self-supporting and self-evangelizing. The church therefore has come up with various programmes and projects to aid its vision. The members are also empowered to become self-reliant.

Goals and Activities of the DWC Youth Ministry

The church has come up with a programme to teach and nurture the youth in the church. It has three objectives: Bible study, prayer and discipleship.

Bible Study

Bible study builds the youth and makes them grow up in the word of God. This is geared at motivating the youth to be strong as they propagate the word of God and not to be intimidated by what is happening around them. The youth need to be grounded in the word of God for them to become strong and carry the cross of Jesus. Paul encouraged Timothy that he should not be afraid of people around him and especially that people should not look down on him because he was a youth. Paul also encouraged Timothy that he should not be afraid for the sake of the gospel. Most youth have harbored fear in them due to Biblical illiteracy. DWC has set up Bible study classes for the youth to make them have confidence with the scriptures.

Bible study also helps the youth to grow up in purity and righteousness. Through this, it bridges the gaps and brings meaning to the various challenges of life. The youth are led through the road of spiritual maturity that they grow up and become responsible in the church and even to the outside life. Like little children, they are taught and watched carefully as they grow and learn how to fend for themselves in their Christian lives.

Finally, reading the Bible makes the youth know their God well. This brings in the necessary obedience and trust. Knowledge makes them humble and strong in the work of God. How can the youth know their God well unless they are taught through the Bible? This is a major task for the Bible study classes.

Prayer

Prayer involves organizing the youth to know how to pray and communicate with God and includes the following goals:

- a) To know how to talk to God personally
- b) To become strong through praying and worship
- c) To learn the various ways on how to communicate to God through prayer

- d) To know how to pray for oneself and for others
- e) To learn how to develop the discipline of prayer through one's life

Discipleship

Objectives in this area include:

- a) Sensitizing the youth on how to become propagators of the gospel and getting involved in the field
- b) Teaching the youth on how to become church builders, through bringing in more converts and handling the cases arising
- c) Encouraging the youth on how to become strong, especially when confronted by false doctrines
- d) Building the youth through the understanding of themselves in relation to the Bible
- e) Orienting youth for responsible church membership
- f) Equipping youth for discipleship and personal ministry
- g) Teaching the youth Christian theology and doctrine, Christian ethics, church history, and other topics related to Christian churchmanship
- h) Training the youth
- i) Involving the youth in leadership stewardship
- j) Interpreting and undergirding the work of the church and denomination

Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata Youth Ministry

The main focus of the study was on the objectives and activities of the youth ministry of Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata. This is believed to have been carried on from the time the church was established. The main focus has been on the 13-25 years age bracket.

According to the pastor, the church has a youth leader and pastor who are responsible for the affairs of the youth. The leader and the pastor work together to implement and execute the various activities that are planned for the youth in the church. These are reviewed after every year to make sure that they conform to the given objectives of the church.

The youth have their service every Sunday after the main service. This service integrates their various styles of worship and drama that is expected of them. The youth are taught and guided through the Bible with a planned lesson series.

Problem Statement

Despite the presence of many young people in Destiny Worship Centre and the existence of well-articulated youth program objectives, it is unclear if the church is achieving its stated objectives. And with the presence of the rising number of youth in the church, the apparently haphazard training strategies represent an unacceptable risk to the entire youth present in the church.

Research Questions

The following are questions that will lead the researcher in going about meeting his goals:

Grand tour question:

The study was guided by the following questions:

Does the youth program at DWC help and motivate the young person to grow in his/her faith?

Sub-questions are the following:

1. Are the objectives that the church has set being met in the youth ministry?

2. What are the perceptions of the youth towards the achievement of the objectives?
3. Are the objectives relevant to the youth ministry in the church?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this evaluative study was to discover the perceptions of the youth and their leaders regarding the achievement of the stated objectives of the youth ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata. Data was collected through the open-ended interviews with 6 youths. For the purposes of this study, spiritual growth is defined as the "elements of positive change that occur in the lives of the youth, judged on the youth's level of application of truths learned about Christian living" (Mattah 2001, 4).

Significance of the Study

Knowledge of youths' perceptions is very crucial. There is need to hear from the youth about their feelings and concerns. The study will provide a useful resource to the Destiny Worship Centre Church Lang'ata's Youth Ministry. Those who teach the youth, together with the pastors, will be helped in their endeavors. The study will be an aid to bridge the gap and work for effectiveness in the youth ministry of the church. The results of the study will be an insight to the relevance and effectiveness of each activity against the stipulated goals and objectives of the church and the youth ministry specifically. This is very crucial if the church has to remain relevant and of help to the surging number of youths in the church.

The study hopes to describe an enabling environment for improving the teaching and evangelization of the youth in the church, now and in the future. This is to make sure that the workers, teachers and prospective teachers would be in a better position to plan their activities in accordance with the laid down objectives and the goals that are set.

It is hoped that the outcome of the evaluation of the youth ministry in Destiny Worship Centre will provide additional and essential insights and knowledge to others interested in the same area of study. Therefore, the study is not only significant to Destiny Worship Centre alone, but to other churches that have youth ministries in their programmes.

Delimitations

The study limited itself to evaluating the perceptions on the relevance of the youth ministry in Destiny Worship Centre, Lang'ata. This involved and included the assessment of whether what was done is in line with the church's objectives and goals. The study limited itself to dealing with the youth only and not other members of the church. The researcher, therefore, did not go beyond the bracket of the youth fraternity.

Limitations

Whilst the study intended to offer generalized recommendations from its findings, the researcher's focus on one church was an inhibition to this reality. There was limitation of time to do as thorough a job as the researcher anticipated and also did not allow for doing this evaluative case study in multiple churches.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Substantive Literature

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of the youth on the effectiveness of the youth ministry of Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata. The study was to address the area of teaching and how it relates to the set objectives of the Church. The church's planned activities were also investigated to see if they were meeting the target and the goals intended.

According to Creswell (2003, 30), the literature review is important as it "provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings." In addition, Creswell states that, "in a case study literature will serve less to set the stage for the study" than to furnish a framework. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999, 30) stated that literature serves "to make the researcher familiar with previous studies and thus facilitate interpretation of the results of the study." The literature review here sheds light on the nature and background of the study.

Who are the Youth?

A youth is a person who is in the ages between childhood and adulthood. This is normally referred to as the adolescent group. The adolescent is looked at as a person in transition needing to accomplish five developmental tasks, as a member of youth culture, and as a person marked by a number of general and broad psychological characteristics (Lawrence 1972, 17).

According to Zuck, community leaders and teachers are alarmed by indications of increasing disorders among the young: alcoholism, vandalism, venereal disease, violence, and disruptive behavior in the schools. He says,

Just when the Christian educators, psychologists, and sociologists think they have the youth culture characterized and postured, evidence of radical shifts emerges. And this is the challenge of reaching, teaching, and discipling young people. It is both frustrating and fulfilling. Within the last fifty years, the evangelical church and her parachurch organizations have never had a greater opportunity for touching the lives of youth both inside and outside the local expression of the body of Christ (Zuck 1968, 119)

Youth Ministry of the Church

Taylor defines youth ministry as “enabling and mobilizing the gifts of many persons to touch, with the truths of the gospel, the lives of youth in every realm of their being” (1966, 23). This includes the sum total of all a church does with, for, and to youth and also the work done by church staff youth leaders as well as volunteer leaders of youth. Youth ministry could also include ministry with parents of youth.

The number of fellowships and social events on the calendar do not indicate the effectiveness of a youth ministry. Some have mistakenly said, “We have nothing for the youth in this church. Let’s call a youth minister and start a youth program.”

Every church that has youth and is doing anything (a Sunday school class or even youth in a worship service) is already doing something in form of youth ministry. A better approach is to strengthen the work already being done, no matter how weak it may appear, and then build on this foundation by supporting it with social activities that add the sparkle to attract youth. Social events are strong outreach tools and strengthen a weakened group in need of life and vitality. On the other hand a youth group needs motivational leaders to move on. Black says,

Youth leaders need encouragement and support. A wise youth minister will look for ways to equip and motivate adults who will touch the lives of youth in multiplies ways. Youth ministry is much bigger than parties, games, and fellowships. It includes everything done with, by, for, and to youth by a church. (Black 1975, 22)

Aims and Objectives of Youth Ministry

Our whole teaching and guiding ministry should be based on truth and must seek to lead teens into right relationships with God and others. Therefore, because the Bible is the only sourcebook of truth about God and about man's relationship to Him, a solid foundation in God's written Word provides the proper framework for any Christian approach to working with young people. Certainly youth workers can gain much from psychology, education, and sociology. These can enhance one's knowledge of youth and youth work. But evangelicals seek to evaluate these principles in the light of God's Word.

The church needs statements of goals which it desires to accomplish. This will give some direction to the planning and implementation and therefore progress will be assessed in light of the guidelines given. When aims are well stipulated then it is clear that some job is going to be done as aims point to those goals. But without aims we can say there is no job to be done because there is no vivid target. Whatever they are, aims provide for an understanding of the basis for motivation and the end towards which a process moves.

There is a need for a church to get to know the needs of it's youth such that appropriate aims and objectives can be formulated. Hence, it is good to get to know what to do and what you are aiming at. This is what most of the churches have not been able to do. Churches operate as if nothing like the youth exists, and they lack effective programmes. They have no programmes set, not even for the future.

Christie speaks of the seriousness of moving without an aim or goal, "it is better to have a goal and not reach it, than to fail to set a goal at all" (1973, 41). With no goals or aims, youth programmes of the church will reach nowhere, and therefore will have no effectiveness in its endeavors. Objectives are goals or desired ends towards which some

action is directed. One way of looking at objectives is to state them as means by which to involve youth in the nurturing process at each stage of overall development. In a church, maturity is linked to the standards of Christlikeness. “The overall objective of becoming like Christ through a growing, experiential knowledge of God guides the entire nurturing process” (Dettoni 1993, 15). The youth are placed in the same category.

Then why have objectives? According to Zuck, “aim at nothing and you are sure to hit it” (1968, 103). People are learning something – even if it is nothing more than that they don’t like church! Importance of having objectives includes the following:

1. Good objectives help leaders and youth know how to submit cooperatively to God’s work in and through them.
2. Objectives give direction for the entire nurturing process and provide a general basis for development of programs and materials.
3. Objectives serve as guides to help young people and adult leaders take successive steps in the desired direction. Learning is progressive and cumulative. Care must be taken that objectives are not stated or followed so strictly that they become straitjackets that restrict spiritual growth.

Objectives serve as guards against slipping into inappropriate or meaningless activity.

Appropriate aims can help prevent a leader from becoming uninvolved in incidental details that he misses the main points. Aims must not be permits, however, to limit individual freedom to search out and act on the truth.

4. Objectives provide limitations to group experiences within bounds that a leader can handle. Only frustration and failure will result from attempts to reach ultimate goals immediately. Aims must not limit so much that they hinder effort to meet the genuine needs of individuals.

5. Objectives express purposes common to both leader and youth. They are useful aids in stimulating motivation, cooperation, and participation. However, a leader must always avoid any tendency to force his aims on others or to manipulate rather than educate.
6. Objectives provide a good basis for evaluating how well a youth program is developing maturity. They must, therefore, be broader than merely “content to be learned” but not too general that they provide little or no help in measuring spiritual growth.

Planned Activities

The church must have activities in place for the youth. The activities that are planned lead the way to achieving the set objectives of the youth program. Furthermore, the planned activities have to be appropriate to meet the set objectives. They must be related to the objectives and therefore able to be met in the process.

Any youth activity must have a purpose that is being targeted, and this should include a maximum of participation on the part of the young people. There ought to be adequate preparation and effective publicity; and certainly the whole operation ought to be backed with fervent prayer. Stated in another way, “every youth program and learning experience for teens must include at least three basic elements: objectives, content, and methods” (Zuck 1968, 114).

The content of youth activities must be permeated with the Bible. Lessons and youth programs/activities must be dynamic in the sense that they relate to the life experiences of the young people. They must also be Biblical.

Sunday youth programs provide additional opportunities for youth to invite friends to “their own” meetings. But perhaps the greatest in discipleship/evangelism is the instruction and practical experience afforded in training Christians for personal evangelism. Gospel teams may be formed, instructed, trained, and then sent out to reach other youth for Christ. Youth might be more effective in bringing their counterparts to church.

The regular church service offers opportunities for decisions and/or public witness, formally or informally, and give teenagers a chance to bring unsaved friends in contact with a skilled presentation of the gospel. Some churches schedule rallies, retreats, or conferences designed particularly to reach young people. Special decision days afford a time for teens and others to make a decision or give public witness to a previous decision for Christ. “Youth sitting together in the sanctuary is of strategic importance in developing *esprit de corps* in ministry with and to them”(Ibid).

Churches on weekdays or holidays, also should conduct numerous activities, namely; study group, recreational activities, and special interest groups because of the number of youths that might be present on one sitting. These can be geared to provide opportunities for personal contact and counsel which Sunday activities may lack. Efforts should be made to reach “fringe followers” (those members who are not very active with church activities) and unsaved youth and to lead them into a meaningful relationship to Jesus Christ.

The advantages of weekday activities over Sunday contacts are magnified even more in camping situations which allow ‘round-the-clock’ contact, close living, a natural setting, an on-your-own feeling, and comparative isolation – all of which provide multiplied opportunities for counseling and winning the unsaved. (Zuck 1968, 191-192)

The church library can have an evangelistic influence by providing books on Christian biography, doctrine, apologetics, Bible study, and Christian fiction. Choirs and ensembles have been a means of evangelism both among those participating and those who listen.

Adult workers with youth should be alert to opportunities the Lord provides for them to witness and win non-Christian youth to Himself. For example, one youth leader saw three or four boys playing basketball in the afternoon on a school ground. “He asked them if he could play with them. They agreed. After getting acquainted with them while playing

ball, he bought them cokes at a nearby drugstore. Then he invited them to attend Sunday school class that he teaches. Result: the boys were in his class next Sunday” (Watson 1965, 55). All that the church does should be greater for evangelism and edification – to win others to Christ and then build them up in Christ.

According to Zuck (1968, 113), a local church can have a two-pronged evangelistic thrust towards youth:

1. through efforts such as those mentioned above that present the gospel directly to the unsaved, and
2. through training Christian young people in the church to witness to and win their peers

Churches often overlook the latter, and yet this is very effective in youth evangelism. “Teens, more so than many adults, can reach other teens because they speak the same language, have common interests, spend time together, and are not looked on as professionals” (93).

Benson Warren and Mark H. Senter (1987, 16) proposes an effective rationale for youth ministry. He advocates that youth ministry in a nutshell should bear an intimate adult-student relationship for it to succeed. Senter gives the following rationale for youth ministry:

1. Youth ministry begins when adults find a comfortable method of entering a student world
2. Youth ministry happens as long as adults are able to use their contacts with students to draw them into a maturing relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
3. Youth ministry ceases when either the adult-student relationship is broken or the outcome of that relationship ceases to move the student toward spiritual maturity. There is need to move the student forward to spiritual growth, otherwise there will be no need for a youth ministry. The youth ministry should be able to do this

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study, exploring the perceptions of the youth ministry of Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata, targeted 15- 25 year olds. The study employed qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is “any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 10-11).

Research Approach

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998, 4) qualitative research design could be referred to as “a way of gathering knowledge about the social world.” This gives the researcher the freedom to interact actively with respondents to tackle the issue under study. On the other hand, Creswell (1998, 15) states, “Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.”

The above explanation justifies the researcher to use qualitative method to collect and analyze data with the intention of investigating the perceptions of the youth ministry in Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata. Affirmatively, Creswell (2003) gives apparent basic characteristic for the use of qualitative research method.

- Qualitative research design is generally inductive. The researcher has no hypothesis to prove, but rather learns from the respondents.
- Qualitative research design gives the researcher the advantages of doing his research in a natural setting (at the site).

- This design is interactive and humanistic. The researcher will be able to interact with the participants and in a human way.

- Qualitative research is emergent rather than tightly prefigured. The issue under study will be able to feature out clearly through the interview.

- Qualitative research is fundamentally personal interpretation. It will be through what is gathered from the study through interview that the researcher will be able to interpret and enhance imperative conclusions.

I prefer employing a qualitative research design because it allows me to hear from the youth and their leaders concerning what they feel and perceive of the youth ministry in DWC. The researcher will have to listen to the participants.

Grounded theory

Creswell (1998, 68) states five traditions that could be used in qualitative research. These are biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study. Grounded theory is so called because it is grounded in data collected during research (Nyagah 2004, 16). In this study, grounded theory will be defined as “theory generated from data systematically obtained and analyzed through constant comparative method” (Creswell 1998, 98). Therefore, this is a grounded theory about the study of effectiveness of youth ministry for their spiritual nurture.

Theory in Qualitative Research

Theory here is used in grounded theory to refer to the result of the study. The researcher sought to discover a theory that is derived from the information from informants (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 12). In a qualitative study, the researcher does not start with a preconceived theory to test in the course of the research (Nyagah 2004, 19). The theory emerges during data collection and an analysis. According to Creswell, in an inductive

approach, the researcher begins with collecting information from the respondents and then forms “categories or themes until a theory or pattern emerges” (Creswell 1998, 56).

The researcher chose to do a qualitative study in the grounded theory tradition because detailed information was needed from the respondents. The information that was gathered was only on the youth’s perceptions of the effectiveness of the youth ministry of the church. The youth need to be considered since they are the recipients of the activities of the ministry. The use of interviews with open-ended questions gave the youth an opportunity to express themselves freely and with frankness. Therefore, through this exercise in the whole process would determine the development of a theory that relates to the research questions.

From the information gathered from the participants, the following theory emerged: *An organized youth program is important for youth to grow spiritually to maturity. Three factors: Bible study, a good youth curriculum, and relevant activities should be part and parcel of any youth program. Competent and responsible leadership should be a priority for a good youth ministry. A combination of the above will necessitate the youths to grow and be useful leaders in the church.*

Entry

The researcher had an obligation to seek permission from the church before beginning his research. He met with the pastor and made prior arrangements so that he could make an entry to the church. The researcher also sought permission from the relevant youth leaders to make sure that he had a penetration into the church’s circle of the youth ministry.

Data Collection

In this study, data was collected by the use of open-ended interview questions. There was also the use of related documents of Destiny Worship Centre, Lang'ata. The church constitution was also used to provide further information.

Interviews

Chisnall sees “an interview as a conversation directed to a definite purpose other than satisfaction in the conversation itself” (1995, 24). According to him, an interview is concerned with a purposeful exchange of meanings, and it is thus an interaction between the interviewer and the respondent which contributes to the success of the interviews.

While interviewing people the researcher can have the opportunity to interact with the respondents in a manner to enhance his data collection. Things that are not well understood can as well be explained. The process might be difficult for respondents to respond freely if not well guided. Once they have confidence, then it becomes possible for them to be positive while answering every question asked.

Interview can be in the form of limited response, free response, or defensive response. There could be different categories that are applied in dealing with different kinds of respondents.

Mostly, it is important to have trained interviewers in the field in order to avoid biases. Those doing the job should know what they are doing to make the process successful at all times. The researcher used interviews with first preparing the respondents in advance.

Data from Documents

Every relevant document in Destiny Worship Centre in the line of the youth ministry was used to gather the needed information. Various magazines and church write-ups were

found and these were used as primary documents for collection of the data. Minutes from every meeting for the youth were resourced to give the study a wide range of information.

The youth leaders were in line for interviews to make sure that the aims and objectives of the church and the church youth ministry was clear. The interviews that were conducted with the youth fraternity was based on the objectives and planned activities for the church's youth.

The researcher began data collection by examining the programs and objectives of the youth ministry at DWC. This was done through the available documents and interviews with the pastors and the youths. The interviews were done and conducted in an informal manner, with free flowing style, and guided by the leading questions that have been set for the same. While taking the interviews, the researcher also made an audio recording and took notes.

Role of Researcher

The researcher in this study was the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. The researcher interviewed the youths and their pastor one by one. The researcher intended to interview one pastor, one youth leader, and six youths.

The researcher had the liberty to consult sources of DWC Lang'ata for information in his area of study. He also consulted the pastor in charge of the youth and interviewed him. He also interviewed the youth as well as the leaders in the youth ministry. The researcher, therefore, was in a position to assess the perception of the youth on the activities that are planned against the set goals and objectives of the church.

Sampling Procedures

The researcher selected participants according to their availability. He considered and chose participants with the ability to contribute. The researcher used theoretical

sampling whereby he began by studying those individuals who showed great willingness and wanted to contribute positively.

Research Participants

The participants for this study were selected for interview. One was the pastor in charge and the other one was the leader in charge of the youths at DWC. The rest were the youths in the youth ministry at DWC. The pastor and youth leader should have been in the church and in the same capacity for at least one year. The youth should have been actively involved in the youth ministry and its activities for not less than six months. The researcher did “theoretical sampling” where people who fit into the category of the population and were in a position to make contribution to the evolving theories were selected to participate (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 201)

The researcher intended to communicate to the participants for interview by January and carry out the research in February. However, the interview went beyond March. Communication involved sending a letter to the potential interviewee, getting consent and then arranging on how to carry out the interview.

Interview Procedures

The researcher identified interviewees. He had one-to-one process and also a focused group interview. The researcher used adequate recording procedures and labeling. He designed an interview protocol with open-ended interview questions. The researcher also determined the place to conduct interview. He therefore obtained consent from the interviewees who participated in the study.

Method of Analysis

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998, 57) grounded theory uses set procedures for analysis of data namely, coding procedures: open coding, axial and selective coding. These

procedures were used to analyze the data collected. This involved breaking down the data conceptualization it and combining it together. Open coding develops categories of information. Axial coding connects the categories. Selective coding creates a story that connects the coding and categories.

The data analysis therefore considered the existence and basis of operation of the youth ministry. Interviews were conducted towards this end. Findings were drawn from the interviews conducted with the participants.

Validation and Verification Strategies

Validity and reliability in this study was assured by triangulation which refers to the use of various data collection methods to allow comparison, while collecting, analyzing and interpreting data.

The researcher also involved the participants in the process of verification (member checks) by giving them opportunity to interact with the findings for affirmation. The researcher finally established audit trail to allow for independent researcher to check the procedure that was used in the study.

Pilot Interviews

The researcher tested the interview questions by interviewing three youths from the NEGST campus who fitted in the category of participants for the study. The three pilot participants also attend other similar churches in Nairobi. These pilot interviews were a guideline on how to go about the real research at Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of the research was to explore the youth perceptions on the effectiveness of the youth ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata. The research participants were youths of ages 15 to 25 years. The major guiding question was: does the youth program at DWC help and motivate the young person grow in faith? In the data collection process, the researcher was in a position to access and analyze documents and materials for youth ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata. He interviewed the leaders in charge of the youth program, six youths and former youth members of the youth ministry. The youths were especially cooperative and provided useful information towards this study.

This chapter summarizes answers to the guiding research questions as well as the sub-questions that directed this research. Data was analyzed using methods and procedures that were designed and discussed in chapter three.

The researcher used open, axial and selective coding to analyze the data obtained through interviews. There were eight participants although I had intended to interview six of them. The basic research questions used to collect data are as follows:

- 1) Are the objectives that the church has set being met in the youth ministry?
- 2) What are the perceptions of the youth towards the achievement of the objectives?
- 3) Are the objectives relevant to the youth ministry in the church?

Background of the Participants

Many of the interviewees had been in the church for more than a year. In that period of time, they were active members of the youth ministry in the church. In the beginning,

they were not in a position to contribute positively to the affairs of the ministry. However, after some time, when they became fully integrated in the youth ministry, they began to air their views, comment and offer positive suggestions on the youth ministry. The researcher also discovered that the church had set five objectives for the youth ministry: bible study, prayer, evangelism, fellowship and discipleship.

Table 1 Interviewees' background

| INTERVIEWERS | INTERVIEWEES AGE | INTERVIEWER'S PERIOD IN CHURCH(YEARS) |
|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Interviewee number 1 | 17 years | 1 |
| Interviewee number 2 | 19 years | 4 |
| Interviewee number 3 | 22 year | 6 |
| Interviewee number 4 | 23 years | 5 |
| Interviewee number 5 | 22 years | 4 |
| Interviewee number 6 | 25 years | 6 |
| Interviewee number 7 | 22 years | 1.5 |

Theory Explanation

Data analysis resulted in the following theorem: *An organized youth program is important for youth to grow spiritually to maturity. Three factors: Bible study, a good youth curriculum, and relevant activities should be part and parcel of any effective youth program. Competent and responsible leadership should be a priority for a good youth ministry. A combination of the above will necessitate the youths to grow and be useful leaders in the church.*

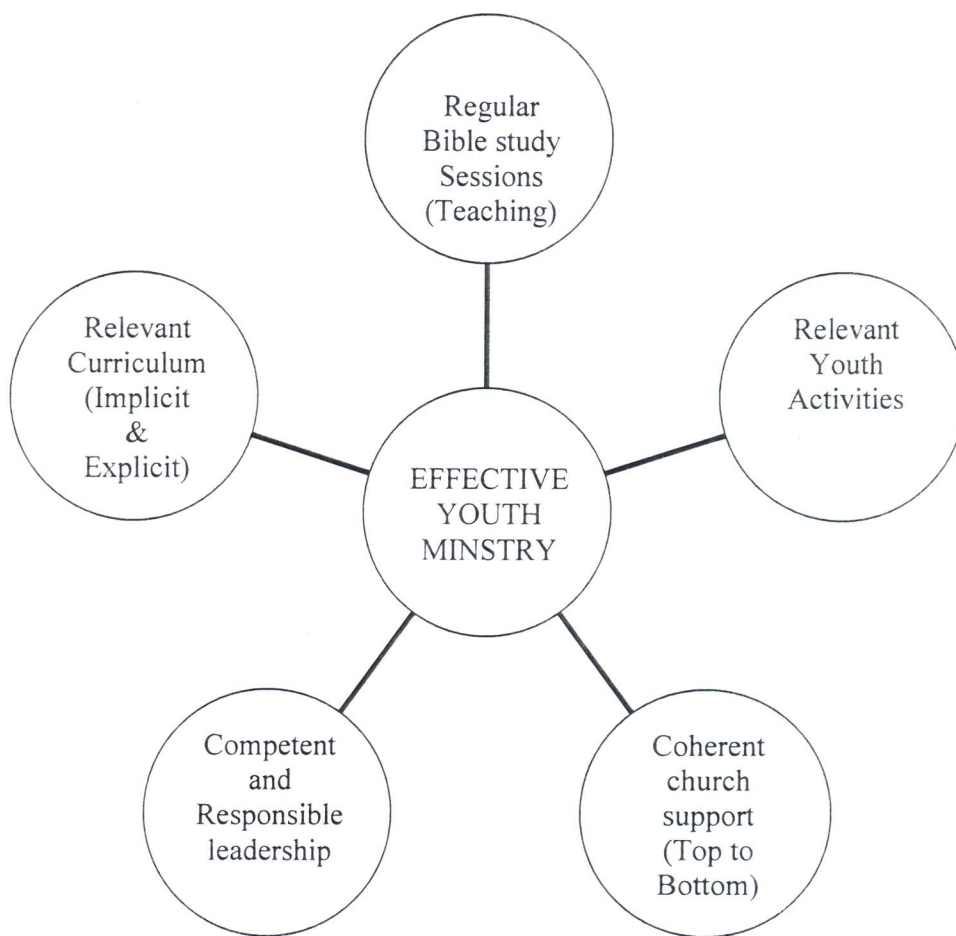


Figure 1. Model of the theorem

The theorem above indicates that for effective youth ministry to be a reality in the church, the church should give attention to curriculum, leadership, relevant youth activities, church support, and teaching.

Findings

Data analysis in research question 2: the perception of the youth towards the achievement of the objectives was grouped into four domains; curriculum, objectives edification, and youth activities.

Curriculum

The objectives that a church or any organization has set will require a pattern in form of a curriculum for them to be achievable. Curriculum is the basis for development of an effective youth program either in the short term or in the long term basis. In the background, the analysis revealed that there was a terrible disorder – meaning that there was no order of activities within the youth program. A direction, plan, and time frame are necessary to achieve the laid down desired goals and objectives of any program.

The subjects, goals and activities should be well stipulated in a comprehensive curriculum set up. The learning experiences, quantified in terms of the anticipated planned outcomes should also adjoin the system to a curriculum development. How does a program expect to achieve a domain that has not been planned for, evaluated and quantified within time and space? Cole (2001, 24) presents curriculum as a “planned learning outcomes represented by lists of quantified or behavioral objectives.” To him and many others like deems curriculum as important for instruction and order in the process of maturation. Ward, one of the distinguished Christian educators amplifying the essence of a curriculum, says that it is not only an instructional manual, but rather ‘a decision making process of what is to be taught and why, to whom, and under what conditions.’(Cole 2001, 25) This is a more comprehensive approach to understanding why a curriculum is important especially in the youth ministry. In his view, Buconyori (1993, 64) stress the developmental content that should be inclusive in the youth curriculum. Developmentally, youth are not static, but are people with the potential to grow. In this way the ‘curriculum will tend to help students in various areas of human development including, personality, spiritual, mental, physical, emotional and social development.’(Ibid) In other words, Buconyori advocates for a all inclusive curriculum that captures the growth elements of the youth. The youth have to be taught and reached according to their age and needs. Indeed, a program that has no curriculum in it is headed to nowhere.

Youth were asked whether they were aware of any curriculum. Mutindi reported:

I have not been introduced to any order of the youth activities and objectives that should be met. I know there should be a plan within the youth ministry on how we carry out our activities, but am not sure there is something like that”.

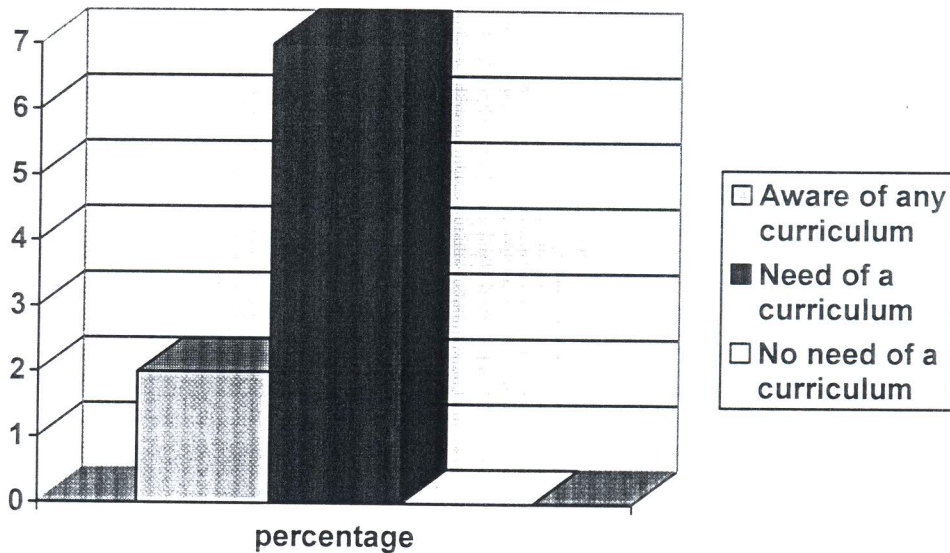


Figure 2: Need of curriculum

From the analysis, only 20% was aware of any kind of a curriculum that existed in the church for the youth program. This meant that it was difficult for the youth ministry to follow up the laid down objectives and goals to the level that was necessary. Indeed, all of the participants were positive that a curriculum would be helpful for them to grow and be motivated in their Christian lives. Every participant (100%) indicated that there was a need of a curriculum to guide the youth objectives of the church.

Youth Activities

Activities should be in line with the objectives that are set by the church for the youth ministry. The program drawn for the youth should reflect within it the activities that accompany the objectives, as these are active learners. Youths are motivated through the

activities that are carried out in the youth ministry. Since this is an active group it would be difficult to have an effective youth ministry less serious youth activities. The study revealed that once the youths join the church, they are encouraged to join the youth ministry, the choir, or the praise and worship ministry. However, it turned out that in the church there were few present activities. When interviewee number 1 came into the church, she was encouraged to join the youth ministry. However, “most of the said activities never took place at all.”(Ndinda) Whereas there were proposed and planned activities, these were not well defined. There was no formalized program that was followed, that would carry the youth ministry to maturity.

Yet there are other activities that the church offers that don't seem to make the youth grow in their Christian life. The only activities that appear to take place or are conducted in the church include praise and worship, choir, training on instrumentals, ushering and church arrangement. Interviewee number 2 indicated that, though she anticipated being involved in youth evangelism, door to door ministry, welcoming other youths into the church or some encouraging work in the church, this rarely is the norm or priority to the church as a whole.

Activities Edification

Basically, continuation of youths into a particular program requires that they are satisfied or rather interested on what is offered in view of the set objectives vis a vis the activities for them to go on. Satisfaction would come through the activities that are offered, programs and the teachers as a whole. There should be a holistic sense into achieving edification in a program, particularly in the youth ministry.

The researcher wanted to first know whether the participants knew what edification meant to be able to interact with the question satisfactorily. This was how it went with two of the participants:

Cecilia...This should be the emotional feeling about something

Joseph... Should be the continued sense of desire to feel that you have an endless interest.

From the discussion, it was thus clear that majority did not understand what was meant by edification. "We are not sure that we are being edified fully, as the case might be", one of the participant reported.

The study revealed that though there seemed to be few activities that take place, as has been shown earlier, most of the youths felt secure to belong to the Destiny Worship Centre Church youth ministry whereby there is more encouragement and fellowship. Youth love freedom of expression and even of learning more through interactions. In terms of spiritually growth and maturity, interviewee number 3 believes that she has grown over the year she has been actively attending the youth ministry. However, "growth of the youth numbers has been slow, since the programs seem to be less edifying," she continues to report. The youth numbers, for three years, 2003 to 2005 has been oscillating at 42 to 44 and back (See chart 3 below). Opportunity for many of the respondents was lacking. One of the participants felt mature enough even to evangelize other youths, disciple and even conduct useful youth activities if given the opportunity. Most of the youths' desire was to be given an opportunity to discover and do something for themselves. When this will is void, the youth will be suppressed and not be able to practice their abilities. Majority of the participants expressed a lot of interest and enthusiasm to evangelize in a crusade, but the opportunity had not been granted.

A further discussion on edification of the youth ministry brought out a lot of revelations. Interviewee number 4 said that there had been edification over time, and, therefore, interest could not be generally said to be absent in the majority of the group. This was probably attained through fellowships and the encouragement that was coming along the few activities present in the youth ministry. The group necessitated a process of passage

which is always crucial for a young Christian to grow. Some of the activities that were edifying included having Christian plays and drama by the youth, attending youth rallies and youth meetings organized by other churches and fellowshipping together as youth. A minority of the youths, therefore, felt that there was edification and growth as Christians in the youth ministry even though many of the fundamental principles were not in practice.

As was discussed in earlier, curriculum directs a program from one degree to another. The absence of a formal or implicit curriculum would affect the way things are done, and therefore it's effectiveness. Since in the study it was discovered that there was no curriculum that is followed, there is no proper plan of what is followed or taught. There is no consistence and form in the whole exercise. Interviewee number 3 said that; "the power of the youth is in the vision, and this vision is not being materialized in the church youth ministry." In addition she says; "there is no drive and therefore not motivated at all." She feels let down and less encouraged by the programs.

Relevance of the Objectives to the Youth Ministry

The data analysis in reverence to research question three: are the objectives relevant to the youth ministry; the research analyzed the data on the following topics: shortfall of the youth ministry, performance of the youth ministry, the policy and regulations, programs and organization in the youth ministry.

Shortfall of the Youth Ministry

The researcher had difficulty defining what was 'lacking' in the youth ministry. 'Lacking' was a strange word by its natural sense unless comparatives were made and drawn. A parallel was to be drawn from other (surrounding) churches to meet the clear meaning. Most of the participants, after getting an in-depth meaning of the word 'lacking' were ready with a list.

In view of what is expectant in the youth ministry, the researcher sought to know whether the youths themselves felt or recognized any 'lacking item' to make the youth ministry more effective. Interviewee number 1 indicated that there has been lack of self-confidence in the youth per se, due to low morale and discouragement: "I am shy even to share in front of other youths." There had been no factual modeling, and as such many of the activities are not fully blown and therefore the starting line is always a problem to many. There are less experienced and visionary leaders who could pull the rest along, especially new converts. There is also lack of exposure, and hence less of experience to back on.

Individual Opportunity

There is no individual opportunity to explore oneself or ability and talents. Many of the youths were yet to discover their talents except two, who were singers. In addition, the program has attracted few numbers of the youth in the last three years. There has been no room for positive competition which sharpens one's abilities and encourages working hard on the part of the individual. Therefore, many of the youths are not serious with what takes place in the youth ministry. They are not aware of their abilities, whereas the church is in need of more youths to sustain its future. To some degree, interviewee number 3 felt that many of them are reluctant to want to try out their abilities.

Consistency is important in order to draw a continuum of achievements and growth over time. Some respondents felt that whenever ideas are discussed and passed through they are not followed on for implementation; hence, they die a natural death. This is a result of lack of competent and responsible leaders that are committed to the affairs of the youth in the church as well as the youth ministry as a whole. One of the things that the majority felt was lack of was a pastor assigned to deal with the youth as a central focus. Furthermore, there is lack of relevant activities that are geared to youth. Most of the activities if any are

not attractive to the youth, within or without. The youths are willing but not interested anymore by what is being offered in the youth program. Boniface said;

Am delighted to be in this youth ministry, but, should there be more programs and activities that should be offered? How can we continue like this? Am willing to learn and grow, but I cannot see this happening here.

Asking interviewee number 5 what was lacking in the youth ministry, she said that “There is lack of good leaders, who have love in them, and also are responsible to the task that they perform in the youth ministry of the church.” Interviewee number 7 was quick to point out that “there is no Bible study; no teaching, and so on, and as such the youth meet twice per month and only for one hour. Basically, this is not enough to propagate the affairs of the youth.”

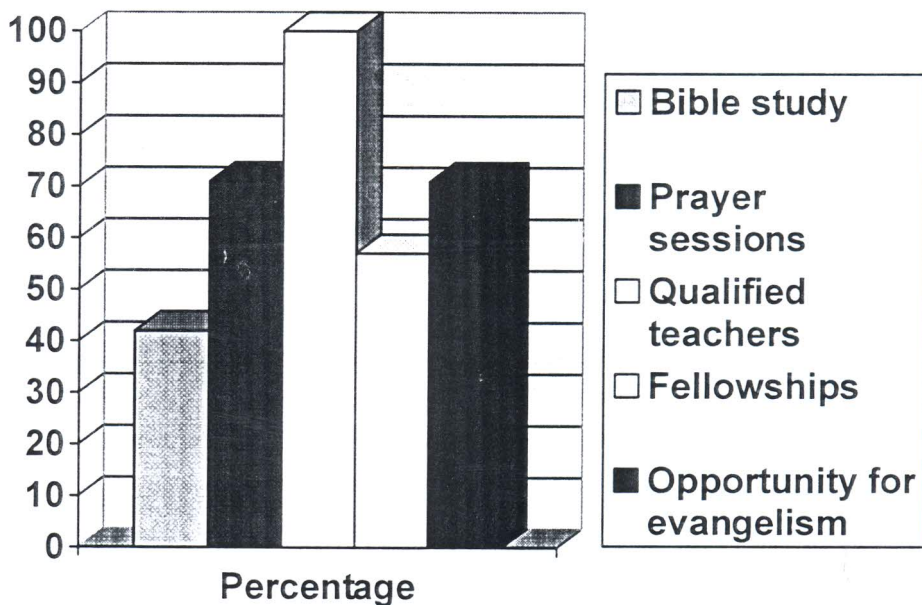


Figure 3: What is lacking in the youth ministry

In answering the question whether there was any lacking observation of the objectives, majority of the respondents indicated that there was a general lack of utilizing the most facet of the youth ministry in the church which included Bible study, prayer, competent teachers, fellowships and the opportunity to evangelize. Every participant

leaders nor the church has given us a written document explaining what exactly we are supposed to do in the youth ministry”, she continued.

Basically, objectives are set to give a project a focus, life and hope of the future accomplishments. Objectives are the basis which anchor and direct an organization. Youth should be aware of the objectives of the program in general and how this would apply to their lives. Unfortunately, almost all the interviewees were unaware of the major objectives of the youth ministry in the church. They appeared somewhat confused of whether the youth ministry has any set objectives that were supposed to be followed. Four of the participants indicated that things like “video taping – A Christian movie, publishing a book or organizing a retreat and socializing were the only programs for the youth that seemed to be in the agenda for over four years.”

Programs

Programming is important for the youth. A professionally planned program meets the desired product. This process might take time but it is good for later use. However any plan or program that is not used is not helpful. A formalized program would help and ease the way activities are conducted in a particular setting. Three of the participants had difficulties in categorically identifying programs that were on offer in the youth ministry of the church. Where there is no formal program/curriculum that is followed, the people go ahead to do and practice that which is decided anonymously by the leaders, and nothing is a norm.

This study revealed that youth had to work hard on their spiritual life on their own if they had to grow and maintain their Christian life. “I have to attend other fellowships of other churches to survive in my faith” one of the interviewee said. Therefore, it was clear that there was no proper program to guide the affairs of the youth in the meantime.

(100%) indicated that there was lack of qualified teachers to disciple the youth towards spiritual maturity.

Performance of the Youth Ministry

Youths come and go. They are afraid and discouraged by the number of the youths who attend to the youth meetings, and probably do not like the activities that are conducted and how they are organized; most of the youths compare themselves with other churches around them. Kioko said

We are very few of us here, unlike other churches around. Most of our friends have left to others churches, I meet them often and they seem happy and contented out there.

Ndama:

My friend left our church and the youth ministry. She was the treasurer and this has affected us so much. The church she has gone to appears to have a better youth ministry.

Respondents felt that there was a lack of enough substance to sustain the youths in the church's youth ministry; and this is as a result of few committed workers, relatively low growth of the youth ministry, less motivating activities, follow-ups, and fewer interesting contemporary activities that would attract the youths. "Even the chairperson of the youth ministry is absent in the church most of the time," one of the respondents reported.

Policy/Rules/ Regulations

The three domains are discussed interchangeably. Every organization is guided by rules and regulations. As said above, curriculum for this particular study would be able accomplish this. However, in the course of the study, this was not found to be the case. Many of the participants confirmed that they had not been introduced to any youth rules, vision or regulations of the youth program. The study revealed that there is no laid down procedures that are followed to help the youth in their Christian growth. "We carry on as we have found the youths doing in the youth ministry. It is difficult to notice any direct policy that we have been introduced to," one of the interviewees indicated. "Neither the

Most of the respondents were not aware of the proposed activities of the youth programs. Except of one of the interviewees, the rest had no knowledge of the objectives of the church and the youth ministry. One of the respondents said. “I am not aware whether there are any objectives or specific activities for the youth. We meet, discuss, sing and that is all.”

Organization in the Youth

Proper organization in the youth ministry affairs and activities would mean success. An organized program brings forth results that it has set forth to achieve. Two participants interpreted the youth as “an amorphous organization that is existing in the church.” The youth ministry seems to be perpetually in lack of direction or future. An attraction could be pulled through a concrete organization in the youth program and its affairs. One of the interviewees said that “to just meet, sing and dance, have Bible quizzes and drills is not good enough for us all the time. We need more stuff!” Additionally, interviewee number 2 being asked about the program and how the activities of the youth ministry are conducted was quick to state that “it is too difficult for me to tell the way the programmes are. Have no clue what should be the program or the activities.”

She was totally unaware of what should have been the correct activities or programs of the youth ministry of the church. Yet another participant responded by saying that “the eye is the light of the whole body to guide and instruct’ – meaning that there is lack of proper organization to give direction to the affairs of the youth ministry in the church. For the objectives of the church to be met in the youth ministry, then there is need for a solid organization within the youth program.

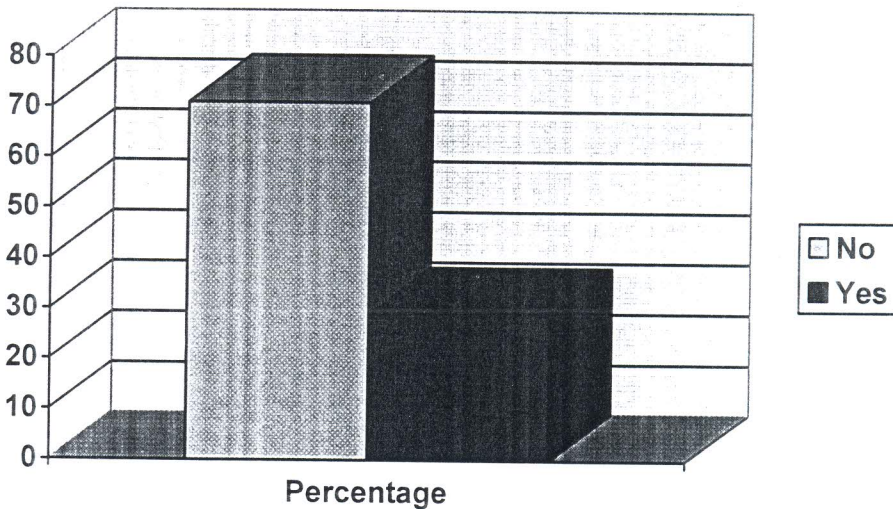


Figure 4: Youth program organization

Responding to whether the youth program was organized enough to be effective, 71% indicated that it was not, yet 29 percent of them felt that there was a little bit of organization, as shown in the figure above. Therefore, the church and the youth ministry has to sit down and organize the youth activities and programs in reference to the set objectives of the church to the youth ministry.

The Challenges Witnessed

Throughout the process of interview and observation, it came out clear that there were many youths who were not interested in the youth program in the church and even outside. The church youth ministry had few but potential youth activities. These included the choir, praise and worship, and drama club among the youths. Though there were problems of proper coordination and organization, there were fewer activities that were conducted satisfactorily. However, interviewee number 1 expressed optimistically that there is always hope that much could be achieved in the future. Hope was apparent that the church could change and the youth ministry could become vibrant and effective to the benefit of the youths present and others to come.

Objective Actualization in the Youth Ministry

Research question 1: Are the objectives that the church has set being met in the youth ministry Program? This was the basic question for data analysis, and is discussed in the following topics: leadership, youth meetings, teaching, church concern for the youth, motivation, spiritual growth and ultimately the migration of the youths to the other churches.

Leadership

Detaching proper leadership from organizations is like driving a car without fuel. Training and experience are important for effective leadership and achievement of the church objectives. Generally, “Adults can only lead others spiritually as far as they have gone themselves” (Benson and Senter III 1987, 165). Like guides in a boundary water wilderness area, leaders cannot knowingly lead kids into an area they have not previously explored – there is need for personal experience. Leadership, as like curriculum, seemed to override other factors that were hindering effectiveness of the youth ministry at Destiny Worship Centre, Lang’ata.

Youth need guidance. In their passage through adolescence, there are so many “foundational habits” and “values” formed that might be either positive or negative (Vukich & Vandegriff 2002, 226). A youth minister therefore is “needed” to propagate proper behavior and habits. And for the youth minister then to be effective, the person should have the characteristics related to ‘shepherd- leadership’. He should be one ‘looking after’ and ‘caring for’ the particular flock (235). Being sensitive and alert is a good reputation for a good leader.

In accordance to majority of the participants, there is a leadership crisis, due to lack of committed and experienced youth leaders. ” Our leader is just a boy, I am even better than him” one of the responded said.

The church seems to have not taken a serious stance on leadership skills. According to interviewee number 2, the senior pastor of the church is “not concerned about training leaders” in his church. Ignorance overrides effective leadership dispensation in the youth ministry of the church.

According to Benson and Senter III, a leader should be: willing to learn new skills and ideas (teachability), able to adapt to unexpected changes in people- in all situations (adaptability), willing to take risks with youth (vulnerability), reliable (dependability), and a model to the youth (1987, 167).

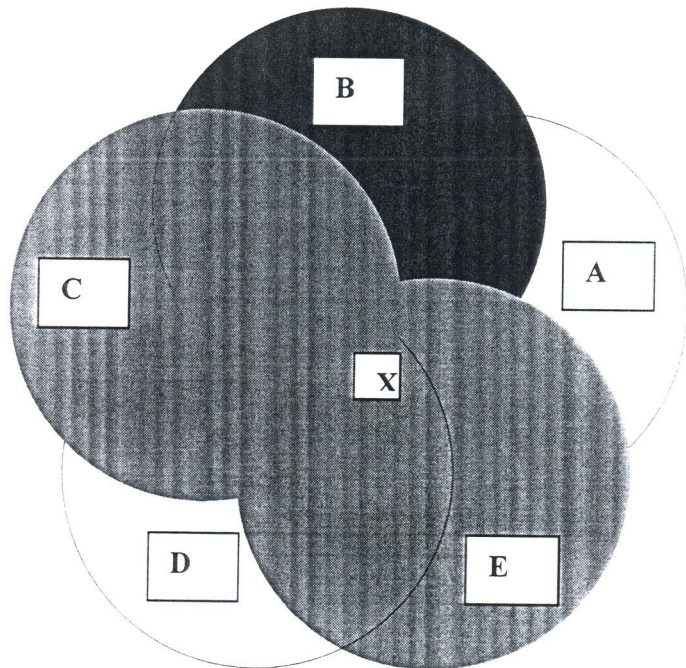


Figure 5. A model of a good leader

KEY:

X= Effective leadership: which entails the following;

A = Teachability

B = Adaptability

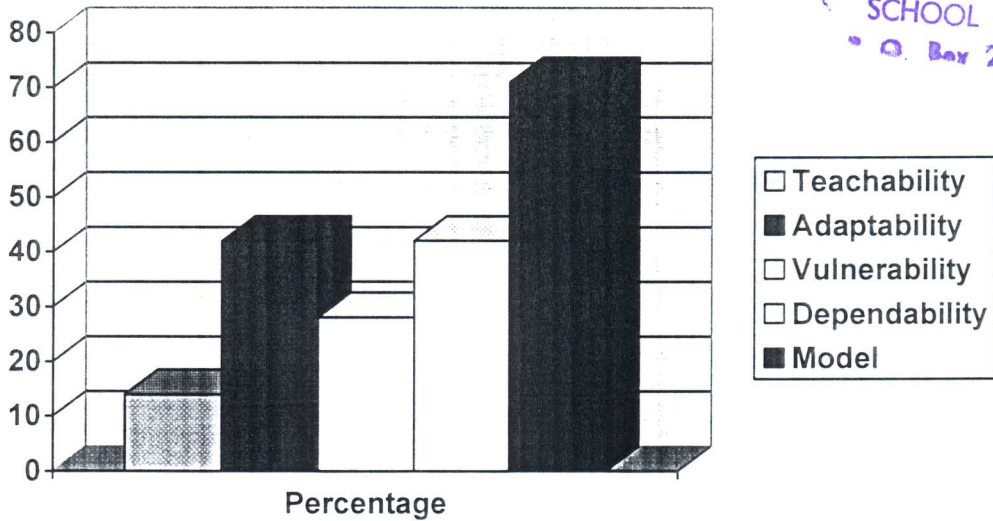
C = Vulnerability

D= Dependability

E= Model

Effective leadership (X) is a product of a person who is willing and able to adapt positively to the conditions and situations that show up in the process of carrying out task. He/she should be able to acquire more knowledge and skills to work efficiently, be able to model his/her students accordingly and be a security to them in their quest to grow up. A

good leader of any program should have a degree of reliability for the students and his clients to want more from him. A youth program in a church setting desires a person of vision and motivation, who is committed to his learners and their life progress.



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Figure 6: Graphical representation of a good leader in the youth ministry

According to the figure above, findings revealed that, the participants rated their teachers to have low teachability and adaptability qualities. However, the teacher could model the youth as well as give them assurance and hope to maintain their Christian belief.

Youth Meetings

A group of people with the same mind should meet regularly to discuss, evaluate and even monitor what is happening to them and their group as a whole. The most elaborate or intricately programmed meeting cannot be effective if it does not meet the felt needs of the youth. Posing a question to the whole group will certainly incorporate everyone in accordance with their needs. Brainstorming process should reveal both real needs and felt needs of the group. Benson and Senter III defines real and felt needs: “A real need is something of a subjective nature- inside oneself, while a felt need is more objective –

outside oneself" (1987, 356). Setting priorities, focusing in on what you want to accomplish, and developing creative ways of meeting needs is a preferred approach. Meetings should be encouraged to also iron out differences, air views, discuss and offer suggestion for improvement. The study discovered that only the youth officials meet, set objectives and discuss. What is discussed is passed over as an agenda for the youth meeting. Youth are then given ideas and a routine to follow. Most of the meetings follow the same routine previously conducted.

From the respondents, meetings were few, probably once a month. "We meet just once per month for only less than an hour," one of the respondents said. "Obviously this is not," he continued to comment.

Teaching

Relevant teaching is important to any group in the church. True test of teaching is a change in the lives of students (Vukich at el, 267). The teacher should pay the 'price to be effective' – being well-prepared, touchable, alert, and creative. Teaching in essence is simply the result coming from 'proper planning and leading students in events and activities that have meaning and purposes for them'. The youth earnestly desire to be taught Biblical principles and this cannot be left to chance. They need to know how to conduct their lives as Christians and how to remain holy and righteous. There should be enough exhaustive materials in the church both for the youths and their teachers.

In my observation, and going through the archives and interview it became clear that there were no teaching materials for the youth. They only discuss issues as they arise. Interviewee number 2 pointed out that the last time that they were taught on topic that is relevant to the youth was in 2003 and this was just for a few minutes. Since that time there has been no other sessions on teaching to the youth. However, it is good to acknowledge that teaching is necessary for the youth to mature. Teaching is inevitable for good

stewardship. From the youths themselves it was clear that in the church there are able individuals who could teach. Lack of trained teachers for the youth has gone unnoticed and unattended to in this church. The leaders, according to interviewee number 1, “are picked, not out of ability to perform but otherwise on the strength of their stature.”

Interviewee number 6 put it categorically, “there is neither teaching, nor Bible study in the church for the youth, and nobody is concerned whether it takes place or not.”

Successful youth teaching will only permeate through organized structures in a church setting. This would not fall short of changing lives of the youths, encouraging growth towards spiritual maturity, conforming thoughts, behaviors, and lifestyles to the image of Christ.

Church Concern to the Youth

The church is the overall prefect of all the teaching ministries in the church. As such, the church should have an upper hand in making sure that there is good leadership. The church should also be aware of what is taking place in each group. Thus, the church has the duty to ensure that there is effectiveness and that the set objectives are met and achieved by each church group. The church should define and encourage the way forward for the youth ministry. Throughout the study, the researcher found out that the church always has a plan to meet the needs of the youth but this does not happen. It is often postponed. This has made the youth to remain at a disconnect with the church in particular. However, one of the participants feels that the church is concerned about the youth, but practically there is little involvement, as supposedly should be the case. From the pastor, the church is willing to help and assist whenever there is a need and when called upon.

Interviewee number 4 indicated that there is always willingness by the church to support and assist, but it has literally not done so. “The church seemed not to be concerned,

and has less of burden towards youth affairs.” A major feeling is that the church appears not to be interested much in the affairs of the youth or otherwise.

Interviewee number 7 felt that the church ‘should support’ the youth ministry to achieve its objectives. Apparently the church is not doing this.

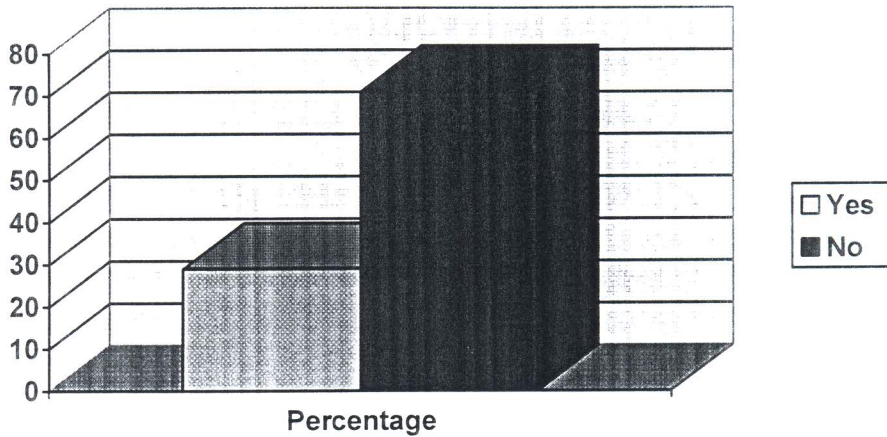


Figure 7: Church support to the youth

The figure indicates that the church support has been low to the youth ministry, with the tangible support at only 30 percent.

Motivation

Any youth program should be a catalyst and a motivator to the youth to move up the ladder of spiritual growth in their Christian life. Three participants were not sure whether they were being motivated by the whole program, because there “seems to be no vision to carry them across.” One of the interviewees said, “I am not confident of what happens here, in the Youth Ministry.” As a result, the interviewee said that there is ‘unbelief, insincerity and lack of ideas and organization.’”

Creating awareness and confidence in the youth is important. The church as a whole has a responsibility to invoke positively to the youth ideals of evangelism and what else they should be doing in the church setting to grow. The youth should be trained and

encouraged to do evangelism. No amount of “hype, guilt, or motivation will work if we fail to train thoroughly our youth to speak of Christ with confidence” (Benson and Mark 1987, 315).

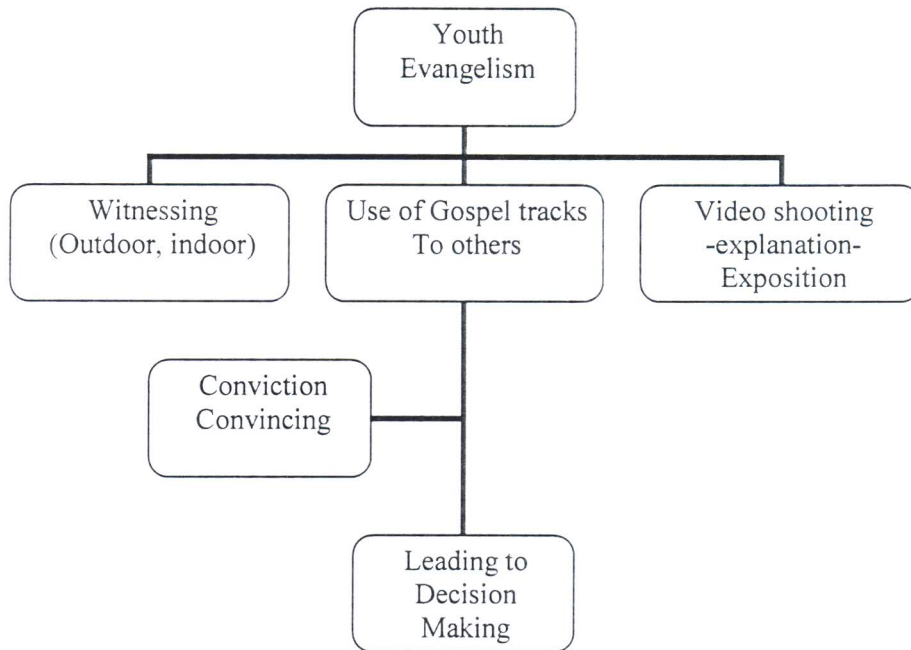


Figure 8. Youth evangelism model

The above model perceives youth evangelism as to entail witnessing, use of youth materials, and exposure through videos, exposition and so on. The above tools will propagate truth conviction to the youths, and will enable them to make concrete decisions concerning their lives.

Spiritual Growth

God wants each youth to grow spiritually: “Desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2- NIV). Richard Foster, in *Celebration of Discipline*, explained different spiritual disciplines that facilitate spiritual growth in a Christian’s life.

The inward disciplines include prayer, meditation, fasting and the study of God's word, while outward disciplines included simplicity, solitude, submission and service. Corporate disciplines included confession, worship, guidance and celebration. These are the items that should be in practice with the youth to have attained spiritual growth.

The study revealed that spiritual growth was minimal because of "lack of disciplines that cultivate to this growth" (Interviewee number 6). Few participants, however, asserted that there was spiritual growth even though they were not sure how this was 'possible' considering the "many things that miss in the youth ministry" (Interviewee number 5). The growth sample was not as fast a rate as it should have been in the first place, as was indicated earlier. Although, one of the goals of the youth ministry is to "produce spiritually maturing youths" (Vukich 2002, 242), spiritual maturity as a goal had been misunderstood or ignored by the church and youth leaders. There seemed to be different opinions on spiritual growth, which depended mostly on the 'hard work' (Ibid) on the part of the individual youth. A revelation that emerged from the interview indicated that the youth who somewhat attend "outside meetings, conduct personal devotions, or Bible study," (Interviewee number 4) seem to have grown unlike the rest who depend solely on the church to nurture them. The church through the youth ministry has not been keen to 'revitalize the youth enough to the desired levels of spiritual growth' (Ibid). One of the most important goals of youth ministry in the church should be 'outreach' and 'nurture' (Benson and Mark 1987, 50). Discipleship should include both. For effective youth ministry, an evangelistic passion is a facet not to be ignored, but also must focus on building up youth in their faith. And of course, the passionate 'outcome' of which the youth ministry strives is the spiritual maturity (Ibid).

Acknowledging that spiritual growth in the youth and teenagers would take time, the actual growth takes more than the continual timeline- growth would take time, effort, and energy. For this reason, for Christian maturity to be realized in the youth goals should be

maintained. Goals at times might be difficult to verbalize or implement, however, they should remain the guidepost to the direction the youth are moving in their Christian growth. In this study, goals were “not the guiding posts for the youth towards spiritual growth” (Interviewee number 7).

Migration of the Youth

Migration here is used to mean the ‘moving from one church to another’. During the discussion and interview it became clear that youth come and go, and the youth ministry has reduced in numbers. The researcher took pain into understanding from the respondents why this was the case. The respondents were quick to point that, mostly they are not edified like it is in the surrounding churches; therefore, they come and leave at a certain point. Even with this kind of occurrence in the church and in the youth ministry in particular, nobody has shown any concern. Those who have left the church due to misunderstandings or lack of edification and boredom have not been followed up or brought back to the church and the youth ministry. One of the participants asked: “How can the youth be active if not well motivated by its leaders, and the pastor?” He went further to suggest that there should be more activities to ‘attract’ the youth. As has been revealed, there is no proper program for Bible study sessions, prayer and so on – and this affects the effectiveness of youth ministry.

‘Loneliness’ (Interviewee number 7) can crop in the youth ministry when the youths are left unattended to. In the study it was discovered that the youths meet at most twice a month for one hour and this seems not to be enough to prepare the youth for the challenges of life.

In addition, one of the participants expressed a belief that some of the leaders may not be sensitive to the youth. Their talk could be hurting in some way - there are improper communication styles by the leaders. The integrity, experience and commitment of youth

leaders in the ministry is a baffling concern. Putting a question to the respondents on youth motivation, they said:

“The pastor is not concerned about his flock.” (Winfred)

“There is lack of trained leadership, committed and responsible.” (Joyce)

“There has been a program of visiting other potential youths and encouraging them to come to church. It was successful, but the program died away at some point.”

(Ndinda)

The study, therefore, revealed that set programs are not progressive and they never last long. The intention to make the youth program effective is always conceived but is not taken in on to the stage of implementation. With this happenings, youth have “to move to greener pasture” elsewhere (interviewee number 3).

Unfortunately, one of the interviewees felt that there has been ‘no proper program or plan’ to bring the youth back to the church after they leave. No one follows them up and that’s why there is more migration of the youth to other neighboring churches.

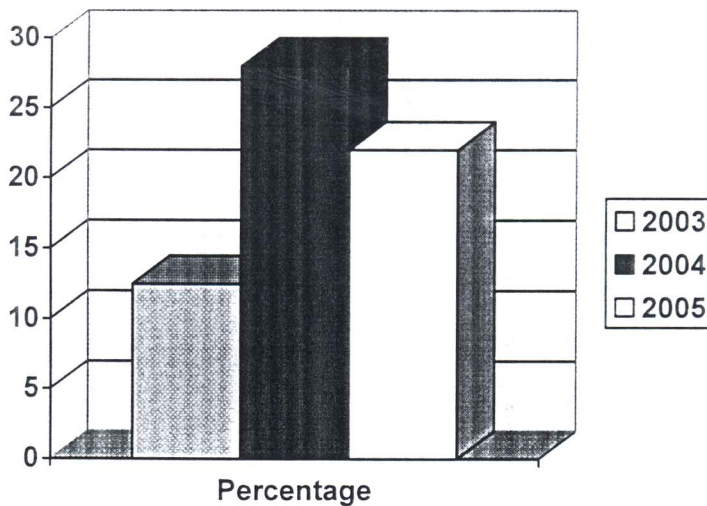


Figure 9: Migration of the youth from the church

From the chart above, there has been a continued movement of youths out of the church in the last three years.

Achievements

The researcher set out to know the actual achievement that the Youth Ministry has obtained by the time of going out for the study. Achievement is a measurable phenomenon – where a variable could be judged against its increase or expansion or the equivalence. As per the sample that was taken, it was not possible to give a clear record of achievement (s). Interviewee number 5 said that, “I am uncertain of any achievements, but there is potential to go far.” There was a mixed reaction to this, because another participant indicated that there has been a lot of achievements in the youth group.

Judging from the previously discussed phenomenon, we can deduce the overall achievement of the group, in that the objectives have not measured up to expectations.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this research was ‘to explore the effectiveness of the youth Ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang’ata.’ This particular chapter firstly presents the summary of the findings that came out on whether the youth ministry was effective or not, and secondly, effective principles that emerged along the study to be recommended for effective youth ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang’ata. Finally recommendation for further research is suggested here.

Summary of Findings

The theory of this study was homogeneity based on common interest and activity which could be central to the effectiveness of the Youth Ministry at Destiny Worship Centre Lang’ata and any other church of the same caliber. Indeed the researcher aspired to hear from the active youths themselves. Seven youths were interviewed for purposes of this study.

The researcher established a substantive theory because in a grounded theory, “One can have a theory about a given phenomenon that is located at any matrix level: for instance, about an organizational or biographical phenomenon” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 174).

From this theory emerged two different homogeneity interests. The first one was fellowship and visitation, and the second one was Bible study. The first group composed of four respondents who felt that youth fellowships would be a good opportunity to share and grow together in a free and an open environment.

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From this theory emerged two different homogeneity interests. The first one was fellowship and visitation, and the second one was Bible study. The first group composed of four respondents who felt that youth fellowships would be a good opportunity to share and grow together in a free and an open environment.

concrete ways to address the spiritual needs of the youth in the church. Youth ministry here should have well defined goals, objectives and curriculum to be effective, in meeting the contemporary needs of the youth.

Recommended Improvements

In view of the research findings, the researcher deems necessary to recommend some improvements that can be implemented in the Destiny Youth Ministry.

To the youths

The youth should be meeting regularly to develop their talents, and also drive away their fears and gain confidence as they grow in their Christian faith. Encouragement and exhortations are important facets that are lacking. The youth should be vibrant enough to influence and welcome other members from the 'outside' for teaching on youth matters.

Youths should have the opportunity to visit other youth in different churches to fellowship and assist one another. The church youths should be committed to the affairs of the church and the youth ministry in order for them to grow and nourish.

There should be more activities that are attractive as well as educational to the youths. The youth program should motivate the youths to do visitations and get involved in sharing the Word of God with other youths within and without the church setting.

Leadership

There is need for good leaders who can foster the youth commitment to the youth ministry. The church should look for visionary and committed leaders to help and assist the youths in their lives as they grow into adulthood.

Responsible and committed leadership is long overdue in the church fraternity. The church should consider sending potential leaders for training. Otherwise, when there are notable weakness in leadership the church should step in to help and give direction.

Follow-ups

There is need for follow-up to what is discussed and passed as a need for the youth team in the church. Postponing events is a denied justice and should not be welcomed as an habit in the youth ministry. Young converts, and new members in the church should be followed up and disciplined into the Word of God and affairs of the church. Youths should be encouraged to be prayerful and committed to God and in his commands.

Teaching

For effective and thorough teaching, more days in addition to Sundays' should be set aside for the youths to be taught and have meetings, fellowships and rallies as they meet with other youths to fellowship together. A proper curriculum should be developed on how to do effective biblical teaching to the youth. There should be regular Bible study sessions for the youth.

The church

The church should be able to identify good leaders, train them and support them to be good servants and stewards of the youth. Whilst the church should be concerned, the pastor should meet with the leaders of the youth and the youths themselves to hear their problems and suggestions, to encourage them and guide them.

The church/pastor should ensure that rules, regulations and church discipline are maintained as far as the youth are concerned.

Prayer

There should be overnight prayers for the youth. In addition, youth prayer retreats should be organized regularly. In these sessions, the discipline of prayer would be taught and practiced.

Youth service

There should be a youth service, to preach and to teach in the church as a way of instructing them, and cultivating in the youth the art of preaching in the main church. There should be some evangelism and mission to other youths

How youth could grow spiritually

For the youths to grow spiritually there is need for them firstly to become committed and interested in the word of God. Bible studies, fellowships and teachings should be a priority to the group.

How to increase the numbers of youth

Follow-ups should be stepped up. Spiritual needs of the youth should be met by the concerned people and the church as a whole should be involved. Youth evangelism should be conducted regularly.

Needs of the youth

Needs that affect the youth are paramount to any youth ministry and for sustenance of the same. Discussions on how the youths can be helped and also help themselves, as workers in the church is crucial.

Conclusion

Youth are a significant group in the church. They determine the future of any church, as they become tomorrow's leaders and take over the mantle of leadership. Therefore, any issue related to the youth should be addressed with the urgency it deserves.

The youths' spiritual needs should be addressed, and a proper curriculum set in place for their benefit as they grow in life. Neglecting the youth in a church setting would spell doom to the Christian society as a whole. Therefore, caution should be taken and heeded for the betterment and the future of our churches.

Recommendation for Further Study

I did explore the effectiveness of the youth ministry in the given church. This was just good enough to determine the way forward for such a department in the church as to create and improve the teaching and nurturing ministry in the church. In addition, I feel a study should be carried out in view of developing a youth curriculum that can be befitting for a proper effectiveness of the youths in a youth ministry.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview guide

1. What is your age?
2. For how long have you been a member of the youth ministry?
3. Are you aware of any formal programme, activities, goals or objectives of the youth program in the church?
4. How do you feel and perceive of the way the youth ministry is conducted, programmed or how it carries out its activities
5. Do you feel edified, encouraged or motivated by the whole programme? Is it relevant to your spiritual needs?
6. What improvements would you perceive for the youth ministry at DWC?

Appendix B

Sample letter to the Pastor for permission

N.E.G.S.T.
P.O. Box 24686
Karen/Nairobi.
Kenya
20. 6. 2006.

The youth pastor/leader,
Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata
P.O. Box 8012,
Nairobi
Kenya.

Dear Pastor Isaac Ndambuki Nzimbi,

RE: PERCEPTION OF D. W. C. LANGATA YOUTH MINISTRY

I am a Master of Divinity student at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (N.E.G.S.T.) in the Christian Education department. I began my programme in January 2003 and expecting to complete in July 2006.

This letter is intended to ask for permission to use the church's youth programme documents for my research as one of my programmes requirements. The research will lead me to a writing of my thesis and present to the college. This is a polite request that you allow me to evaluate your youth programme in order to find out its appropriateness towards the church's planned activities in relation to their indented goals and objectives.

Once the permission is granted, I will interview six youths. This will give in the right information that I shall need to do my evaluation, and in addition to the information that I will get from the church's documents.

It is my great desire that at the end of the study, I will be in a position to give recommendations in relation to the findings of the study, and therefore be of help to the youth programme of the church.

For reference on the undertaking, you may contact the Deputy Vice- Chancellor in Charge of Academics of N.E.G.S.T.

Yours faithfully,

Justus Katumo.

Appendix C

Sample of letter to Respondents

Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School
Of Theology
P.O. Box 24686
Karen – Nairobi

Dear respondent,

This letter is to inform you that I am carrying out a research in your church, Destiny Worship Centre, Lang'ata on the perceptions of the effectiveness of the youth ministry in the church. It is my hope that my endeavour to carry out this particular research will enable the entire church to rate and improve the performance of the youth ministry for spiritual nature of the youth fraternity.

Your particular participation and contribution will be of great help to me. I will be involved in the process of interviewing you at a place of your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Justus Katumo Mutweia.

Appendix D

Table 2: Need for a curriculum

| Category | Frequency | Percentage out of 7 |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Aware of any curriculum | 2 | 28 % |
| Need of a curriculum | 7 | 100% |
| No need of a curriculum | 0 | 0% |

Table 3: Representation of some crucial elements lacking in the youth ministry

| Lacking items | Frequency | Percentage out of 7 |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Bible study | 3 | 42 |
| Prayer sessions | 5 | 71 |
| Qualified teachers | 7 | 100 |
| Fellowships | 4 | 57 |
| Opportunity for evangelism | 5 | 71 |

Table 4. Organization in the youth ministry

| Organized | Number out of 7 | Percentage (%) |
|-----------|-----------------|----------------|
| No | 5 | 71 |
| Yes | 2 | 29 |

Table 5: Good leadership

| Elements | Frequency | Percentage (%) out of 7 |
|---------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Teachability | 1 | 14 |
| Adaptability | 3 | 42 |
| Vulnerability | 2 | 28 |
| Dependability | 3 | 42 |
| Model | 5 | 71 |

Table 6: Church support to the youth

| Support | Frequency out of 7 | Percentage |
|---------|--------------------|------------|
| Yes | 2 | 29 |
| No | 5 | 71 |

Table 7: Migration of the youth from the church

| Year | Movement of youth | Total | Percentage (%) |
|------|-------------------|-------|----------------|
| 2003 | 5 | 40 | 12.5 |
| 2004 | 12 | 42 | 28 |
| 2005 | 10 | 44 | 22 |

VITA

Personal Data

Name: Justus Katumo Mutweia
Postal Address: P.O. Box 8012 00300, Nairobi
Date of Birth: 29th September 1974
Gender: Male
Marital Status: Single
Nationality: Kenyan

Educational Background

NEGST Master of Divinity (C.E.) Candidate 2003- 2006
Kenyatta University Bachelor of Science (Environmental Sc) 1993- 1997
Machakos School Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education 1988 –1991
Masaku SPD Kenya Certificate of Primary Education 1984 - 1988

Professional Experience

Environmental specialist – Environmental Liaison Centre International, (ELCI) 1997- 2000
Work Assistant - Extension Office, NEGST 2005 – present

Ministry Experience

Church Leader – Destiny Worship Centre Lang'ata 1999 – 2003
Ministry overseer – Liberty Community Chapel 2004 – present