

**AN ASSESMENT ON THE BENEFITS OF YOUTH INCLUSION IN THE
CHURCH MINISTRY, A CASE STUDY OF LIRA URBAN ARCHDEACONRY,
DIOCESE OF LANGO**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I, Odongo Jimmy Francis do hereby declare that this research dissertation is my original work and it has not been submitted to any University or institution for any award

Signed... 



Odongo Jimmy Francis

RM20M05/002

Date... 

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research dissertation has been approved for submission to Uganda Christian University

Signed.......... Date..........

RT REV DR JOEL OBETIA

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my father and mother Mr Martin and Mrs Aida Odur whose guidance throughout childhood enabled me to be responsible, hardworking and optimistic in life. I also dedicate the work to my wife Akello Angela Rose (Mrs.) and my children Odur Godwin Odongo, Oder Isaac Moses, Okullo Joshua Odongo, Okello Michael Chris and Apio Sondra Harmony for giving me time to complete this work, Michael Arlington my sponsor. The entire youth of Lira Urban Archdeaconry and their lay leaders, for accepting to give me the information during the data collection. The Archdeacon of Lira Urban, entire pastoral team, and my Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Lango, the Rt Rev Professor Alfred Olwa for his spiritual guidance. May God bless you for your continuous support towards my education with abundant and long life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this moment to thank God almighty for granting me and sustaining my life up to this moment, and giving me the opportunity to do this piece of work. A big thanks also to my Supervisor Rt Rev Joel Obetia for amidst his health challenges helping and guiding me throughout this piece of work. I also extend my gratitude to my friends Jacob Emmanuel Ochola, and Mr Alok Jacob for putting their efforts and supporting me in producing this piece of work.

Another big thanks goes to my fellow course mates in the names of Okullo Sam Baker, and Alengo Dick for sparing their precious time supporting me while doing this work. Not forgetting my siblings who have been there for me even when am down hearted.

Finally I extend my appreciation to the entire Uganda Christian University administration for giving me the opportunity to be part of the great family through their guidance - May God reward them abundantly.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACCRONOMYS

Math

Mathew

Jer.

Jeremiah

Tim.

Timothy

Rt Rev.

Right Reverend

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the benefits of youth inclusion in the church ministry within Lira Urban archdeaconry, Diocese of Lango. This study was conducted under the following objectives; Examining the Christians' view towards involving youth in church ministry in Lira urban Archdeaconry. Establishing the impact of involvement of youth in church growth and management and establishing the reasons for low participation of youth in general church ministry in the Lira Urban Archdeaconry. The descriptive and evaluative research design were employed during this research to study 100 out of 150 projected respondents, the sampling was done through random sampling. Both structured and semi structured questions were used to help the researcher to get answers and relevant information from respondents. The results of the study indicate that the youth, spiritual and lay leaders believe that the involvement of youth in general church programming is of benefit for church development. The study also shows that majority of the youth satisfied that they are being included in the church ministry though they have some areas lacking their involvement. The study revealed several reasons for low participation of youth in the church ministry and among reasons were low self esteem, ignorance, peer pressure and money minded pastors who scare unemployed youth away from church. The study concluded that much as there is moderate inclusion of the youth in church ministry, there are still gaps that need to be filled for better inclusion. Lastly the study recommended that the youth department from the Diocese down to sub-parishes be strengthened and youth friendly programs well regulated and guided be put in place so that youth are recruited and retained in church through mentorship, guidance and counseling and discipleship as guarantor for ministry sustainability and continuity.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the benefits of youth involvement in the church ministry. This chapter will look at the statement of the problem, objectives and research questions, scope and duration of the study and research significance.

In the gospel of St Mathew, during the great commission, Jesus commanded that the good news be preached throughout the world by making all mankind to be his disciples through baptism in the name of the father, son and the holy spirit (Math 28:16-20). This is a long term assignment that is meant to be cross generational for sustainability and continuity of the Christian ministry through the church, and can be best embedded in the youth

1.1 Historical Background

The youth and children ministry is one of the key areas that need keen attention from the general church administration. Through various relevant activities, youth are graduated from Sunday school to the bigger congregational services and are led through catechism to confirmation when they now qualify to participate in the general church leadership and mainstream structure, including being God parents during infant baptism.

Since the youth age is associated with so many changes, proper programming to ensure youth are well guiding through this period need to be guaranteed. This will help the church to fully respond the uncertainty, risks and dangerous exposure, and better management of the group dynamics. This will help the at all times the general church and in specific the youth groups to all times maintain the Christian ethics and the integrity of the body of Christ.

It is paramount that key basic guidelines are put in place governing uniformly activities and programs of the entire church departments from the province down to parishes. Through this the youth and the young adults in love and with respect shall be mentored, disciplined and included in the general church ministry and management.

1.2 Theoretical perspective

Christian ethical theory

At present, the world population is dominated by the youth. Nearly all industries design programs that are youth friendly to capture their attention. The church is not an exception in this, different programs are designed that target youth participation. Across the secular world this is a new phenomenon but to the Church it started with the birth of the early church though modernization is giving it a new twist

According to Norwegian historian O.M. Bakke (Augsberg Fortress,), Christianity transformed the way people live their young years, and he argues that the change was much for the better.

On the other hand, the ancient Greeks and Romans admired young physiques, but they were little interested in the intellectual contributions or emotional experience of anyone under the age of 20.

The philosopher Plato considered children to be like animals, only worse because they were more intractable. Aristotle believed that young people, like women and slaves, lacked sufficient reason to participate in society. In many culture across the globe, less attention have been given to the youth and children, they have been treated with low regards and in most cases disbanded from where the adults are having their affairs, the church inclusive.

This kind of history put the young people in the dark end and dilemma of the Christian faith, a reason for new approaches to handling the youth as very important part of the Christian ministry and community.

1.3 Conceptual background

In Mathew 18:1-7, Jesus presents the true quality of those fit for the kingdom of God in the personality of little children. In response to the question of who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, he welcomed the little child. Still in Mark 10:13-16 Jesus rebuked his disciples when they wanted to block the little children from coming to him and opened their minds that the kingdom of heaven is for those who receive it like little children. This means that to Jesus the head of the church, children and young people are a very integral part of the life of the church.

In light of the above still, if the church must stand strong and withstand the future threats that may befall the church, the process starts now with the vibrant youth and children ministry. and the belief that young people are the leaders of tomorrow be abandoned. It is the responsibility of the mature church leaders and pastors to groom the young people as early as possible as Proverbs 22:6 teaches if the continuity of the church must be guaranteed other than thinking there is another time to do it when they become adults.

With proper guidance and counseling, mentorship and discipleship, the youth shall be empowered to face the challenges that may sway them from their walks of faith and shall gradually but incrementally nurture their talents and reach their potentials.

The youth ministry leadership must be strategically placed with all its vibrancy to give biblical foundational teachings to the young people. Besides that they should be having the right information and understanding on the influence of modernity on the life of the Christian youth.

This shall help the youth to develop the required resilience to much the negative wave of the wind of change that may negatively affect their future Christian walks of life which in the long term pose bigger threat to the bigger church.

1.4 Contextual Background

Investing in today's youth is really very necessary in growing the body of Christ. Teaching, guiding and discipling young people in the church to grow in their relationship with the Lord prepares them to serve Christ in all they do. As a result, this nurtures the congregation and allows the church to flourish.

Working for and with the youth is one of the ways of grooming future leaders and to foster church development. During his ministry Paul the apostle identified himself with young people like Timothy and Barnabas who later became very instrumental the church planting and its development and stability. 1 Timothy 4:12 says, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

With Jesus' figurative presentation, it tells that everyone has a place in the Christian ministry but with a particular path to follow as Matthew 18:2-4 puts it, "He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.' This means all those with the right attitude matter to God and to the church.

1.5 Problem Statement

My generation is in the mix of the dilemma about the exact roles of the youth in the church and how they can be integrated in the ministry, and big questions about God in the life of the young people. And we are desperate for the Church to speak with relevance and integrity to the heart of our confusion.

I remain convinced that one of the ways God desires to part the clouds of the confusion among Christian congregation is through healthy, thriving, Christ-centered youth ministry. Youth ministry that is so healthy and secure that they attract and point truth-seekers directly to the glorious name and power of Christ Jesus.

But first, mature Christians, including pastors need to examine themselves with honest questions, because the world is not interested in our calculated church services as much as they are watching our daily countenance, and that of our youths.

In many cases youths are stressed, overwhelmed, disconnected, depressed, physically unhealthy, spiritually drained, unsupported, discouraged, and Yet other youths are full of life with a sparkle in their eyes, walking with a bounce in his or her step, filled with the love, support, affirmation, and respect of elderly church members, living each day joyfully and abundantly within the Diocese of Lango and Lira Urban Archdeaconry in particular

It is not wise to dream of youth Christian walk of life existing without struggle or pain this side of eternity. Rather, we pray for Christian youth ministry that thrive despite circumstances because of the supernatural love found in our deep connection to Christ and the reality of His kingdom being revealed in our daily lives (Jeremiah. 17:7-8).

This study attempted to empirically interrogate the mechanisms which have been put in place to respond to the observance of the positive and healthy inclusion of youth in the church ministry for positive impact among youth mostly affected. The research also looked at what role Lira Urban Archdeaconry has been playing in ensuring high enrolment for Christian youth and encouraging adherence to the functions and values attached to youth ministry.

1.6 General Objectives

The main purpose of this study was to examine the benefits of the involvement of the youth in the church ministry.

1.6.1 Specific Objectives

This research had the following objectives;

1. To examine the Christian view towards involving youth in church ministry in Lira urban Archdeaconry.
2. To establish the impact of involvement of youth in church growth and management.
3. To establish the reasons for low participation of youth in general church ministry in the Lira Urban Archdeaconry

1.7 Research Questions

1. What is the importance of youth inclusion to the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry?
2. What is the effect of youth inclusion on the general church management in Lira Urban Archdeaconry?
3. What are the reasons for low participation of youth in church ministry in your Archdeaconry?
4. what key areas of church ministry are lacking the youth participation in Lira urban Archdeaconry?

1.8 Scope of the Study

This was categorized into sections like content scope, geographical scope and time scope as explained below;

1.8.1 Content scope

The study looked at the importance of youth involvement in the church ministry- a case study of Lira Urban Archdeaconry. The study also tried to understand if there were any limitations for local church in mobilizing the youth to actively be involved and participate in church ministry and this is a strong tool for church general growth and management. Different church stakeholders were interviewed to examine the extent to which youth participation has contributed to a vibrant Christian ministry. The researcher looked at information from key informants and also got other information from materials obtained from relevant officers like Archdeacons, Parish priests, lay readers, youth and other leaders within the Archdeaconry as well as sampled members of the congregation. Key people interviewed included: 1 Archdeacon, 3 parish priests, 18 lay readers, 32 lay leaders (including youth leaders) and 54 ordinary members of the congregation,

1.8.2 Geographical Scope

This research was conducted in 4 Parishes within Lira Urban archdeaconry found within Lira city. Lira Urban Archdeaconry was chosen because more vibrant youths are found there and more vibrant activities are done within the urban areas than rural areas so it provides a better ground for the study. It is also part of the heart of the church ministry planning for the Diocese of Lango making it richer in information gathering for the researcher.

1.8.3 Time Scope

The researcher looked at data from a period of 10 years from (2000-2019), this was the period when the church fully strengthened and embarked on massive mobilization of Christian youth to embrace church mission work as a way of building the future leadership, expansion and sustainability of the church. For example since 2004 there have been annual youth conferences and conventions held in the Archdeaconry for over 10 years now, this formed a strong basis for the study.

1.9 Significance of the research Study

This study has got crucial phenomenon and therefore sought the understanding of the relationship existing between the church (the body of Christ) and the youth where most of the Christian faith practice is made manifest on a daily basis. Therefore, the research carried out might be generous in the following ways below;

The Church will use the findings in this study to address the necessary measures and resources towards strengthening the Christian ministry through strong, spiritually vibrant and stable Christian youth. This study report also will provide a platform for the enacting and strengthening of strategies aimed at stopping negative views and attitude towards the youth involvement in church ministry.

The research report might also help in bridging the lost gaps by future scholars. This means that prospective researchers with interest in carrying out the same topic of study on the importance of youth inclusion in church ministry can use the related data investigating more about contribution of the strong youth ministry to effective Christian ministry.

The research report will help the clergy, fathers and the mothers unions to design activities relevant for nurturing good Christian morals in churches and youth department as a way of bringing up morality upright children who will not be swayed in faith because of heretical teachings but can be strong branch of the church ministry now and for the future.

The local community and the general public at large may be interested in the study because they will know the different roles of youth in church and its importance in fostering ministry development and their shortcomings in relation to Christian ministry.

The research is important because people will be able to understand the meaning and impact of active youth participation in church ministry. This will enable Christian parents, communities and the local churches of Lira Urban Archdeaconry and the Diocese of Lango at large to develop and implement strategies for orderly and guided youth inclusion in order to strengthen Christian mission for the good of the gospel expansion and church sustainability.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at secondary sources of information. Therefore, the study will focus on the suitable sites and text books containing the study materials only. These will be retrieved from various authors globally for information dependability.

2.1 Definition of Christian youth

A Christian youth is a male or female age 18-35, who is baptized and has confessed Jesus as his personal Lord and savior. This is someone who consistently and actively attends church services and participates in major church activities and has a good moral standing with Christ. Ecclesiastes chapter 12 verses 1-6 puts it clear that we should remember our creator while we are still young because dark days are ahead.

According to English Collins Dictionary, a Christian youth is somebody who believes and follows Jesus Christ, a member of a Christian church or denomination, a person who possesses Christian virtues more especially practical ones.

2.2 Youth and the church today

Uganda like other nations has the youngest population. Even the church is dominated by youth and young adults spread sectors in the church. It is unfortunate that the youth are looked at as the leaders of tomorrow, and little attention is being given to them in order that they can be groomed and prepared for this said leadership in future. For the traditional churches like the Anglican and Roman Catholics, youth are migrating to other denominations that offer them youth friendly environment and activities, where they participate and feel accepted and valued. It is the responsibility of the church leadership to nurture the young people under their care by creating and including them in various church ministry programs. According to pastor Phillips Chemel, a national youth pastor, The time is now and here.

In the last ten years though Roman Catholics and Anglican remain dominant Christian denominations in Uganda, they are losing believers to other sects. On October 19th 2018, the new vision reported that the Archbishop Stanley Ntagali was tasked by the guest speaker at a dinner organized to fundraise for the youth Convention scheduled for December 2018 to ensure the trend was reverted because it was dangerous to the Christian ministry. It was reported that most youth were crossing to the Pentecostal movements and Islam where they were given liberty to participate in many youth friendly activities.

According to Mary Kutesa, Director of Legal services Uganda National Roads Authority-UNRA who was the guest speaker at the event, the rate at which the two traditional churches were losing

to other sects was alarming and something urgent needed to be done. This agreed with the 2014 national census report. According to this report, the Islam had gained from between 2002 and 2014 from 12.4%-13.7%, Pentecostal gained from 4.7%-11.1%. while traditionalist gained from 1.5% to 1.7% within the same period.

All these point to the fact that youth ministry is key if the church must keep growing and sustain itself. Youth friendly activities must be identified and strengthened in order to revert the trend.

2.3 The priority and Priorities of youth Ministry

The youth ministry is given different levels of priority by different churches and Nations in the contemporary. Across Africa and Uganda in specific, the spiritual leaders give very little attention to the youth programs even as they know their potentials. The matter is made worse among the rural churches where very few youth attend churches and little is done to follow them up. This has made key positions of leadership is taken by very elderly members of the congregation who struggle a lot to catch the pace of development brought by modernity. The urban churches are trying though major focus is directed on the youth of working class whom they expect to make financial contributions to the church, while the non working class is given little consideration.

According to Monitor Empower Uganda's report of 17th November 2018, most youth in Uganda make preference to churches that give youth much attention and opportunities to participate in appealing church activities like Music, talent shows among others. In their report the most preferred by youth are the Pentecostal churches over the traditional churches.

2.4 The Need for Leaders in Christian Youth Ministry

According to Lauren Abraham, a senior earning a communications degree at GCU(*Grand Canyon University*), youth need guidance and support as they navigate through the most challenging part of their development and seek to grow in their walk with Christ. Christ-like leaders are needed to serve young members of the congregation and help them to reach their full potential.

It is important to note that even the churches with bigger number of youth invest little resources in the youth ministry. Very few churches recruit and train youth pastors to support youth ministry programs, yet these youth pastors should have helped in the general programming within the youth ministry and to be the bridge between the youth and the mainstream leadership. This clearly shows that less priority is given to the youth, a reason why some churches have very low Church attendance by the young people.

According to the 2018 and 2019 Annual youth convention reports for Lira Urban Archdeaconry, a convention attended by over 4000 participants, the youth feel good when they are given chance to participate in nearly all church activities including programming. The great number of participants was realized due to the fact that the fellow youth were actively involved in the mobilization of both material and Human resources. To make it more sweet for them, the steering committee was greatly composed of those who were nurtured and disciple through the same youth conventions since its inception in 2003 as a camp fire gathering, until now that it has turned out to be a convention.

2.5 Research Gap

Despite the fact that there are a number of studies that are carried out in relation with the topic of study, it should be noted that most of the literature noted in this study does not focus on the real impact of youth involvement in the Christian ministry, the literature looks at majorly the number of young people in the church across and around the world, but little has been noted in relation to the objectives of the study.

2.6 Literature summary

The literature above explains how different scholars have tried to research about the topic, it indicates the different views as per the objectives of the study which the researcher seeks to establish and perhaps draw relationships and conclusions in the area of study according to the variables. Furthermore, this study seeks to fill the gaps in the literature.

3.0 Introduction

This chapter looked at the research design, study area, target population, sampling technique and sample selection, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and the limitations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher employed a descriptive research design. Smith (1981) defines evaluative research as a systematic assessment of the effectiveness of programs that were designed as tentative solutions to existing problems. The evaluative research design was employed to examine the strategic measures put forward by the local church to ensure youth are actively involved in Church ministry. Qualitative study was relied on to collect and interpret data from various respondents. Qualitative approach was used to collect primary data and quantify after study investigation.

3.2 Area of Study

The study was conducted in Lira Urban Archdeaconry with the major focus on strengthening youth involvement and empowerment as a basis for strong church and Christian ministry within the archdeaconry. The area was chosen for the study because of the following reasons:

- i. The church within this area is very actively mobilizing the youth to actively participate in the church mission.
- ii. The Archdeaconry forms part of the heart of ministry in the diocese of Lango so the information got from this area represent the views of the entire Christians majorly in urban and peri- urban areas of the Diocese of Lango.
- iii. With the introductory letter from the Dean of School of Divinity and Theology of Uganda Christian University, permission will be granted by Diocesan leaders and local churches for the researcher to access the Christians within the community to conduct the study.

3.3 Data sources

The researcher greatly relied on library sources of information such as text books written by various authors, magazines and journals relevant to the study. However, primary data consisted of a collection of original primary data from selected respondents. This was done through use of questionnaires and interview guides for the key informants during field inquiry.

3.4 Study Population

According to Julius Caesar Enon, this means people from whom a researcher can obtain information. And according to Sowell (2001), a target population consists of all the people with common characteristics to whom investigators plan to generalize their results. Therefore, the target population for this study included: the local church Clergies who consisted of; Archdeacon (1), Parish priests (04), Lay readers (18), youth leaders (36), other youth and lay Christians (41)

3.5 Sample Size

The researcher relied on a sample population of 100 respondents out of a population of over 150 people estimated under this study. The sample was chosen using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling model table during data collection process and triangulation.

3.6 Sampling Technique

During data collection, random sampling technique was used to get sample representative of the sample population. Creswell, (2005) defined random sampling as a subset of individuals that are randomly selected from a population. Random sampling technique was adopted in getting the respondents to answer the questionnaires. Kothari, (2004) says that sampling technique is used because it guarantees desired representation of the relevant sub groups.

3.7 Indicators and Variables

The independent variable is importance of youth ministry and the dependent variable is church ministry. It is important to note that variables will help the researchers to limit many findings of

plausible studies but rather focus on important information. The researcher during data collection looked at youth ministry and its meaning, its importance in the general church and Christian ministry.

3.8 Data Collection Methods

During the data collection, both the primary data and secondary data were very helpful in gathering the information. The respondents gave the primary data, while other information from already existing reports and findings formed the secondary data. These methods were so instrumental in the collection of information about the topic of study.

3.8.1 Primary Data

During this study, the respondents gave the information by filling the questionnaires, while other information was got interviews based on the key interest areas as provided in the questionnaires. With their consent got at the beginning, the respondents freely helped the researcher to gather the pieces of information needed for this study. Others even gave personal testimonies relevant to the topic under study.

3.8.2 Secondary Data

The researcher got the other information from other sources like the books, event reports, journals and websites among others to get the secondary data needed for this study. Departmental annual reports on major youth targeted activities were also very helpful in information giving during the study.

3.9 Data collection procedure

The researcher sought for University permission and obtained introductory letter to be used in the field and to be accepted by heads of institution where the research was organized and this helped to avoid embarrassment and denial to information accessibility. With the aid of this letter, it helped the researcher to collect information freely without hindrance. Respondents, who participated in the study and those who filled questionnaire, were given enough time to fill in the information on questionnaire and interview schedules was conducted with ample time and respondents would agree on time arrangement.

3.10 Data collection tools

According to Creswell (2005) no single technique or instrument may be considered to be adequate in itself in collecting valid and reliable data. Therefore, two major tools were used to obtain adequate and reliable information for this study. The tools used in data collection included interviews and questionnaires of both structured and semi-structured nature.

3.10.1 Questionnaire

During the study, questionnaires were given to the selected respondents who could read and write and they filled them after given their consent to the study process. Meanwhile interviews on the

same questionnaires were given to those who could not or were not willing to write by themselves, and the researcher did the recording of the information given by respondents.

3.11 Measurement of Variables

In this study the researcher made comparative analysis of the primary data given by the respondents and the secondary data got from other already existing information like the books, departmental annual reports among others. This was done for the purpose of the accuracy and sufficiency of the information. And also to test the reliability and the validity of the content.

3.12 Reliability and Validity of Data

For reliability and validity of the study content, the researcher used random sample which information was used to represent the wider population. On the other hand the use of questionnaire and interviews as data collection methods was good for provision of excellent results. The researcher majorly concentrated on the key areas of youth involvement and participation in general church programming, and identification of gaps and their causes in youth ministry.

3.13 Data Analysis

Data analysis is regarded as the process of inspecting, analyzing and sorting data to generate useful phenomenon of study, and drawing conclusion of field notes. It also involved creating categories or themes and sorting answers to questions or statements from the field work into thematic analysis. After data was collected, it was tabulated and entered into the computer system for statistical analysis and presented. This was done through use of codes to reflect properly the required data. It is then presented using tables, graphs and pie charts where pertinent.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained consent through direct request from the respondents in order to seek response from the target study population. The respondents were given a brief description of the purpose and procedure of the study. The respondents were assured of confidentiality of the information and their personal protection and that they have the right to refuse or accept to be interviewed. The data findings are presented in form of research findings and will be submitted to the Faculty of Divinity and Theology for the Award of a Master Degree in Divinity of Uganda Christian University.

3.15 Limitations to the study and solutions to the constraints

The researcher somehow faced difficulties in getting accurate information from some respondents who themselves hinder youth inclusion in church ministry because of fear that it could expose them. The researcher took time convincing and explaining to them the purpose of the research and personal details.

Many Christian youth have been mishandled by the spiritual leaders who tag them as rebellious, but they have learnt to live with it for the fear that they might be cursed.

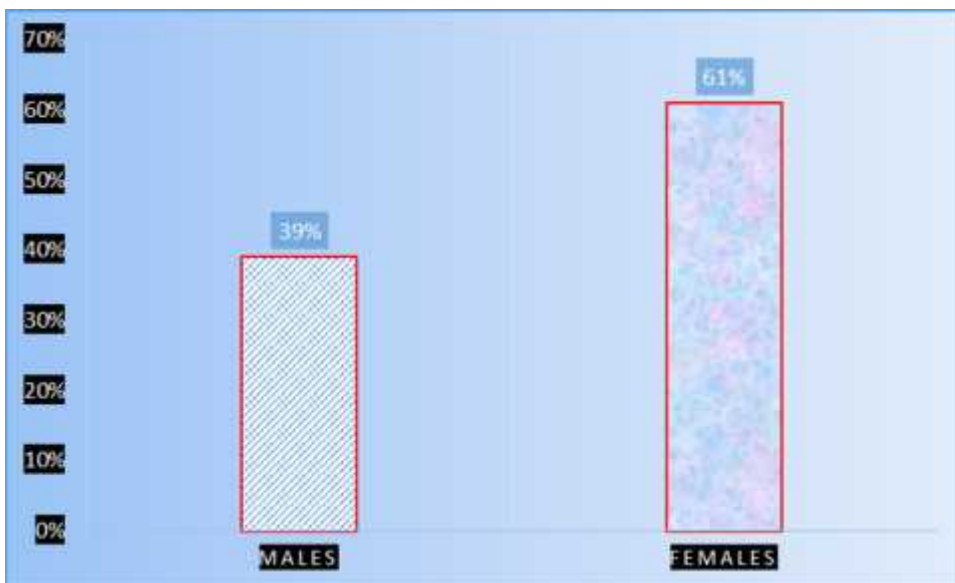
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction:

This chapter presents the findings of the study exploring relationship between the Youth and the church today, the priority and Priorities of youth Ministry and the Need for Leaders in Christian Youth Ministry. Data for this study was collected through questionnaires and the results of the analysis are presented per study objective and described in tables and figures (pie charts and bar graphs) where stated. The sample size for the analysis was 100 Christian youth.

4.2 Figure 1: Showing categories of respondents

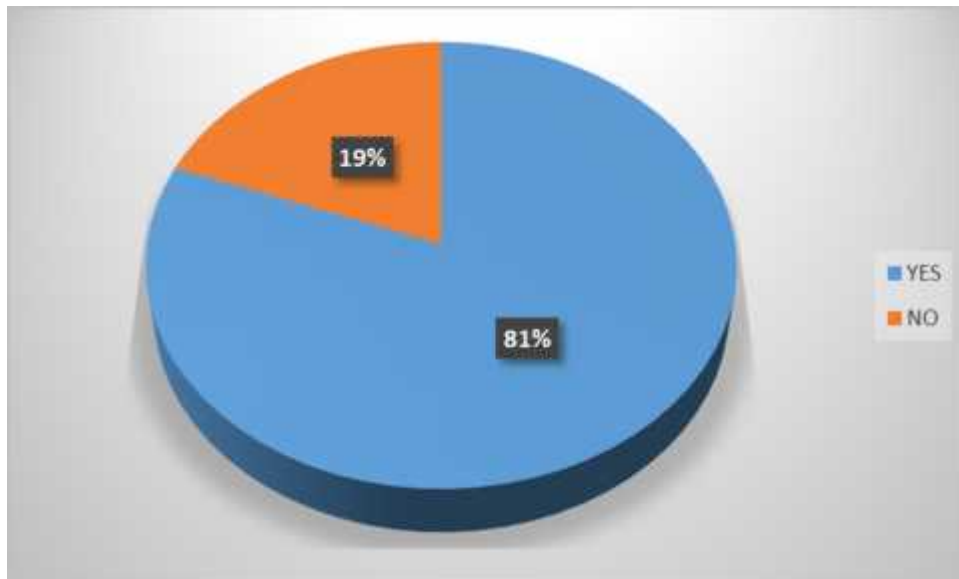


As seen from the above figure, majority of the respondents were females who constituted 61% while males were only 39%. This is attributed to the fact that female youth are closer to the church as compared to their male counterparts.

4.2.1 Youth inclusion to the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry

Figure 2: Showing whether Youth are included in the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry

(n=100)



As shown above, majority 81(81%) of the respondents contend that the youth are included in the church at Lira urban archdeaconry, while, on the other hand, only 19(19%) of the respondents said that the youth aren't included in church.

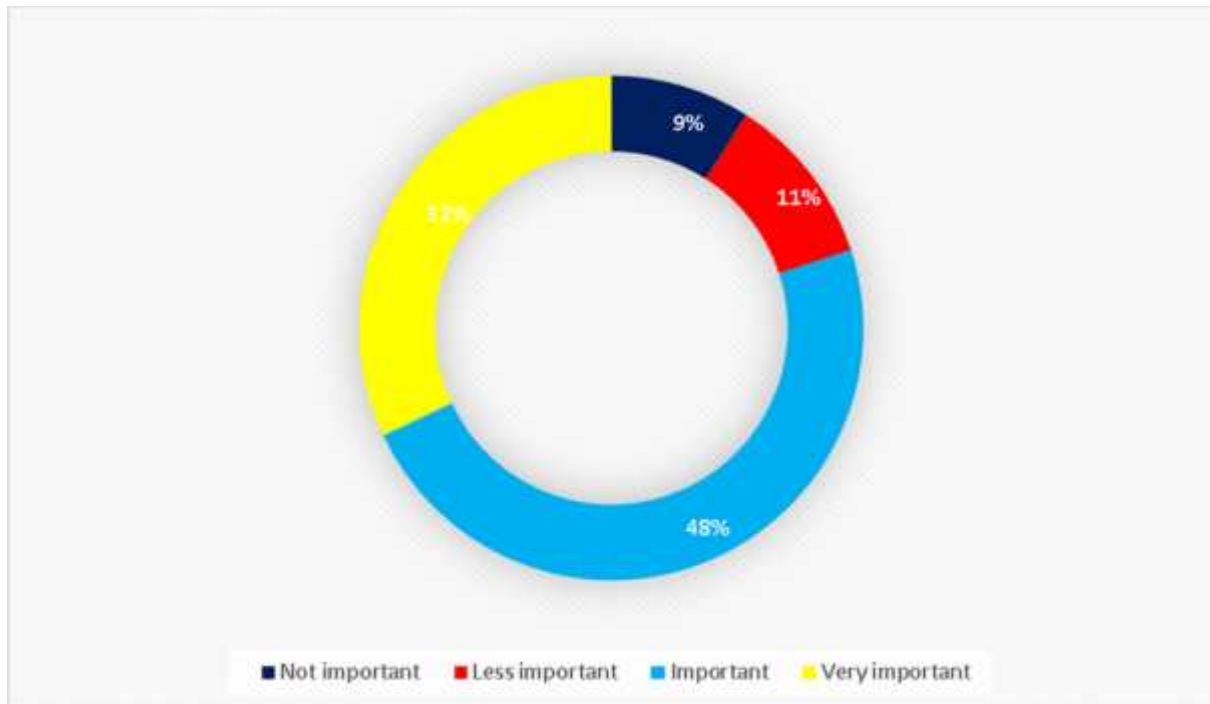
Table 1: Showing how youth are included in the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry

Responses	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)	
Youth are included in the general church programming	Leading Praise and worship	30	30%
	Preaching	03	03%
	Cleaning and ushering	05	05%
	Leading service	02	02%
	Doing charity work	10	15%
	Youth Sunday	05	05%
	Reading scriptures	10	10%
	Playing musical instruments	15	15%

	Sub total	80	80%
Youth are Not included	Youth are considered unholy	01	01%
	No Leadership post	03	03%
	Ignored and seen as waste	09	09%
	Considered disorderly	02	02%
	Ignorance	04	04%
	Youth unwillingness	01	01%
	Sub total	20	20%
	GRAND TOTAL	100	100%

As seen from the above table, 80(80%) of youth said that they are included in the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry with the list of areas of their inclusion provided, while; only 20(20%) of the youth said that they are not included in the church and the reasons they say so also listed.

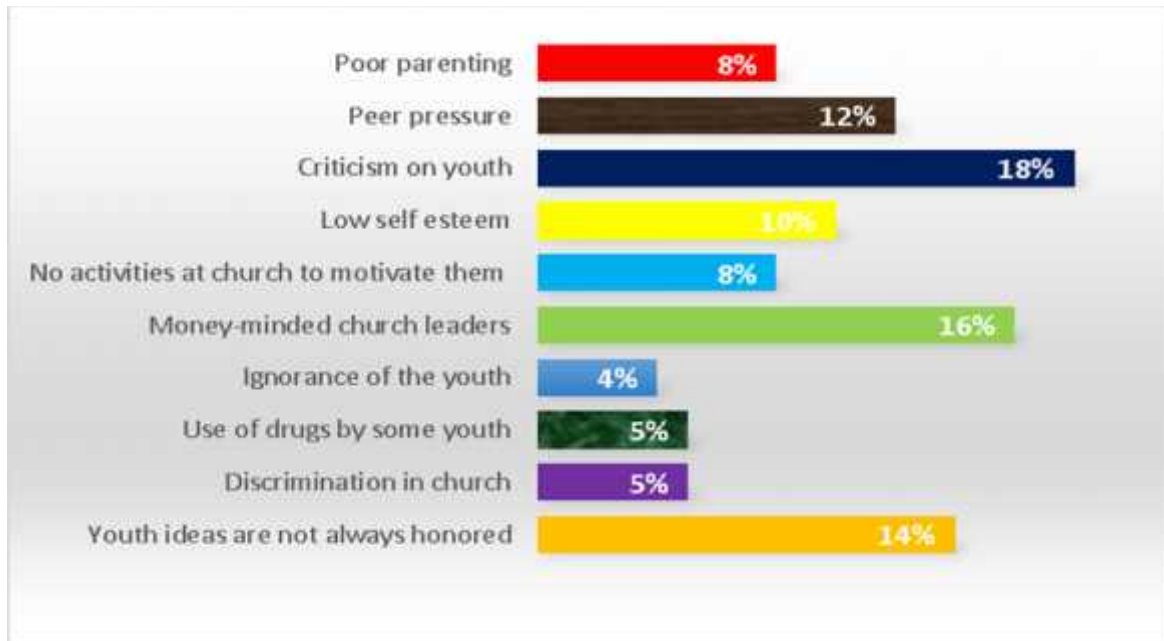
Figure 3: showing perception of youth on importance of their inclusion in church programming.



According to the figure above, 48% of the respondents said it is of importance to include youth in church programming, while 32% said it is very important to include the youth in church, 11% said it is less important and only 9% said it is not important to include the youth in church programming.

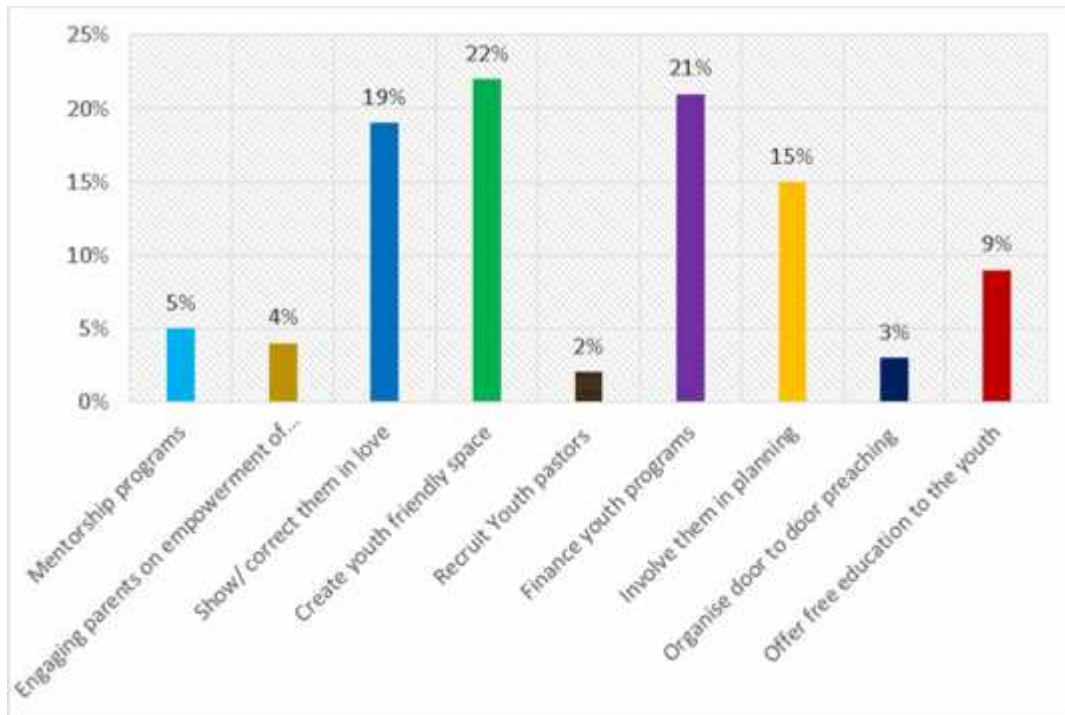
4.2.2 The need for Christian youth in ministry.

Figure 4: Reasons for low participation of youth in church ministry (n=100)



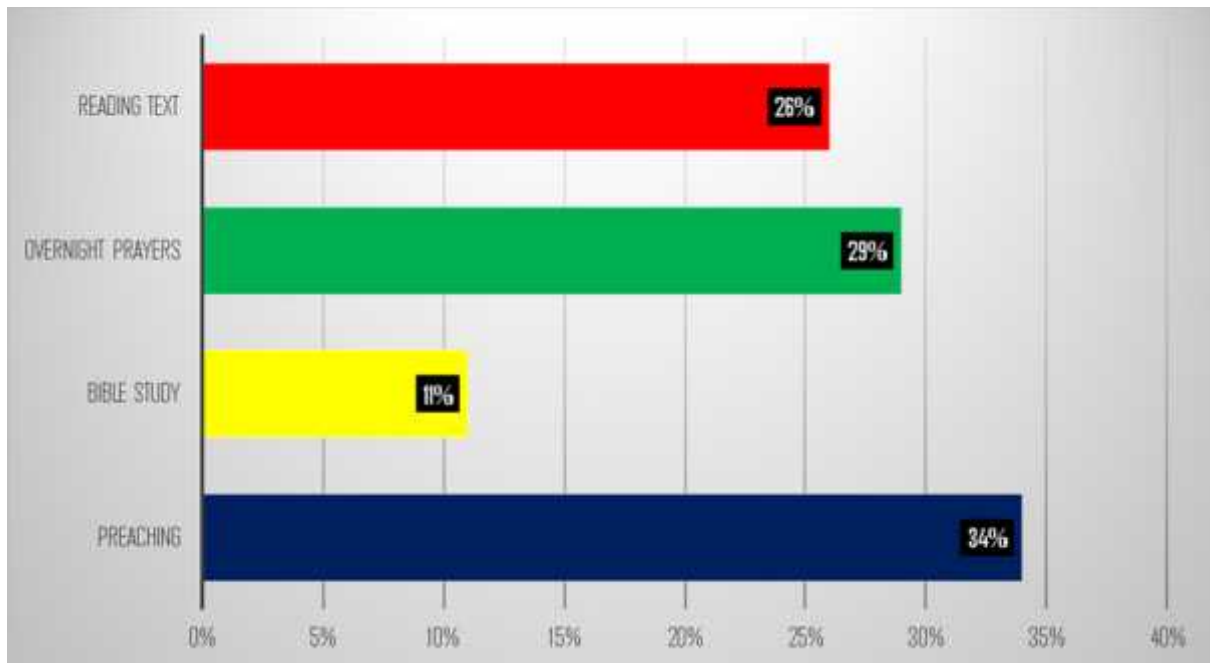
According to the figure above, majority of the respondents 18(18%) said criticism on the youth contributes to low participation of youth in church ministry, while only 4(4%) attribute low participation of youth to ignorance. Other possible reasons for low participation of youth to money-minded church leaders 16(16%), youth ideas are not honored 14(14%), peer pressure 12(12%), low self-esteem 10(10%), no activities at church to motivate them 8(8%), use of drugs 5(5%).

Figure 5: Illustrates ways of increasing level of youth participation in church programs (n=100)



As shown in the above figure, most of the respondents 22(22%) said the church should create youth friendly space, followed by 21(21%) who said church should finance youth programs, 19(19%) said youth should be shown love and corrected in love, 15(15%) said the church should involve youth in planning, 9(9%) said church should offer free education to the youth, 5(5%) said mentorship programs should be designed for youth at church, 4(4%) said parents need to be engaged in order to empower the youth, whereas only 2(2%) of the respondents said church needs to recruit youth pastors(male and female pastors) to motivate and draw youth to church.

Figure 6: Showing key areas lacking youth participation in Lira Urban Archdeaconry (n=100)



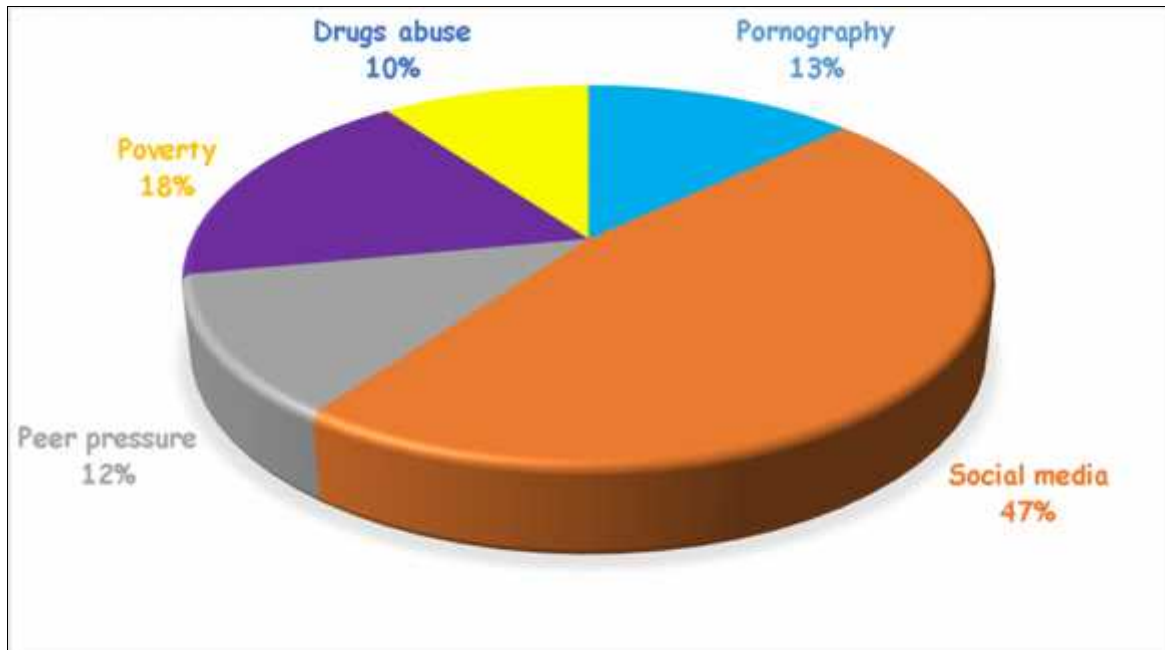
As shown from the figure above, the largest number of respondents 34(34%) said preaching was the main area lacking youth participation in Lira Urban Archdeaconry, followed by overnight that constituted 29(29%), reading text which had 26(26%) and bible study which had 11(11%) respectively.

Table 2: Showing key areas of church Ministry with the highest youth participation in Lira Urban Archdeaconry (n=100).

Department	Frequency	Percentage %
Choir /praise & worship	23	23%
Mission/ outreaches	09	09%
Charity work	13	13%
Reading text	03	03%
Bible study	02	02%
Church cleaning	13	13%
First week fellowship	11	11%
Overnight prayers	02	02%
Healing and deliverance	10	10%
Ushering	10	10%
Mobilization	04	04%
Total	100	100%

As presented on the table, 23(23%) of respondents said Choir /praise & worship was the department with the highest number of youth, followed by Charity work and Church cleaning with 13(13%), First week fellowship with 11(11%), Healing and deliverance and Ushering with 10(10%), Mission/ outreaches with 09(09%), Mobilization with 04(04%), Reading text with 03(03%), Bible study and Overnight prayers with 02(02%) respectively.

Figure 7: Showing most common threat to youth attendance/ participation in church programs (n=100)



As seen from the figure above, majority of the respondents (47%) said Social media was the most common threat to youth attendance in church programs, 18% was attributed to poverty, 13% to pornography, 12% was attributed to peer pressure and a smaller number of the respondents (10%) blame it on drugs abuse.

Table 3: Showing how the church can respond to threat to youth attendance/ participation in church (n=100)

Response	Frequency	% Percentage
Youth centered projects	06	06%
Teaching morals and hard work; not just believing that all come from heaven	12	12%
Preaching on practical life changing economic empowerment	17	17%
Guided social media usage	20	20%
Youth conferences, seminars & retreats on such threats	04	04%
Reading scriptures	01	01%
Counseling & guidance sessions	07	07%
Educative films such as Jesus film	02	02%
Encourage the youth to save	01	01%
Create job centers within the church	03	03%
Sensitize the youth on such threats and good decision making	05	05%
Committing them in prayers	02	02%
Church shouldn't point fingers at youth	10	10%

who are lost, rather help them fight such threats		
Organizing activities such as football, music etc around the church to keep them busy	01	01%
Total	100	100%

As illustrated above, 06(06%) of the respondents said youth-centered projects should be established, whereas; 12(12%) Teaching morals and hard work; not just believing that all comes from heaven, 17(17%) Preaching on practical life changing economic empowerment, 20(20%) said there should be guided social media usage, 04(04%) Youth conferences, seminars & retreats on such threats, 01(01%) highlighted the Reading of scriptures, 07(07%) said counseling & guidance sessions be designed for the youth, 02(02%) stressed use of educative films such as Jesus film, 01(01%) said the church should encourage the youth to save , 03(03%) said the church should create job centers within the church, 05(05%) said the church should Sensitize the youth on such threats and good decision making, 02(02%) said the church should Commit them in prayers 10(10%) said by Church shouldn't point fingers at youth who are lost, rather help them fight such threats and 01(01%) said by organising activities such as football, music etc around the church to keep them busy.

Figure 4: Shows how respondents rate Lira urban Archdeaconry in building the church ministry through youth inclusion. (n=100)

Number of respondents	Rating	Percentage
32	5/10	32%
27	6/10	27%
41	3/10	41%
100		100%

As shown above, majority of the respondents (41) rate Lira urban Archdeaconry in building the church ministry through youth inclusion as 3/10, followed by 5/10 as rated by 32 respondents, and 27 of them rated it as 6/10 in building the church ministry through youth inclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions of the findings of the study, conclusions, and recommendations and nursing implication.

5.1 Discussions of the findings

5.1.1 Demographic information of respondents

The following are the findings and discussion;

Generally, inclusion of youth in church ministry at Lira urban Archdeaconry is socially and culturally nested, and largely influenced by myriad of individual, socio-cultural and religious, community, and institutional factors. Hence, there is need to understand the socio-ecological context of inclusion of youth in church ministry in order to fully appreciate its operation in Lira urban archdeaconry.

The evidence revealed that the youth are situated at the various socio-ecological levels, and therefore it is imperative to address the challenges in these multiple layers. In applying the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM), the study was able to examine the multi-dimensional aspects of the importance of youth inclusion to the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry.

It was also found out that majority of the respondents were females who scored 61% while male respondents were represented by 39%. This could probably be due to the nature of females who are always around the church, while males are rarely seen around the church. In many church functions women form the majority, and the strongest and biggest social groupings in the church are those dominated by female membership. Example, mothers union and cell groups.

5.1.2 The importance of youth inclusion to the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry.

According to the findings, it was found that 48% of the respondents said it was of importance to include youth in church programming, while 32% said it was very important to include the youth in church, 11% said it was less important and only 9% said it was not important to include the youth in church programming. These findings thus reveal that, majority of the respondents understood the importance of youth inclusion in church programming at Lira urban archdeaconry. And picked from their personal testimonies, most of them have been groomed and nurtured in faith as a result of consistent inclusion in church ministry more especially youth friendly activities. For example on a yearly basis since 2003, Lira urban has been consistently organizing annual youth convention, the only interruption was due to Covid 19 lock down when most public gatherings were prohibited. This convention attracts more than 4000 participants across and beyond Lira Urban Archdeaconry according their personal testimonies.

5.1.3 The effect of youth inclusion on the general church management in Lira Urban Archdeaconry.

The inclusion of youth on the general church management in Lira Urban Archdeaconry plays a significant role in church building and development. They help in a number of fields such as Choir /praise & worship department, Charity work and Church cleaning, First week fellowship, Healing and deliverance and Ushering, Mission/ outreaches, Mobilization, Reading text, Bible study and Overnight prayers. Their inclusion in these departments can help harness church growth and development over time. During the interviews with the church pastors, it was revealed that some of the pastors now serving in the Archdeaconry and the Diocese in general were identified as a result of their active involvement and participation in the church ministry and sent for theological training by the Diocese of Lango. Others have taken key roles in both public and private sectors and have come back to support the growth and development of the church.

5.1.4 Reasons for low participation of youth in church ministry in your Archdeaconry.

Findings by the researcher pointed out that, majority of the respondents 18(18%) said criticism on the youth contributed to low participation of youth in church ministry, while only (4%) attributed low participation of youth to ignorance. It was also found out that low participation of youth was attributed to money-minded church leaders as constituted by (16%), youth ideas which are not honored constituted (14%), peer pressure represented by (12%), low self-esteem (10%), no activities at church to motivate the youth (8%), and the use of drugs scored (5%). This criticism on the youth deter them from coming to the church or participating in church activities/programmes whereas, money-minded-church leaders drive away the unemployed youth from church due to lack of funds to support some church programmes such as fundraising and endless collections by the clergy. Accordingly, youth ideas which are not honored (14%), peer pressure, low self-esteem, no activities at church to motivate the youth, and the use of drugs discourage them from participating in church ministry making some of them to only come to church during a normal church service just for identity purposes but not for any positive reasons. Others have run away to join other churches which they consider to be more youth friendly and accommodative to youth, accepting them the way they are.

5.1.5 Key areas of church ministry which are lacking the youth participation in Lira urban Archdeaconry.

Findings revealed that the largest number of respondents 34(34%) said preaching was the main area lacking youth participation in Lira Urban Archdeaconry, followed by overnight that constituted 29(29%), reading text which had 26(26%) and bible study which had 11(11%) respectively. This implies that, the youth feel left out in a number of fields such as preaching, overnight, reading of text, and bible study. In most cases, these sectors are dominated by the adults and clergy in church. This puts the future of the churches within the Archdeaconry at risk

because youth form the majority of the members of congregation and failure to include them means future leaders are not being groomed and nurtured, a big gap between the elderly Christians and youth is being widened and practical mentorship and discipleship shall be at stake.

Similarly, it was also noted that, majority of the respondents (41) rated Lira urban Archdeaconry in building the church ministry through youth inclusion at 3/10, followed 32 respondents who rated it at 5/10, and 27 of them rated it at 6/10. This implies that the archdeaconry is rated above average but there is need for improvement on the side of the Lira urban Archdeaconry in building the church ministry through youth inclusion so that they become a model Archdeaconry where others can come for learning and benchmarking.

5.2 Conclusion:

It is important to note that Lira urban has been very active in ensuring youth participation and inclusion in the general church programming for a good period of time. However, there are still gaps in other areas as presented and discussed above.

To this effect it is important that practical efforts to enroll, support and encourage the youth to love the church as a way of increasing inclusion of youth in church ministry at Lira urban Archdeaconry be worked on. This will have a positive impact on reducing threats to youth attendance/ participation in church programs such as; pornography, social media, peer pressure, poverty, drugs abuse among others. The gaps identified included; lack of comprehensive counseling to the youth,

The major challenge in many churches is that the Sunday school and youth groups are given little attention. This is evident by lack of youth and children friendly activities and lack of serious Sunday school teachers and youth mentors who are indeed very instrumental in youth and children ministry. this calls for proper planning and consideration if the transitioning process children and youth should be well managed.

5.3 Recommendations:

From the study findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

The office youth focal person(**youth worker**) at the diocesan level and archdeaconry and parish be strengthened and equipped to collect data from all the Archdeaconries, parishes and sub parishes in regard to the youth. These persons should be able to move to all churches within the diocese to collect data in time. Proper coordination and dissemination of information should be maintained, and rising issues affecting youth department be attended to and where possible strategic plan for youth recruitment and retention in the church be designed with constant follow up.

The entire diocese should take the initiative to recognize the work and values youth ministry render to the churches, especially in areas where services by ordained priests are inadequate. Youth leaders should be empowered and included in the diocesan planning meetings and their views taken into consideration with proper guidance and regulations of their activities for good discipleship.

The archdeaconry should always consult the leaders of different parishes/ sub parishes during the yearly planning session to ensure well regulated youth activities and considered within the church programs. The Church should have a plan of sensitizing the sub-parishes on productive handling youth related issues. Mentoring, counseling and discipleship sessions must be conducted to handle critical matters affecting the youth, nurturing the potentials in them and positively guiding them through their walks of faith with love, tolerance and acceptance.

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- 4. The role of the church on the youth, by Pastor Phillip Chemel, national youth Pastor and resident minister for Pentecostal international worship center peel, Canada.*
- 5. [Theology & Ministry] by Lauren Abraham 2016*
- 6. The new vision news paper- 19th Oct 2018*
- 7. Ways to strengthen youth ministry By Lewis Center May 1, 2019*

APENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUTH, PASTORS AND LAY LEADERS WITHIN LIRA URBAN ARCHDEACONRY

Dear respondent

I am Odongo Jimmy Francis, a student of bishop Tucker school of Divinity and theology, Uganda Christian University Mukono pursuing master of Divinity. I am undertaking a research study on the topic: the benefits of youth inclusion in the church ministry within Lira urban archdeaconry. You have been selected to participate in this study. Any information you give during this study shall be confidential and only used for academic purpose.

Personal information (please tick appropriate box)

Sex: M F

Role in church: Pastor leader member/youth

5. The importance of youth inclusion to the church in Lira Urban Archdeaconry

a) Are youth in your church included in the general church programming

Yes No

If yes how.....
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If no why?
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.....

b) according to you, how important to the church is the inclusion of the youth in the general church programming? Tick appropriate answer

1. not important 2. Less important 3. Important 4. Very important

6. The effect of youth inclusion on the general church management in Lira Urban Archdeaconry.

a) Has the inclusion of youth in the general church programming in Lira urban archdeaconry had any effect on the entire Christian ministry? Yes No

If yes list them

- 1.....
-
- 2.....
-
- 3.....
-
- 4.....
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- 5.....
-

7. A)What are the reasons for low participation of youth in church ministry in your Archdeaconry?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

B) in your view, what can be done to increase the level of youth participation in the church programs?

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8. A)What key areas of church ministry are lacking the youth participation in Lira urban Archdeaconry? List them

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B} What key areas of church ministry has received the most youth participation? List them.

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C) which of the following are the most common threat to youth attendance participation in the church programs? Tick all appropriate boxes

- I. Pornography
- II. Social media
- III. Peer pressure
- IV. Poverty
- V. Drugs abuse

How can the church respond to the above threats in order to keep the youth in the church?

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B) in a score of 1- 10, how would you rate Lira Urban Archdeaconry in building the church ministry through inclusion of youth in the church programming.

Thank you so much for your participation in this study, may God bless you.

APPENDIX B THE WORK PLAN

S/No	Activity	Period (in months)					
		August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	Jan/Feb 2024	March/April 2024	May-July 2024
1	Writing synopsis						
2	Proposal writing and correction of 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd drafts						
3	Designing tools of data collection and data gathering						
4	Data analysis						
5	Writing draft report/correcting draft reports						
6	Writing and submission of final report						

APPENDIX D- RESEARCH BUDGET

S/No	Item	Quantity	Unit cost	Total cost (Ugx)
1	Stationeries			
	Ream of paper	01	15,000=	15,000=
	Pens	04	500=	2,000=
	Note book	02	5,000=	10,000=
	Flash disk	01	25,000=	25,000=
2	Secretarial services	Assorted		100,000=
3	Data analyst	01	150,000=	150,000=
4	Communication	Assorted		50,000=
5	Transport	Assorted		450,000=
6	Contingencies	Assorted		150,000=
7	Total			952,000=