

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SPIRITUAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF TEENAGERS  
IN NEGRO STUDENT HOMES

BY

SHIHEMI J. ISOKA

JUNE, 1999

THE  
BV  
1485  
.T4418  
1999

Ref  
268.433  
I 85

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

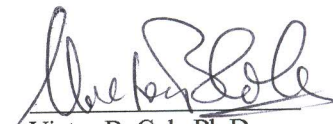
FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
TEENAGERS IN NEGST STUDENT HOMES

*SHIHEMI J. ISOKA*


A Thesis submitted to the Graduate School  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Christian Education

Approved:

Supervisor

  
Victor B. Cole Ph.D.,

Second Reader

  
Suraja Raman Ph.D.,

External Reader

  
Ruthie Rono Ph.D.

June, 1999

LIBRARY  
NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
P. O. Box 24686, NAIROBI

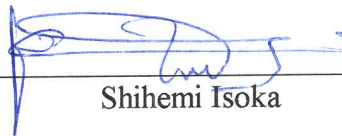
25840

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shihemi Isoka', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

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

---

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All glory, power, and honor belong to our almighty God who has called me to serve him and therefore, made this study possible. He graciously gave me strength, wisdom and courage in the course of this study, and appointed other servants to help make it a reality. Praise be to his name. As such, I am indebted to the following:

Dr. Victor Cole who made noticeable effort to make me a competent researcher and gave his time, strength, critique, and advice, all of which made this work what it is.

Dr. Suraja Raman whose time, advice, counsel and intellectual input made it possible for me to put together the proposal. Her encouragement, motherly comfort and general sharing in the struggle found no equal in the time of writing this work .

Dr. George Huttar who made me computer literate and the entire translation department of NEGST which allowed me to use their computers and shared my desire to see the work completed.

Mrs. Toyin Cole who encouraged me so heartedly to enroll at this graduate school. Her material and moral support have been of great value to me.

Mr. and Mrs. Morris Omollo who welcomed us in their home the first day we arrived at NEGST. Mrs. Omollo's constant concern for the well being of our family has been a constant challenge throughout our stay at this institution.

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.

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Statement of the Problem	2
Significance of the Study	2
Research Questions	3
Research Hypotheses	3
Delimitations	4
Definition of Concepts	4
<b>2. Literature Review</b>	<b>7</b>
Introduction	7
Spiritual Formation in Adolescence	8
What Parents must Know about Adolescents	8
Adolescent Identity and Spiritual Formation	10
Cognitive Development and Spiritual Formation	12
Maturing in Christian Faith	13
Parental Contribution to Adolescent Spiritual Formation	14
Parent-Teen Relationships	14
Biblical and Historical Considerations of Parental Spiritual Nurture	16
Parental Example in Spiritual Formation	17
Methodological Literature	21
<b>3. Methodology</b>	<b>24</b>
Entry	24
Research Design	25
Population	26
Sampling	26
Instrument Design	27
Jury Procedure and Validity of the Instrument	30
Pilot Testing	31
Administration of the Instrument	31
Method of Data Analysis	33
Conclusions and Recommendations	34

<b>4. Data Analysis and Interpretation</b>	<b>36</b>
Questionnaire Returns	36
Demographic Statistics	37
Factors Contributing Towards the Spiritual Development of Teenagers	39
Implementation of the Factors	48
<b>5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	<b>66</b>
Statement of the Problem	66
Purpose of the Study	67
Significance of the Study	67
Research Design	67
Summary of Findings	68
Conclusions and Recommendations	69
Recommendations for Further Research	72
<b>Reference List</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>77</b>
A. Questionnaire for Parents	77
B. Questionnaire for Teenagers	80

## List of Tables

1. Countries of Origin of the Student Parents.....	26
2. Questionnaire Returns.....	36
3. Duration of Parents in Faith.....	37
4. Previous Employment of Parents.....	38
5. Age Distribution of the Teens.....	38
6. Distribution of the Teens by Gender.....	39
7. Distribution of the Teens by country of Origin.....	39
8. Teens' Relationship with Jesus.....	40
9. Parents' Perception of their Teenagers' Spiritual Life.....	41
10. Parents' Perception of Factors Contributing to the Teenagers' Present Spiritual Life.....	41
11. Teens' Perception of the Agents' Influence on their Spiritual Life.....	42
12. Teenagers' Perception of the Type of Influence upon their Spiritual Life.....	43
13. Teens' Perception of the Spiritual Disciplines they Exercised.....	44
14. Distribution of the Rates of the Spiritual Disciplines According to the Teens.....	45
15. Disciplines Parents Encourage their Teenagers to Exercise.....	50
16. Rating Order of Disciplines Encouraged by Parents.....	51
17. Frequency of Discussion Between Parents and Teenagers.....	53
18. Rating Order of Parent/teen Discussion.....	54
19. Spiritual Benefit of Parent/teen Time Together.....	56
20. Percent Rates of Time Together According to the Teens.....	56
21. Extent of Freedom Given to Teenagers by their Parents.....	57
22. Reasons for the Teen Freedom.....	58
23. Problems and Challenges to Parental Spiritual Guidance to Teens.....	58
24. Methods of Problem Resolution.....	59
25. Distribution of Church Attendance.....	60
26. Reasons for Attending Church of Own Choice.....	61

## **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

