ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENT AND
SPIRITUALITY FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE CASE
OF ZETSEAT APOSTOLIC REFORMATION CHURCH

BY ZINASH GUDISSA JIMMA

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APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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Dean, Graduate Studies   Signature and Date

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Advisor   Signature and Date

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Internal Examiner   Signature and Date

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External Examiner   Signature and Date

ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

_____   _____

Assaye Legesse (PhD)   Signature & Date

St Mary's University, Addis Ababa

DECLARATION

I, Zinash Gudissa Jimma, declare that this work is my original paper which is entitled Contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development in the case of Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis paper have been duly

_____   _____

Zinash Gudissa   Signature &Date

St Mary's University, Addis Ababa

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Contents

ACRONYMS

GO-Governmental organization

NGO-non-governmental organizations

PYD –Positive Youth Development

WHO –World Health Organization

YM4TNY-Youth Movement for Transformed Nation

ZARC-Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church

ABSTRACT

This paper attempted to attain the concept of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development in the case of Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church kirkos kifle keema Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The objective of the study was, to explore the role of religious involvement and spirituality for youth's positive development, To investigate the experiences and perceptions of religiously involved and spiritual youths in Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church, to explore what mechanisms are provided to aid in the positive transformation of youths within the church? The study was conducted using 18 respondents (15youths and 3 church leaders). Qualitative data was collected using interview and observation methods participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique and. The finding of the study indicates that most participants who are religiously involved and spiritual are doing most rituals which are considered as religious involvement and spirituality. Positive development in this study is seen from Lerner's framework of PYD which is the 5Cs/6Csmodel(character, confidence, competence, connection, caring, and contribution). The findings of the study also show youth-focused programs that are maintained in the church are related to the 5Cs/6Cs model in so many ways. And according to the findings from the study religious involvement and spirituality donate something good for positive youth development regarding the 5Cs/6Cs. Suggestions for further research and implications for religious youth development organizations are considered.

KEYWORDS; Religious involvement, spirituality, youth, and positive youth development

Chapter one;   Introduction

1.1Background of the study

Definition of youth perhaps changes with circumstances, especially with the changes in demographic, financial, economic, and socio-cultural settings; According to the World Health Organization (WHO), youth refer to people aged between 15 and 24 years inclusive and are characterized by unique physical, psychological, social, and emotional changes that put their life at high risk the United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 as youth without discrimination to other definitions by the Member States." And the African Youth Charter defines those persons between the age of 15 and 35 as a youth (AU, 2006).

At the beginning of 2012, the world's population had topped 7 billion, with those under the age of 30 accounting for more than half of that (50.5 percent).89.7% of persons under 30 resided in emerging and developing economies, according to the poll. Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's youngest population, with almost 70% of the population under the age of 30 (The World's Youngest Populations, 2012).

Traditionally, youth have been seen as problems to be managed. Studies have also concentrated on documenting their liabilities. Recently, however, youth are conceived as resources to be cultivated and upgraded, and the focus is on promoting competencies. A large youth population can be an opportunity for countries to build a strong economic base and reverse poverty trends in many developing economies.

As a result, this study emphasized the FiveCs (character, confidence, competence, connection, and caring) model of positive youth development, which is a framework for PYD that outlines five psychological, behavioral, and social characteristics that indicate youth are flourishing and, when a high level of the Five Cs develops, it results in the Sixth C, which is related to contributing to self, community, and society (Richard M, Lerner, and Jacqueline V., 2013).

The core ideas in positive youth development include developmental contexts (i.e., places, settings, ecologies, and relationships with the potential to generate supports, opportunities, and

resources), developmental strengths (attributes of the person, including skills, competencies, values, and dispositions important for successful engagement in the world), the promotion of thriving, the reduction of high-risk behavior, the bidirectional arrows are intended to convey the dynamic nature of person-environment interactions that have been highlighted in recent expositions of positive youth development (M.Lerner, 2006).

The Five Cs Model of PYD is one of the most widely accepted theories of PYD today, based on nearly three decades of developmental science, the model focuses on the positive characteristics that enable youth to live productive and healthy lives and contribute to society in ways that benefit themselves, their families and communities, and civil society (Richard M, Lerner, and Jacqueline V., 2013). The Five Cs model is the most well-researched PYD model, and it broadly describes what thriving looks like in young people (Heck, K. E., & Subramaniam, A, 2009).

For positive youth development, a religious environment could have significance in creating a positive relationship, positive experiences, and positive environment. Although there are problems among teenagers, the emerging scholarly discipline of positive youth development (PYD) proposes that with proper guidance, they can discover their life purpose and develop their assets, and thus become major positive contributors to society (Méndez, 2008).

Religion and spirituality are two of the most important cultural factors that shape and define human values, behaviors, and experiences (S Mueller, 2001). The belief in a transcendent reality beyond the realm of the senses is the domain of spirituality, which is the creative source of both the realm of matter and the realm of the mind (Giri, 2019).

Ethiopia is known to be one of the religious countries in the world. In the list that was published by the world population review in 2021 Ethiopia was ranked as the 12 most religious country in the world (world population review, 2021). According to the 2007 Ethiopian census of house and population, 43.5% of the total population follows orthodox Christianity, 33.9% Muslim, 18.6% protestant, 2.6% traditional, 0.7 catholic, and 0.6 other (FDRECC, 2008).

The importance of spirituality as a technique of reducing self-centeredness appears to have been overshadowed by the idea of religion as a personality trait, when religion is considered from a

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spiritual perspective; it is easy to see all religions as distinct paths leading to the same goal: self-centeredness reduction or spiritual growth achieved fast and efficiently (Ulluwishewa, 2014).

The impact of religious involvement and spirituality on the positive youth development regarding their character (on connection to principles and values and on taking responsibility), confidence(on their sense of self-worth and their sense of belief in one's capability to succeed), competence(on their accomplishment of different carriers it could be at school, workplace or any social situation), connection(on their social interaction at the church and outside the church, their sense of being loved or belongingness) and caring (their feelings towards social justice, their involvement in different charity and voluntary works) is discussed in this paper.

1.2, Statement of the problem

Today's youth face numerous challenges daily, including work pressure, relationship pressure, and the pressure to stay fit. They desire everything in life, including peace, and they desire it immediately. Is it possible, however, to achieve peace while confronted with such challenges? (Maharaj, 2021).

Today's youth are constantly looking for approvals, likes, and shares. They are incredibly connected to the rest of the world, which is a good thing, but they are still struggling to find the meaning of their existence. They find this world to be harsh and too fast-paced at times, and they succumb to stress and depression as a result (Maharaj, 2021). There have been studies that show spiritual and religious involvement is an important aspect of youth development. To use life meaning as an example, when youths are cognitively mature, they tend to think in abstract terms and explore future possibilities. They frequently ask questions about life, such as the following: What is the meaning of life? What is a meaningful life? Why are we here? What do we want to achieve in life? The significance of the meaning of life in the behavior of youth is reflected in human history (Shek, 2012).

A lot of youths tend to live for anything that comes their way without considering whether or not that is what they were born to live for, and they do whatever they feel is right without thinking critically, which may harm them, their families, and communities, so the researcher believes that finding a purpose in life and one's true identity may be a foundation for building

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one's positive youth development, as a result, the researcher believes that discovering one's true identity and purpose in life can serve as a foundation for positive youth development, resulting in integrity, responsibility, life accomplishment, positive social connection, and living for others.

Ethiopia has a young population, with more than 70% of the total population under the age of 30, though, understandably, Ethiopia's youth can achieve positive developments in their lives to overcome individual life challenges and play a significant role as a solution in their family, community, and country, many barriers impede youth's positive development in the country the current main challenges for Ethiopian youth are unemployment, migration, drug addiction, and health, an unfavorable policy environment, and rapid population growth with an imbalance in job opportunities (Abebe, 2020). A close examination of the country's demographic transition implies that the proportion of the youth population will continue to rise in the future, although Ethiopia has one of the fastest-growing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, its youth face some challenges (Desie, - 2019).

In Ethiopia, it has become normal to drop out of school or do not have a proper class attaining learning process, and among some youths, drug abuse at an early age of high school or college has become a way of showing modernity, and most of the youths are victims of peer pressures Individualism is also becoming a major issue that prevents youths from having positive social interactions, leading them to be solely self-centered and unable to share their love, friendship, and whatever else they have as necessary with others.

Although there has been increased interest in identifying the benefits of religion to youth well-being, many existing studies provide little theoretical explanation for these positive effects, studying youth from a strengths-based perspective is thus a precondition for cultivating youth capacity for Ethiopia that aspires to achieve a lower-middle-income economy by 2030 (Desie, - 2019) . Effective youth engagement is about more than just "fixing" behavioral issues. It is about developing and nurturing all the beliefs, behaviors, knowledge attributes, and skills that lead to healthy and productive adolescence and adulthood (Richard M, 2007).

This study is intended to explore the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for the positive development of youths since this country needs a positive youth, to contribute something to self, the family, community, and the country, and this study shows one factor that

donates something good regarding youths' social, behavioral and psychological characteristics according to the 5Cs/6Cs model for the outcome of positive youth and to suggest further recommendations based on the result of the findings which may help to deal with different problems that youths faced and brings.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study has a general objective and specific objectives.

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of the research is to explore the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive development among youths.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

➢ To investigate factors that motivate youths to be religiously involved and spiritual.

➢ To investigate the social, behavioral, and psychological characteristics of youths in ZARC according to the 5Cs/6Cs model.

➢ To explore what mechanisms are provided in the context of the 5Cs/6Cs to aid in the positive transformation of youths within the church?

1.4 Research questions

➢ What are the reasons for youths' religious and spiritual involvement?

➢ Does religious involvement and spirituality impact youths' social, behavioral, and psychological characteristics which are the 5Cs/6Cs?

➢ What are the mechanisms utilized by the church regarding the 5Cs/6Cs model?

1.5 Scope of the study

In terms of the study issue, the study emphasized how religious involvement and spirituality contribute to positive youth development in the case of the targeted area, and the research focused on youths who attained the regular service of the church's program and these are those who usually come to the youth ministry and those youths who used to part of the youth ministry

in their early youth age but quit attaining the specific program of youth ministry which is held once per week(on Saturday) after they finished their education but who are the church's permanent members and attain the regular programs of the church and different events/pieces of training/activities organized by the youth ministry, the research also focused on the youth ministry leaders.

The first important thing that one should understand is that there is a distinction between spirituality and religion, while religion is related to institutional beliefs and the sacred; the divine and institutional religion is not necessarily related to the definition of spirituality.

There are different types of definitions given by different people for spirituality, but in this paper, the focus is on religious spirituality which is closeness and connection to the sacred defined by religion. And the effect of religious involvements on the youths' by the weekly programs of the church and different ministries held by the youth ministry is also discussed in this paper. In terms of the geographic area, this research is bounded to be conducted at Zetseat Apostolic Reformation church located at sarbet kirkos sub-city Addis Ababa Ethiopia. The qualitative research approach is used as a data collection method using in-depth interviews and observation to collect data and to select samples purposive sampling technique was used and data was analyzed thematically.

1.6 Significance of the study

In a country like Ethiopia which needs the energy, passion, and potential of youths, to take out the best they have for a better future for themselves, their family, their community, and their country, the research is very crucial and the researcher believes this study will come up with some implications that contribute to overcoming losing different youths with different social problems.

This study can be used as a source of information on the area, and it gives an insight and helps as a complementary for further studies on the area, it also helps in creating awareness on the issue for different concerned bodies like different youth programs, NGOs who work on supporting youth development and GOs.

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Youth programs are designed to support or provide activities for young people, or youth organizations. They are frequently based on youth work, non-formal education. Youth programs can operate at any level, from local to international, and can be delivered by the state, youth organizations, or other non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It can also be used as input to planning different youth projects by a governmental and nongovernmental organization to support youths.

The study is especially important for religious scholars, theologians, and spiritual leaders who seek to build the intellectual and practical scaffolding for improving the lives of youth and leading them in spiritual experiences through which they can discover their life purpose, become positive contributors to society, and deepen their connection with the sacred by focusing on strength-based development regarding the 5Cs for the outcome of thriving youths.

1.7 Limitation of the study

As every research has its limitation, some participants for the interview have been very busy to give enough time for the in-depth interview due to their various responsibilities. The fact that the research is limited in one local church by itself could be another limitation, it could have been appropriate if the study was conducted with the inclusion of other local churches or denominations. Since one of the data collection tools was an in-depth interview, the process of the research was a very time-intensive evaluation activity because of the time it takes to conduct interviews, transcribe them, and analyze the results.

1.8 Operational definition of key terminologies

There are different basic concepts and terminologies in this research;

1.8.1 Spirituality

In this study, spirituality is bounded in a religious context and it is a personal relationship with ultimate power in the pursuit of meaning and peace in life.

1.8.2 Religious involvement

In this study religious involvement is described as the ritual one would do as a conviction it could be prayer, attend regular services, being part of different ministries in the institution,

religious readings, and talk about faith, personal relationship with the ultimate power and fellow believers within the institution or where ever it is convenient.

1.8.3 Youth

In the context of this study, youth are individuals with the age group of eighteen to thirty-five.

1.8.4 Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development is defined in this study using Lerner's 5Cs/6Cs model. (character, confidence, competence, connection, and caring) which is a framework for PYD that outlines five psychological, behavioral, and social characteristics that indicate youth are flourishing, and when a high level of the Five Cs develops, it results in the sixth C(contribution). (Richard M, Lerner, and Jacqueline V., 2013).

1.9 Thesis structure

There are five chapters of the study; the first chapter deals with the introduction, statement of the problem, research question, and objectives of the study, Significance of the study, Scope of the study, limitation, and thesis structure of the study. And the second chapter deals with reviews of literature related to the study, the third chapter reveals research methodology and data collection procedures, methodology, research design, data gathering tools, sample size, and sampling technique, and chapter four deals with data analysis and the result of the study, the final chapter holds conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

2.1.1 Overview of religion and religious involvement

The word *religion* is from the Latin *Religare*, which means "to bind together."A religion organizes the collective spiritual experiences of a group of people into a system of beliefs and practices. *Religious involvement* or *religiosity* refers to the degree of participation in or adherence to the beliefs and practices of organized religion. *Spirituality* is from the Latin *spiritualitas*, which means "breathe" (S Mueller, 2001)."

It is a broader concept than religion and is primarily a dynamic, personal, and experiential process. Spiritual characteristics include search for meaning and purpose, transcendence (i.e., the sense that being human is more than simple physical existence), connectedness (e.g., with others, nature, or the divine), and values (e.g., love, compassion, and justice). Even though some people who regard themselves as spiritual do not endorse a formal religion, religious involvement and spirituality are overlapping concepts (S Mueller, 2001).

Experientially, both may involve a search for meaning and purpose, transcendence, connectedness, and values. In this light, religious involvement is similar to spirituality and it may also have communal or group expression; when this expression is formalized, spirituality is more like organized religion (S Mueller, 2001). Perhaps the first clarification that should be made is the distinction between spirituality and religion.

2.1.2 Spirituality

The state of being with spirit is the literal meaning of spirituality. The English word spirit has come from the Latin word spiritus, meaning breath or that which gives life to a system. But it also means soul, courage, and inner strength.

Spirituality can also refer to an ultimate or immaterial reality that is believed to exist beyond the material and that we cannot directly experience with our physical senses, but can be experienced through spiritual practices such as the repetition of the divine name. Meditation, prayer, and thoughtful reading of spiritual literature, charity, generosity, and selfless service to others are all examples of devotional singing, such practices are believed to enable a person to

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experience the spiritual reality and discover the essence of their being or the deepest value and meaning of his or her life (Ulluwishewa, 2014).

Spirituality, as an aspect of humanity, refers to how people seek meaning and purpose in their lives, as well as how they feel connected to the moment, to themselves, to others, to nature, and the significant or sacred (Puchalski, 2011).

All God-centered religions accept that the spirit, or God, is the perfect being, possessing higher qualities such as love, compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, empathy, understanding, and wisdom and that God has created humans in his/her image. These higher qualities, which represent the perfection within each human being, are often associated with the soul/spirit. In some of these religions, for example, mainstream Christianity and Islam, followers perceive God as an entity apart from the material world and dwelling in a mystic space, or heaven (Ulluwishewa, 2014).

As a result, spirituality involving a pursuit for meaning in life entails both being (realizing ourselves; our true nature) and a journey towards becoming one with the supreme, from this point of view, spirituality provides a very practical approach to living one's life; because it first enables an individual to identify his or her true nature and then guides how one can live his or her life following that innate self As a result, it empowers those who are 'conscious' to live in service of the greater good (Giri, 2019). The author continues to discuss that spirituality holds that, while we can seek happiness in the material world, it cannot be physically grasped or held onto. As a result, acquiring material wealth does not guarantee our happiness; we require material wealth only to meet our survival needs not to be happy.

According to the spiritual point of view, happiness is inherent within each human being. We can experience it when we grow spiritually. What is valued in spirituality are not the qualities of the mind which contribute to generating material wealth but the qualities that contribute to spiritual growth, qualities like loving relationships with others as well as with the environment, selflessness, non-greediness, practicing ceiling of desires, sharing, cooperation, forgiveness, non-violence, and activities which aim to serve others without expecting anything in return (Giri, 2019).

2.1.3 Positive Youth Development (PYD)

All youth have strength, and their families, school, faith institutions, and communities have resources that, when aligned with these strengths can promote more positive development among young people, while the term "PYD" has been used in a variety of contexts and ways, there are some similarities between the various models these include a focus on young people's strengths; developmental plasticity; internal developmental assets (such as psychosocial competence) and external developmental assets (such as community influence) (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019).

2.1.4Lerner's 5cs and 6cs models of Positive Youth Development (PYD)

Lerner and his colleagues proposed 5Cs as five important indicators of PYD based on an ecological perspective that stood for competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring/compassion were proposed by Lerner and his colleagues as five important indicators of positive youth development (PYD); competence includes educational, cognitive, professional and social competences, educational competence is reflected by school grades, school attendance and test scores, cognitive competence indicates cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, logical thinking and decision-making, professional competence is indicated by work habits and the ability to discover different occupation choices and social competence points to interpersonal abilities such as the ability of conflict resolution (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019).

The individual's view of his/her global positive value and capacities is referred to as the second C (confidence), the third C (connection) indicates an individual's positive relationships with other people and organizations such as the interactions between the individual and the social environment, and the fourth C (character) signifies internal value standards, integrity, and morality for right behaviors and respect for social and cultural regulations, the fifth C (caring/compassion) refers to the ability to empathize and sympathize for others. Furthermore, Lerner and his colleagues showed that these five Cs would help shape the sixth C, contribution, when these 5Cs exist in a young person (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019).

As these models become more popular with individuals working to enhance the positive growth of young people in homes, schools, and youth-serving organizations, these models must be empirically valid, can be widely applied, and include constructs that are specific and measurable (Edmond P Bowers, 2010).

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2.2 Theoretical Literature

2.2.1 Religion

A theory was postulated by the prominent psychologist Erik Erikson (1968) he suggested that youth are attracted to religion and different philosophies because it helps them to make sense about life in general and for existential questions. The other thing is these organizations help them understand individual and societal history which enter give them a sense of identity. The last and the main social advantage it provides is an intergenerational community that offers a sense of belongingness (Adams & Marshall, 1996).

According to Freud's psychoanalytic viewpoint, religion is the unconscious mind's need for wish fulfilment. Freud believed that people choose to believe in God, who represents a powerful father figure because they need to feel secure and absolve themselves of their own guilt (Kendra Cherry, 2020).

2.2.2 Spirituality

According to some theoretical accounts, spirituality is a predictor of life satisfaction (Daniel T. L. Shek, 2012). Spirituality, according to some theories, is a component of quality of life, meaning, purpose, growth, and self-actualization are basic components of well-being in the psychological well-being model, and psychological well-being includes self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relationships with others, life purpose, personal growth, and autonomy.

According to Frankl's logotherapy theory, when there is an existential vacuum (i.e., a loss of meaning in life), mental problems enter to fill the void. Frankl's understanding of human nature is founded on the premise of "will to meaning". When a person fails to find meaning in life and there is a state of a perceived meaning in personal existence (i.e., existential vacuum), he or she is confronted with "existential frustration," which is characterized by a sense of boredom (Daniel T. L. Shek, 2012).

Although existential vacuum does not always result in neogenic neuroses, it has been proposed that existential vacuum is an etiological factor of psychopathology, and based on the preceding logic, it could be assumed that life purpose is causally related to youth developmental outcomes (Daniel T. L. Shek, 2012).

2.2.3Positive youth development

Erikson's theory laid the groundwork for subsequent research on the ego, identity development, and intervention models. Since then, identity studies have expanded to include a consideration of individual deference; the search for, discovery, and utilization of innate potentials; critical problem-solving skills; social responsibility; character integrity; and the impact of social and cultural contexts on the formation and development of identity (Sandra K. M. Tsang, 2012).

2.3Empirical literature

Researchers have been doing researches to determine the impact of spirituality and religious involvement and a contributor to the positive development of youth. These research have been done on youths age ranging from the adolescents to young adults, on youth from different ethnicity and different economic background the result tends to be similar even though there are different variables involved and the literature incline to the finding that spirituality and religious involvement has contributed to the positive development of the youths.

In a research conducted by Markstrom(1999) on adolescent religious involvement and adolescent psychosocial development the religious involvement was classified into three main groups which are attending bible study, youth group involvement, and religious attendance. The scale that was used to determined psychosocial maturity was a psychosocial inventory of ego strength. The result of this research was that those who frequently attend church and go to youth groups and bible study showed a high level of hope, love, care, and purpose which are the subscales of the peace. (Marktsrom, 1999)

Other research that was done to see the relationship between religion and positive youth development regarding identity, meaning, and pro-social concern (James L, 2004) was done on 801 public high school students in the Los Angeles area. The students' age ranged from 13 to 21 years of age female students were 52% of the respondents. The majority of the students identify with Roman Catholic (57%) and protestant (22.5%) the remaining identified as traditional 9.8% and no religious affiliation 10.8. the finding of the research suggests that individuals involved in religious activity have a higher sense of identity, meaning that dictates their life which shapes their pro-social concern. This research also found that religious centrality and engagement were attributed to altruism and empathy, and structural equation models confirmed that social capital

resources influenced the influences of religion on these moral behaviors. (furrow, king, & white, 2004)

Different researches have also shown that youth involved in religious organization and spirituality have a sense of purpose in life which lead them to have excellence in the careers and educational settings they are involved in a research done by min lee and colleagues (2007) longitudinal research studying high school students who were religiously involved it was indicated that they tend to finish their college education and get their degree. (Min lee, Pulg, & Dlark, 2007).

To see if things are similar throughout the diversity of geographical, cultural, and gender diversities a group of researchers took a sample of 30 youth age ranging from 12 to 21, gender 17 boys and 13 girls, and religion diversity stretching from atheist to mixed religion. The geographical variation taken was six from India, two from Jordan, six from the United States, United Kingdom, and Kenya. The information was gathered through interviews and the result that was obtained was religious involvement has a significant role in the life of youth in determining the character and different psychological constructs. (King, Clardy, & Ramos, 2013)

2.3.1 Association of religious involvement and spirituality with some sense of well-being

Studies have shown that religious involvement is associated with health-promoting behaviors such as more exercise, proper nutrition, smoking cessation, and greater use of preventive services. Religious involvement is associated with less anxiety and depression and less likely to use or abuse alcohol and other drugs. A review of 20 studies published before 1976 discovered that religious involvement was associated with less substance abuse, regardless of whether the study was prospective or retrospective, and whether the measure of religious involvement was membership, active participation, religious upbringing, or self-reported religious salience. More recent studies have yielded similar results (S Mueller, 2001).

A recent review concluded that there is strong evidence that religious or spiritual involvement is associated with a lower risk of substance abuse, people with addictions are more likely to report a lack of religious affiliation and involvement, and spiritually focused interventions (i.e., focused on meaning and purpose, not necessarily on specific religious beliefs) and practices (e.g., prayer)

may facilitate recovery. In 1897, researchers discovered an inverse relationship between religious involvement and suicide. Several studies have since confirmed this inverse relationship (S Mueller, 2001).

 Researchers theorized that young people whose lives incorporated these Five Cs would be on a developmental path that results in the development of a Sixth C: Contributions to self, family, community, and the institutions of civil society. In addition, those young people whose lives contained lower amounts of the Five Cs would be at higher risk for a developmental path that included personal, social, and behavioral problems and risks (Lerner, 2004).

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Data types and data source

A qualitative study was used in this study to ensure those study findings are grounded in participants' experiences. A qualitative approach was used to collect data with data collection instruments of observation and interview which helps the researcher to have direct observation and collecting and analyzing non- numbering data to understand opinions and/ or experiences insight into the problem. As for the researcher, this study was well approached using the qualitative data, not to miss subtleties, and to acquire an understanding of underline motives, opinions, and experiences of respondents by digging deeper.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted at Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church which is located in the kirikos sub-city around sarbet and it has been formed as a protestant organization since 1993E.C and serving people as a religious institution.

The researcher selected the site because it has a vast experience on youth service for almost the past 20 years with a great reward of positive life testimonies and positive development from the youths themselves, parents and different professional that has been part of the services delivered.

And the church has been effective in youth ministry for the last 20 years believing that serving youths is creating a positive future generation and has been continuing the ministry till today.

Even after this critical time of COVID 19, the church continues to follow, guide, teach and inspire youths through different mechanisms, the church has 418 youth members (254 females and 164 males) among them counted 250 are active participants of Zetseat youth ministry which is named as Youth Movement for Transformed Nation(YM4TN) which is under Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church and the rest 150 are youths who are not active participants of the youth ministry but most of them(most of the 150) has passed through the youth ministry at their early age of youth.

So the very most reasons that made the researcher conduct the study in this area is that the continuity of the youth ministry for 20 years and the fact that the church has permanent members who attained regular programs helped to address the right research question.

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3.3 Research Design

A research design is a comprehensive plan for collecting data in an empirical study. (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

The local church-based exploratory study design was conducted to assess the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development in the study area. An exploratory study, thus, would be applied when there is little or no knowledge regarding a given situation. It is advisable to conduct an exploratory study before applying descriptive or analytical studies when the problem and factors contributing to are not well defined (Creswell, 2007). To the best knowledge of the researcher, no studies have been conducted in ZARC on the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality in positive youth development.

3.4 Population or Universe

The study populations are youths aged eighteen to thirty-five who attend programs at Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church regularly. According to the church's technology department, there are 418 of them, and those counted 250 are under the youth ministry (which means they come to the regular services of the youth ministry and they also attain regular programs of the church) the remaining 150 are members of the church and attain regular programs but not under the youth ministry currently however most of them used to be part of youth ministry in their early age of youth. Over all the study populations are   Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Youth aged eighteen to thirty-five.

3.5 Sampling method and sampling technique

The study used non – probability sampling method specifically purposive or deliberate sampling technique which was best to enable the researcher to answer the research questions. Making the center of attention on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest was the main goal of purposive sampling, and in this study, the researcher chooses members of the population to participate in based on the researcher's judgment.   All participants of the study were selected because they fit a particular profile and in this study, these eligible participants are youths with the age range of eighteen to thirty-five and members of the church.

Though there are different circumstances to define the youth age group for example according to the World Health Organization (WHO), youth refer to people aged between 15 and 24, and

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according to the African Youth Charter, youth is defined as those individuals aged between 15-35 (AU, 2006) .In this research by considering some ethical considerations of age and to engage and get more reliable information from those who have more life experience in their religious involvement and spirituality the study used youths with an age group of eighteen to thirty-five.

Sampling size

The sample sizes were fifteen youth from the church and three church leaders who are engaged in youth ministry and different other services. The sample size has been determined by the achievement of data saturation which has been reached on the eighth participant already.

Inclusion criteria

- ➢ Those individuals aged eighteen to thirty-five.
- ➢ Youths who are members of the church.
- ➢ Youths who attain every program of youth ministry and
- ➢ Youths attain every service of the church's program.
- ➢ Church leaders who are engaged in youth ministry currently.
- ➢ Individuals who were willing to participate in this study.
- ➢ Individuals who were available during the study period.

Excluding criteria

- ➢ Non –respondents and the refusing participants.
- ➢ Church members who are not in the youth age group.
- ➢ Those youths who are not members of the church and founds to be coming to the church once in a while.

3.6 Data Collection Tools / Instruments

The three major data collection tools in qualitative research are interviews, observations, and document reviews and the most typical form of interview is a personal or face-to-face interview, where the interviewer works directly with the respondent to ask questions and record their responses (Bhattacherjee, 2012) this study used to interview and observation data collection tools.

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3.6.1 Interview

During the interview in-depth interview with participants and church leaders was employed in a face-to-face manner to get detailed information. The interview guides were prepared per the issues raised in the specific objectives, research questions, and literature review, after reviewing previous literature, the interview guides were written with open-ended questions in the hopes that participants would freely share their thoughts, behaviors, and experiences on the topic at hand and during the interview, the researcher used some effective interview techniques like, appropriate body language and avoiding leading questions.

The focus areas of the interview were based on the 5Cs and 6Cs model of Lerner which is mostly used in positive youth development of strength-based development and participants have questioned questions regarding the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality on the positive development of their character, confidence, connection, competence, caring and contribution separately with a detailed explanation from participants on each social, behavioral and psychological characteristics and further detections by the researcher.

And another question was provided to the leaders regarding their services on the youth ministry and the questions still relayed on the 5Cs and 6Cs model to explore the service provided to the youths. The researcher gathered relevant and subject-targeted information from participants and leaders through the deep interview and observing their physiological and emotional reactions.

During the interviews, Amharic was used as a medium of communication to ensure that the researcher and the participants had a clear understanding. The majority of the interviews were conducted in a quiet setting, such as an office, to capture all of the participants' attention and provide adequate information. Furthermore, the interviews with the participants took an average of 45 to 60 minutes. Furthermore, the interviews with the church leaders lasted 50 minutes on average.

3.6.2 Observation

It is a way of collecting data through observing. The researcher observes participants' ongoing behavior in a natural situation. And researcher observes services delivered at the church on a

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regular program for two consecutive Saturdays, the fellowship and refreshments youths have after the program, the researcher also observed small group programs held at different rooms inside the church compound for the new members.

3.7 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis techniques were used in this study after listening to the recordings several times, the interviews were transcribed (the process of producing a written version of an interview) into Amharic and verbatim (word for word) translated back to English. The transcriptions and translations were then carefully reread, line by line and repeatedly, to carry out the coding process that the researcher deemed important. Later, the quest for themes is carried out by combining previously coded similar data. Any themes with insufficient data support were eliminated.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the research

The validity of the research is directly related to the accuracy of the measurement used to measure the variable intended to be studied, triangulation of data collection techniques(which entails the use of different methods like, in-depth interviews, theories, and observations), and the participation of different types of respondents, namely youths and church leaders, the advisor's approval of the data collection tools, the researcher's commitment to empirical research, which allows the research to rely solely on the actual life of the research participant, and adhering to the research's scientific and ethical standards all contributed to the study's validity.

  Because this research is qualitative and the data collection tool used for the research was face to face interview based on the topic guide developed by the researcher to ensure the exactitude of the tool was evaluated by conducting two pilot interviews(on youths in the church who are not included in the actual interview of the fifteen participants) before the start of the data collection during this time the interview/ the researcher was trying to judge the ability of the questions to address the variables in question If participants were able to comprehend the idea the researcher was talking about and was able to answer line with it. During the observation, it was seen that the participants of the pilot were able to understand and answer, so the researcher proceeded with it.

3.9Ethical Considerations

The most important aspect of research is ethical consideration; ethical approval was obtained from the church, research participants should not be harmed in any way. Before participating in the study, the researcher obtained full consent from the participants and participated voluntarily since it has been cleared to participants how the information they are providing is relevant to the study's objectives. Participants were also told that they could stop the interview if they felt uncomfortable, and the researcher was in charge of protecting their identities and it was made certain that no information about the participants could be traced back to them and the personal information they provide will not be disclosed to the third person.

4, CHAPTER FOUR

4. 1 Data Presentations Analysis and Interpretations

The chapter presents the major findings on the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive development among youths in Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church. The primary sources of data were in-depth interviews and observation it consisted of 15 purposively selected youths and three currently active leaders. Findings are presented with six main sub-sections: I) Socio-demographic data of research participants, II) Assessment on the understanding and reasons of youths' spirituality, III) Service delivered to the youths by the church, Iv) Assessment of the Contribution of religious involvement and spirituality on social, behavioral and psychological characteristics regarding the 5Cs/6Cs, IV) the discussion of the findings.

Table4.1, socio-demographic data of research participants,

Participants	Sex	Age	(Student/employed.....)current status	Educational background
Youth	F	29	Freelancer	Bachelor of degree
Youth2	F	29	Employed	Masters degree
Youth3	F	18	Student	Still in high school
Youth4	M	30	Self-employed	Bachelor of degree
Youth5	M	31	Self-employed	Bachelor of degree
Youth6	F	19	Student	A student in campus
Youth7	M	30	Student	A student on campus
Youth8	M	22	Student/and part-time employed	A student on campus

Youth9	M	19	Student	A student on campus
Youth10	M	29	Employed	Bachelor of degree
Youth11	F	19	Student	A student in Campus
Youth12	M	23	Employed	Bachelor of degree
Youth13	F	18	Student	Post-secondary school diploma
Youth14	F	26	Student/and part-time employed	Bachelor of degree/and a student for another degree
Youth15	M	33	Self-employed	Bachelor of degree
Leader 1	M	25	Employed at the church	Graduating student on campus
Leader2	M	44	Employed at the church	Diploma
Leader 3	F	38	Employed at the church	Bachelor of degree

Table 4.1 presents that 15 youth participants and 3 leaders of the church, sex of participants which tells that eight of them are males and seven of them are females, and there are two males and one female of the church leader, and the table also tells that gender balance was treated well in the research. It also percents the age of youth participants which tells that all of them are within the age range of 18-35and the age of the leaders is also presented. The current work status of participants and church leaders with their educational backgrounds is also presented. As it could be seen in the table most of the participants have a good accomplishment of their education and work.

4.2 Service provided to youths by the church

The church leaders were questioned about the center of the church's ministry regarding youths, and as the leaders answered that their focus of the area of service is bringing personal transformation into being responsible, effective, and positively influential in life, a person who knows his purpose in life and knows his relevance among one's family and community.

And as they have mentioned they have regular programs as a platform to serve the youths and these programs Saturday special programs which hold worship, fellowship time among youths, teachings, and live testimony. And most of the teachings in this service focus on how and why Christian youths should have positive character according to the word of God, how they should not be part of the misery, and how they become effective in every aspect of their life by considering that everything they do is for the glory of God and as children of God. one of the leaders reported how the church is working delicately to enhance the competency of youths as follow;

"*We have annual youth event focusing on the seven spheres of influence which are **family**, **art** and **entertainment**, **business**, **politics** and **government, Music**, **education** and **religion** and facilitate a training by different professionals to support youths to find and know their destiny and to initiate them do whatever is necessary to be successful and effective in every sector they are or they will be*".(Leader1)

There is also a platform that helps to access small groups and to follow them which is called a generation unit. This small group is where the church leaders teach the basic concepts of Christianity from the bible.

There is also a membership class and discipleship class which consists of newcomer youths from other local churches and other religions, and in these classes is where youths get teaching about the purpose and goal of life, their identity from the spiritual perspective, and their relevance in life. Using these three classes is how they know how much are their permanent members our permanent members are And as the leaders strongly mentioned here is where they teach about the character which has a manifestation in every aspect of life. One of the leaders has expressed it as follow

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"We strongly teach our youth about how personal traits matter to God, to ourselves, our family and community, because being spiritual is a life to live and to show by being a model to others".(leader3)

As the researcher observed the membership classes are held at the comers of the big auditorium on Sunday morning, as it is observed 4 groups take membership classes at a moment, and this led the teachers at the membership class to slow down their voices not to destruct one another. Of course, there are many classes in the church but because of so many programs held on Sunday morning, all the classes are occupied. And the researcher observed that there are structured offices outside the local church for the youth leaders which is a bit far from which they do their regular tasks.

According to the leaders' description, all they have to provide for them is the word of God, prayer, spending time with them a possible as they can till the youths get rid of their previous bad surroundings, they provide life skill training (how to be a good boy/girl to a family which includes helping one's family in housework), how two-act within friends, community, at school, workplace because according to Christian teachings spirituality has a practical expression in daily lives, it could be measured with how one treats others, how one lives with others in peaceful and respectful manners.

The leaders also mentioned that they have pieces of training to provide for the youths every six months on sexual purities according to the word of God (about abstaining from sexual intercourse before marriage,) and inner healing focusing on getting out of youths from their past experiences and bad memories. And their researcher has observed an advertisement made on the regular youth program.

The leaders gave their explanation on the caring outcome of religious involvement and spirituality and they were questioned if they have a teaching or a means regarding caring attitudes and they stated that there is a teaching of creating a caring attitude and experience to be met for the needy and whoever needs one's help since this is a satisfying thing to do, and they are showing a practical positive outcome, there is a ministry team called **my home** within the youths who helps the poor through items, money, and food. And youths in the ministry have

supported four students to accomplish their education in college last year. One of the church leaders stated the concept of caring and some of the church's experience as follows;

"caring is the life we shared with God; our God is caring if it was not for him we won't be here right now he shared our life, he is just and he pleased with making justice, so we teach the youths that since they received life and everything they have from God, they need to share to the needy, so that their spirituality become practical, because such activities make life satisfying, meaningful and purposeful".(Leader 2)

4.3 Respondents understanding of youths' positive development

Participants describe what they understand as a positive development and tried to elaborate it in their terms and the researcher raised this question to perceive how the participants understand the concept of positive youth development and how their answer is related to the research's framework of PYD which(their understanding) helps to grasp the related questions developed by the researcher on PYD regarding 5Cs/6Cs.

From what the researcher perceived from the participants' understanding most of them consider positive development as a holistic development that includes social, economic, psychological, and other developments for positive outcomes on one's personal life, social life, family life, the community, and the country. Here are some understandings and definitions of participants on positive development;

"Any change in character or any attribute that is beneficiary to others is what I consider as a positive development, for example, while I became in a change of good character, like being patient, loving, caring, responsible, courageous, and honest I am benefiting, people around me, my friends, families and the society I live in ".(par 8)

" Development is growth. We say someone is grown up or matured because he can take responsibility for his life. So financial development is not having money but the ability to take care of finance...social development for someone is when he can interact with society(which is social responsibility). The positive development is accomplishing responsibility in every aspect of life".(Par 4)

The assumption and understanding of the church leaders on positive youth development were quite similar which emphasize a holistic growth that has a contribution on one's life, family life, and social life .and as they tried to explain it has a manifestation in life that it could be seen in our social life with others, the character we have not just in the church environment because everyone is calm in the church but within our family, our school, work for place and community.

"I believe Positive development means a holistic growth that occurs in individuals, families, cities, or nations for the good. The WHO even defines health as holistic well-being, which is physical psychological, and spiritual wellness, so when one says positive development it is a complete development that starts from personal development to make one's self better than yesterday into becoming more capable and more fruitfulness".(Leader 1)

So, most respondents described positive youth development as a holistic growth that starts from self-using one's potential and desire to the fullest for the benefit of others, it also is securing one's health it could be physical and psychological health. Positive youth development starts from understanding what one wants to peruse in life and to achieve that it might need securing a future career, planning to be functional and fruitful in the future aspects of a person, family(marriage life), and social life and to do this one has to have a standard which defines a positive development and as for the respondents these standard are available in the word of God and accomplishing them is positive youth development.

4.4 Knowledge and reasons towards spirituality

Regarding spirituality, participants gave their definitions from what they understand of its meaning and the reason they became spiritual, and most participants define spirituality as a relationship with God. Most participants stated spirituality as a personal relationship with the ultimate power/supernatural/God to be connected with and to find assistance, guidance, and purpose in life.

"Spirituality is being connected to God; it is a relationship with him, I wanted to understand more in life and the true essence of life that is why I became spiritual".(par9)

" I could say that spirituality has become a mirror through which I see everything and do everything! To put it in one sentence it is a relationship with my Creator, and that was what I wanted when I became spiritual".(Par11)

Some participants stated spirituality as a significant aspect of life in which one lives with the help of the supernatural world.

"Spiritually for me is one aspect of life that has significance in our daily life activities. I Believe that is an intangible aspect of life that has more power than the physical realm because all seen things come from the unseen/supernatural world".(par8)

" Spirituality is to live like a person who is assisted by the supernatural world" .(Par1)

The leaders also answered what they understand about spirituality that it is a life to live according to the spiritual realm through the relationship with God. And this relationship is through different means of spiritual activities which can help to be connected with the spiritual realm and the ultimate power. Leader1precented his idea as follow;

"There is the unseen world which is called the spiritual one, and everything that is seen comes from the unseen world, so spirituality is living according to the spiritual realm which can be understood through communion with God, it could be through the word of God or prayer".(Leader 1)

"Spirituality is deep and it is life, not just an activity which I live it only at church, but it is a life that comes out from the relationship I have with God that can be lived according to the spiritual realm".(Leader 3)

So, according to the respondents Spirituality is a life that is led by the spiritual principles by the relationship one has with the supernatural power through religious activities which are prayer, reading the word of God, and other activities and most of the youths stated that a search for meaning, purpose and being with the supernatural has led them into being spiritual.

Since most participants emphasized stating spirituality as a relationship with the ultimate power to find purpose in life, the researcher questioned them if they found their purpose and goal in life Participants were also asked if they have come to know the purpose and goal of their existence

and most of them have reported that they come to know their purpose in life that most of them said that they didn't even give attention to the concept purpose in life before but now.

As the participants mentioned once they got the idea of they are created by the purpose for a reason they started searching for what it is and most respondents said that they know it already and some said that they have known that there is a purpose in their life but are trying to catch it in hand. One of the participants presented her point as follow;

"Now I believe my existence should add some value to my country, but as I have mentioned earlier I didn't even know what a purpose is before I was spiritual". (par 2)

Participants were questioned that if life is exciting enough for them and most participants answered that it is but not because all thing is secured or because they are reach or something but because their peace and happiness have been grounded by the superpower, as they explained things in this world special the current situation has no contribution of excitement but as a person who is led by the spiritual realm everything makes sense and invites for the adventure in life. And since life has become a life to live with hope and under the control of the supernatural, it is more exciting.

"For me, life is exciting because when you have hope of a better life every day the excitement never leaves".(Par3)

"life is full of adventure the more I live and find new experience the more I want to see and encounter the life I will live in future so it excites me".(Par5)

"No words to describe it more than exciting I have to say. Jesus gave me life and life in abundance he felt every hole in my heart he gave me joy, love, peace, rest, wisdom through Holy Spirit something that money or wealth could never buy".(Par6)

4.5 Religious involvement and rate of church attendance

This result was obtained from 18 participants 11 participants tell that they are religiously involved for more than five years, 3 participants have been religiously involved for 4-5 years now and only one participant has been religiously involved only for one year.

Among the participants, three of them were leaders in the church. And almost all participants except the leaders attained a church minimum of 2 days a week and the leaders spend almost 4-6 days at church.

Of all the rituals the research puts as a religious involvement (fellowship with fellow believers watching religious media (YouTube, television channels, etc...), Prayer, attending regular programs, reading the bible, and religious books as a religious involvement). Most participants (13) reported that attaining regular programs, reading the bible, prayer, and fellowship with fellow Christians is what they do the most and two participants reported that attaining regular programs and prayer is what they do the most.

4.6, What does religious involvement and spirituality has to contribute to social, behavioral, and psychological characteristics regarding the 5Cs/6Cs?

An in-depth interview was conducted with respondents to determine the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality regarding the 5Cs/6Cs model, which are character, confidence, connection, competence, and caring, and how these characteristics have been positively developed with an impact of religious involvement and spirituality for the outcome of contribution.

4.6.1 Character

Participants were questioned about their past and percent personal character and if being religiously involved and spiritual has donated something for the positive outcome regarding their character and participants reported that religious involvement and spirituality has contributed to their sense of moral and integrity and that it gives them a respectful attitude towards other societal and cultural norms and led them control of standards for correct behavior.

Most participants described enormous positive changes regarding their character which results from religious involvement and spirituality and they acknowledged it with passion and excitement by trying to compare their life before and their current traits. Interviewee 4 and 8 express their views as follow respectively;

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"I used to be very careless before I knew GOD and now, with the help of GOD, am on the road of responsibility and I am showing an improvement because of my religious involvement and spirituality". (par4)

"Being religious and spiritual has affected my character for good, for example, I used to be very hateful but now I have a loving heart and I became patient, less envious, I used to be arrogant but I am improved a lot ".(par8)

And participants also explained that their positive change regarding their character has been recognized by their surroundings in their daily life and this is a confirmation for them that they are on the right track.

" I was selfish, very vengeful, I get angry a lot, and I was a hothead with pride to my nose. I used to drink, smoke. I never kept my word, I was an irresponsible individual, a terrible brother, son, and friend but now I am a different person I don't do any of those things rather I became a person who shares what I have I am a forgiving person, much more responsible and my family are wondering what has got into me to be such a good boy".(Par11)

"I was a very negative thinking person and I was sexually immoral due to my addiction to pornography and I was a very terrible boy to my family since I have a miserable feeling after watching pornography I spit out my waves of anger on my family, but now I am not that person anymore my family even are so much surprised by the personality I have developed". (Part 6)

So, according to the study spirituality has a significant role in changing youths' character so much that it could be noticed by the youths themselves, their families, and their surroundings and while explaining this almost all participants were showing their excitement talking about their current character while feeling very distressful remembering how they used to be annoying to their surroundings.

participants were also questioned if they consider themselves as a responsible person and if they have a sense of independence since being responsible and sense of independence is the key concept of character, and most participants (13 participants) reacted that they are responsible with giving some explanations;

" Yes, I am responsible to God, to my family, to the society and the country as a whole and I can measure this through the commitment I show for my rituals at church and as a spiritual person, to the care and love I show to my husband and two kids and I respect the rules and regulation of my country".(Par1)

" Yes, always I try my best to be honest, being fair and accountable for everything that I do"(Par2)

" Yes I do. Since responsibility is growth, I believe I have grown significantly in terms of responsibility and yet pressing forward to attain maximum responsible nature."(Par4)

" Yes, When tasks are delegated to me, I always try my best to do them well".(Par8)

As the study found out from the participants most participants consider themselves as responsible people to their families, educational rules, their jobs, their community, and their country by mentioning to whom and how they are responsible and this implies that most of the participants of this research consider themselves responsible enough. The leaders also reported how religious involvement and spirituality contribute to a positive transformation of character in the youth's life and all the leaders explained that working on the youth's character is one of the focal points that they work on their ministry. And they described that they usually do this by teaching the youths Christianity doctrine which grounds the bible.

Two participants reported a bit different answers from other participants that they are not mastered being responsible yet but trying to be one.

"Not perfectly, but from a time now, but I am trying my best to be a responsible person on things that required my attention and full potential ". (Par6)

"I couldn't say hundred percent, yes, but I always try to become one, every day I mindfully try to do tasks that I need to, and also I try to keep my word". (Par12)

Some participants couldn't dare to say that they are responsible enough for everything they have to accomplish, but they considered themselves as being on the right track to get into the perfect state of responsibility in all aspects of their lives.

Generally, according to most respondents mentioned that religious involvement and spirituality matters on creating a positive character in their life and according to the youth and the church leaders, this positive effect regarding character has been proven by the practical change in the youths' life and by the testimony of the youths' family. The church leader even mentioned that they have witnessed youths changed towards truthfulness, honesty, respectfulness, and love, and being responsible.

"I have witnessed so many youths coming here with sexual immorality, addiction, being irresponsible who were terrible to their family, but now let alone leaving those bad traits, but they became, counselors of youths with a bad habit, leaders, and professionals with a very rewarding feedbacks from their families, friends, and co-workers".(Leader1)

" A lot of families brings their children and ask as to teach and guide their children because of different personal negative traits their children developed, to give you an example there was this boy who has been taking drugs for several years and to get money for his addiction he stole money and different items from his parents but after he became religiously involved, though it took him some effort and time to get rid of the addiction he is now drug addiction free man and he is having a good relationship with his family and friends".(Leader 3)

So as of all respondents being religious and spiritual changes the trait of youth for good since they are convicted by the word of God which has everything they need to become a better person, shape up a character, it will make students obedient, to respect school rules, professionals to be faithful to the position they are into the people they serve, and families in marriage to have a respectful, loving and caring environment at their home and accountable and loving parents for their children, generally they conclude that spirituality is the guidance and a manual of a spiritual person to lead a life accordingly and it has a contribution in life.

4.6.2 Confidence

And regarding their confidence participants from the youths were asked if religious involvement and spirituality has contributed to their belief in self-worth and the belief they have in their capacity and they were also questioned if they think they are an asset for their family, community, and country and to explain from their past and current (after being religiously involved and being spiritual) belief, attitude and experience.

All participants reported that their religious involvement and spirituality have contributed to a sense of self-worth and their belief in their capability. And except participant 11 all reported that they weren't much to think as if they are worthy of anything before they were religiously involved and spiritual.

According to participants' report, religious involvement and spirituality have transformed them into a belief, attitude, and practice of self-worth and most of them made it sure that they used to think that they are ordinary person, who doesn't even know the purpose and goal of his/her existence, but now they gained a piece of knowledge and a deep understanding on how important they are to their surroundings since they are created by the ultimate power, with his image, with purpose and to make a difference, and they have clearly stated that they are interpreting this knowledge and understanding in their daily life of within their family, school, workplace, and their community.

" Yes I do believe that way. I used to think that I could be of any help to my surroundings. But now that I know that I have a purpose and that I am sent I know that I am someone that could make a significant difference and being religiously involved and spiritual has helped me to be confident".(Par1)

"Yes Of course, well in my past I was more of a dependent person and I always brought trouble at home my mind was in a dark state but now I see whole new possibilities in my life and I see myself bringing a solution to my family, community, country, and even the world I have even seen good fruits and accomplishments in my life that made me an impactful person".(Par 6)

According to the study's findings, most of the respondents used to think as if they are ordinary people who didn't care about anything or anyone, and this sense of feeling made them a burden as some mentioned, incapable of making any good but after starting this journey as a spiritual person, they stated that they found their purpose in life and some participants said that they started to become solutions to their families.

The church leaders also reported that being religiously involved and being spiritual build the sense of self-worth and one's relevance.

"Spirituality can answer the question about the relevance of one's existence. And once one understands his/her relevance it will push one forward to be positive energy for the outer world. We have a teaching session for every member of our church when they are new which is called **'what is to live'** *and it holds everything one needs to identify one's self, his/her relevance and the purpose of life and many youths have come in to change of attitudes and beliefs about themselves ".*(Leader 2)

Teaching the youths the purpose and goal of life according to the bible is one of their most target areas to overcome a transformed youth who knows who he/she is, what the purpose of living is, why he/she is important, and how he/she become a solution and they do this by giving regular teachings on their true identity, purpose in life and how to achieve it according to the bible and training on the subject matter and individual counseling for the youth who are going through some personal problems(depression, conflict with families, substance youth).

According to most respondents, a person will advocate what he/she hears out; everyone built one's confidence based on what he/she has been told who he/she is. And if people chose to believe what spirituality told them who they are, they will never be the same again because the word of God teaches that every being came to this world with purpose. Spirituality creates the essence of living and this leads one to live a life not for him/her self but also for others, not to be a victim but a solution. And one participant stated a bit different answer as follow;

"Though spirituality has topped up my confidence, my family also contributed for me to be a confident person. They raised me to be a man with a feeling of self-worth ".(Part 14)

And from the participant's report, it is understood that family also has its contribution to one's state of self-worth feeling and deeds.

Participants were questioned if they find the courage to do things they do and believe as it is right and most Participants reported that they find the courage to do things they want and believed as it is right without being afraid of failure or others retribution.

Most participants reported that they believe that they will do whatever it takes if they consider it right without feeling to fail with the understanding that if failure happens now, it doesn't mean it

keeps coming. Their point was that they believed that though things didn't work out today, tomorrow holds something better. Participant 4 presented his answer as follow;

"I have seen myself chasing my dream even when it seems going against many, yes I usually find the courage to do what I feel is right".(par 4)

" The more I know about life the more I focus on what matters. And if opinions are to take me down, I don't think it's worth doing. Par6 "I trained myself that whenever I tried to do things, to do it with the involvement of God and failings doesn't mean not getting up, so making God part of my deeds makes me courageous to take a step. And I check if things that I am about to do needs to be done now and if I am ready enough to handle them". (Par5)

From this finding, it is understood that most participants do whatever it takes for things that they believed is right and as some mentioned the ground for this courage is the faith they have in the superpower whom they think as a perfect guider for them not to fail if they involved him in their life and walk according to his will and most of them also cleared that even if things doesn't work out sometimes as they want it to be, there is always a second chance to make life better.

Two participants reported that they do have the courage to do what they think is right but not always, they don't usually get the courage to do things even though it seems right fearing what others might think.

"I have the courage to what I want and what I feel is right, but not always I sometimes don't get the courage to do what I think is right fearing of what others might think and am not usually a risk-taking person " .(Par11)

" Mostly I do what I want to do and what feels right, but sometimes I feel discouraged thinking of what others might think".(Par3)

So it could be understood from the two participants that they are not always courageous to take any action even if they think it is the right thing to do if it is going to ignite something in someone else's mind.

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Participants also questioned how they would react to any terrible situations facing their life, it could be, illness, family separation, conflict, etc..., most participants said that they mostly focus on a way out, one participant presented his answer as follow;

"Mostly *I tend to seek the solution rather than panicking. For instance, a year and a half ago my daughter fell into hot water. My wife panicked a lot that she couldn't do anything except shouting. When I came, the first thing I did was to take my daughter and give her first aid which I consider as relevant. I think that showed me how much I tend to seek the solution*". (Par4)

" When that sort of situation happens, I always try to calm down and pray unto the living God who hears and responds to me, and whenever I do that God maintains my peace and gives me direction on what to do next. But sometimes I might feel distressed for some moment". (Part 9)

So, as the findings from most participants though terrible situations are not easy that one could welcome it with a smile but with all the bad feelings it has they to find a solution on the thing that is happening.

Participants gave their answers to the question they were asked how they react to any terrible situations facing their life, it could be, illness, family separation, conflict, and most participants share their experience and their attitudes towards such situations by telling that though they might get surprised for bad and got depressed for a moment by the situation but most of them reported that they tried to control their emotion and try to calm down and focus since challenges are part of life.

" When such situations happen, I always try to calm down and pray unto the living God who hears and responds to me. When I do that mostly, the Holy Spirit maintains my peace and gives me direction on what to do next". (Par6)

"Mostly I tend to seek the solution rather than panicking. For instance, a year and a half ago my daughter fell into hot water. My wife panicked a lot that she couldn't do anything except shouting. When I came, the first thing I did was to take my daughter and give her first aid which I consider as relevant. I think that showed me how much I tend to seek the solution". (Par4)

Participants were also questioned that if any challenge that came in their life drew them into maturity or dropped them into social lose and participants has answered that since how they perceived any situation has been changed after they became religiously involved and spiritual, though it has a gaining and a losing attribution if one is a good learner he/she can learn something for tomorrow and will survive the challenging time with full of hope.

"Yes there is! I struggle financially in the first two years of my marriage and it gave me such incredible lesson and maturity on how to handle times of losses". (Par4)

"I was once very sick and it was very hard for me to walk around but during that time when I couldn't go anywhere, I read the Bible and prayed which helped me grow in the relationship I have with God. (Par13)

According to most respondents report if challenges are not to go away for some time longer and harms the emotion or if the thing happening or happened has already a dead end to be changed, they believe that the upper power will give the courage to accept the situation and to deal with it. One of the participants presented his answer as follow;

"Yes, *I lost both my parents, and it was painful but God has helped me to get comfortable and he guided me and taught me how to be responsible soothe challenges I have been through drew me to maturity*". (Par10)

"My parents are divorced and through that all I believe I have learned a life lesson. And I also believe it has been of great help to a bit level of maturity. But while gaining I may also have lost some". (Par3)

As a result, this research has found out that for most of the respondents, the challenges that came in their life drew them into maturity through the challenge has it is own negative effects. They acknowledged the superpower as a guide, assistant, and the one who gives courage and being spiritual by the relationship they have with him has helped them to be beneficiary from his guide and assistance to overcome challenges.

4.6.3 Social connections and interactions

Participants were asked if their religious involvement and spirituality have helped them to be socially interactive and if it has created them a sense of belonging and being loved and they all

reported "*yes*". From what has been found in the study all participants acknowledge that religious involvement and spirituality create a sense of being loved and belongings because it gives a full picture if they tend to social interactions without any back hold not to do so.

Most of them replied the fact that they come in to know that the superpower has made them and love them made them feel they are worth being loved and that they are important and this sense of being loved and belongingness made their social interactive more easy and achievable. One participant stated her idea by giving an example as follow;

"To tell you my experience I used to do different things to make people love me and want to be with me like unnecessary scarification of my time, my money and so many things because deep inside I doubt that if they love me and accepts me, but after I start being religious and spiritual I discovered that God truly loves me that he created me out of love and to be loved with uniqueness and if I am unique I belong everywhere and can be loved by anyone".(par15)

" knowing that God knows me with my name and that he created me with reason and loved me till death that is something that would be the courage to hold on to and live and share life happily with others, so I can say that being spiritual has a lot to contribute for a sense of being loved and belongingness". (Par6)

All participants reported that religious involvement and spirituality have created them a sense of being loved and belongingness because as most of them stated. God is all-powerful yet he loves them, so when they become into knowing of this truth it sent their mind free from the feeling that they are not loved by anyone and that they don't belong anywhere. Some of the youth participants explained that the feeling of being loved and belongingness is related to knowing one's identity, as participant 14 explained it,

"Yes being religiously involved and being spiritual has created me a sense of being loved and belongingness as I already identified my true personality through being spiritual which I now know that I am who God said I am, I am not whom people think I am, I am not whom my community thinks I am, so what spirituality did for me is, it makes me accept my true image to love it to accept it and to develop a sense of being loved and belonging. As a result, it gets me to a good relationship with anyone since I understand that everyone has been made by the ultimate power's image". (par14)

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Since they were enlightened by the knowledge that the ultimate power and love has loved them, they now feel like they could be anywhere to share their love to communicate with people, to have fun with them, and to enjoy their social interaction. The leaders in the church also stated that religion and spirituality creates a sense of identity and they reported that their teaching is based on the scriptures/word of God which can tell more about how God loves the world, how God creates a man with uniqueness, and how God creates every one by purpose. And these teachings create the youths a sense of being loved and accepted.

"Let me share my story I never had to go to weddings with my family back in the days when I was not a religious person because I used to feel that I don't belong somewhere special, I was so shameful but now after I recognize my true identity I have this sense of that I can be loved and belong anywhere I need to be. I also wrote a book with this age of mine about identity". So while we teach we also share our life experience which also impacts the lives of others since it is a life witnessed by the speaker."(Leader 1)

So, from all the respondents reported it is well understood that they all have gained a sense of being loved and belongingness and as most of them mentioned these feeling comes from knowing one's true identity from religious spirituality perspective.

Participants were also questioned about their social interaction focusing outside the local church environment it could be with their friends, family neighbors, co-workers, and their community and if being religiously involved and spiritual has contributed to their positive social interaction.

Except for participants 8and 14, all participants reported that they have a good relationship with people from other religious backgrounds (at home, school, work, neighborhood) mentioning their families, co-workers, friends, neighbors, and this question was approached to explore the extent of their social interaction if they have a good one, which can tell a lot about their connection with others.

Most participants report that they have a positive connection with people from other religious backgrounds who could be family members, friends, co-workers, and neighbors and they mentioned that they tried to maintain a peaceful and respectful relationship with them.

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And they also explained that their religious and spiritual life had a lot to donate for their loving and respectful relationship with others if it wasn't for that they couldn't earn the positive approach with other denominational people in a way that keeps love and peace because it is not difficult to be in day to day interaction with people who have the same faith, attitude, rituals but when one become spiritual it is expected to love and respect a person as it is no matter what the differences.

And because of training in the church which is fellowship with others, most of the participants reported that this fellowship creates a fearless environment to maximize their social interaction.

" I have a good relationship with people, I have friends and business allies outside the local church environment and so far it's great" and indeed my religious involvement and the fact that I am spiritual has contributed a lot".(Par 5)

" My interaction outside Church is quite good. I try to maintain peace with others and always strive to be helpful for my community, and I can say that being religiously involved and spiritual contributes to having a good relationship and it is in this life that I got the knowledge and practice to live with others in loving and respectful manner. (Par9)

"I believe that being religiously involved and being spiritual had a lot of contribution in my life for the sociable characteristics I have because one of the practical principles of Christianity is fellowship and in my religious life church is where I practiced social interaction a lot and spirituality gave me an attitude interaction with other to be grounded on love and respect. I can say that I have a more intimate relationship with people outside the church, I don't know why but I find it quite ok to spend more time with people who are from a different religious background, it is not that difficult for me to talk with them, to be part of their happiness and sadness, to spend time with them, so I can tell that I have a good and positive interaction with people in the church environment and outside".((Par15)

Most respondents believe in relationships and living in a community and being religious and spirituality had a lot contribution to made friends in church and have knowledge how to live with others, some of the respondents mentioned that their attitudes have been changed through religious activities so that they can share their love, potential, time with others. What religious involvement has taught them is to live with anyone in peace. The leaders also from the church

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explained that it is not God's intention for them to be abstaining from some category of people regarding their race or religion but instead to love all and to live in peace with all.

Two participants (participants 8 and 14) said they have a medium social interaction with people outside the local church at this very moment due to some reasons. Par 8 stated his answer as follow

" Yes religious involvement and spirituality contribute to a relationship and interaction one has with people, but I am not having many interactions outside of the church right now because most of my friends are from the church environment and I am very busy with schooling my part-time job at church but I can say that whenever I get the chance to meet my classmates I am not challenged to mingle with them and socialize".(par8)

"Of course I believe it has a good contribution because one of the core values of spirituality is to have a peaceful and loving interaction with one another. The fact that I am highly engaged with church-oriented life and services I am less interactive with people from a religious background. And also the fact that my family is the reason for me to be in this faith state I couldn't get much opportunity to spend time with other people from other religions. But I could say that there were times that I was not religiously active and lost from spiritual life and back then in my campus life I was much interactive with such people but overall I can say that "I am sociable; I have a simple personality that anyone could be with".(Par14)

According to what the two participants (8 and 14) reported, though being religious and spiritual had contributed them to be sociable with any people in their surroundings, but due to their different commitment within the church environment and the fact they have to spend more time in church and with people within, they couldn't get much opportunity to evaluate their practical social interaction with people from a different religious background.

4.6.4 Career and regular task competence

Participants were asked to explain whether or not they believe religious involvement and spirituality have contributed to their current accomplishments, and if so, how. And every participant said "*yes*" and according to the findings, they all believe that being religiously involved and spiritual has given them a sense of excellence to become effective wherever they are and whatever they do. Here are some reports of participants;

"Yes, religious involvement and spirituality have contributed a lot to the achievement I have now since I have become religiously involved and spiritual I got smarter. When I was in high school I was an average student but after I have come into this life my first year of college was a success I got a C.G.P. of 4.0 and my mind got brighter than ever".(Par8)

" Yes, religious involvement and spirituality have contributed to the accomplishment I have now, I would not be living right now if I hadn't known Christ! And I mean that literally. Now I'm working in a company that stations in the USA, I am planning to get married in two years, I'm an influencer at different places(starting from home), I plan to do many things for my fellow countrymen. And it's all because of Him!"(Par12)

And from what most of the participants mentioned religious involvement and spirituality contributes to their hard-working at school, work, and in any sector, they are since they believed that the superpower has created them to succeed with an enlightened mind and once they understood that they start using their potential to the maximum in every aspect of life.

They related their achievement in their many aspects of life with religious involvement and spirituality by mentioning that it creates them a sense of identity, why they exist, what potential has been built in them, and that they are created to make a difference, so this knowledge and understanding led them into a decision not to be ordinary and to start a journey to a successful path and destination.

Regarding competence, all leaders mentioned that this is another focus area of their service and they reported that based on their religion's teaching believers should be light and salt to the world, this concept was reported by all the leaders.

So from the leaders' report, the research has found that the leaders strongly believed that being religious and spiritual has a lot to contribute to the effectiveness and accomplishment youths develop since spirituality encouraged people to be hard-working not lazy one and according to the leaders this concept has been mentioned in the bible in many verses and if one is led by the spiritual realm he must abide by the principles, which tells one to be effective a role model in every aspect of life.

And they all explained that a true source of excellence, wisdom, and power is the supernatural which God, so if one has a relationship with the supernatural he/she could not be a failure at least it makes them courageous, hopeful and target full and these will contribute for the success they need to achieve. One of the leaders stated his idea as follow;

"We are told to be light to the darkness and salt to the tasteless life, so we teach the youth accordingly to excel in every aspect of their life. As the bible tells us to be hard work in any area we are we always tell them that they represent the kingdom of God, and every wisdom, gift, and knowledge comes from God and they are the children of God, so they can do better. To show for it we have a sizable number of professionals at high positions with significant duty and responsibilities that work diligently and brought changes that can be measured in their area of influence". (Leader3)

From what is perceived from all respondents spirituality induced excellence encourage diligence because it is the source of everything and as they stated since they believe that they have a goal in life they need to achieve that and since they do everything they do for the glory of God referring the bible, they claim that they should everything with excellence and diligence.

As the leaders assured a lot of high schools and campus students become very diligent and hard workers even some families have testified that their children's are showing improvement after joining this ministry because the leaders taught them that they (the youths) can do better and God deserves better (which means doing what they do for the glory of God).

4.6.5 Caring

Participants were questioned about their feeling towards social justice and if they sympathize watching someone gets hurt or if there is any way that they show care or help others and all participants told that they have a caring heart and religious involvement and spirituality has a lot to contribute for that. Most participants have answered by giving examples on their practical reactions of showing care here are some reports;

" Oh yes I have a caring heart of course most Ethiopians has a caring heart, but being religiously involved and spiritual will push you to the fullest, to live for it as part of your purpose in life and there are platforms at church to share what you have for others, though caring

doesn't have boundaries. I don't have the gut to see anybody get hurt I just can't see, if I can help in any way I don't think twice to take any action". (Par4)

"I care for people a lot, injustice makes me sick, I have grieved many times finding myself not contributing something to people who were getting heart. And I believe all the good thing we had is that is driven from God, we cannot love, share, sympathize by our nature this is what we have imparted from God."(Par2)

"To be honest what spirituality gives you more is a heart of caring because once you know that you are living the life you are given by God you will understand that there is no need for you to be greedy and hateful rather you will share what you have and you start loving without expecting".(Par14)

Participants mentioned that as Christian youth that they should feel the pain of others needs to pray for them to seek a peaceful life in any way they can. As the church leaders also reported being religiously involved and being spiritual has a contribution for the youth to becoming caring, feel bothered when others are in trouble and they show a practical reaction of sympathy as possible as they can.

And as the leaders explained the church has a platform for such activities since it is what they believe is true worship of God, caring for the deprived and they believe that God is just and a God of justice so as an imitator of him as his Children they believe that youth should be concerned about the social justice.

" *Spirituality teaches community life, it teaches how to love others how to care for others and we have a platform for the youth to practice this love and care .there are youth who contributes money and paid their friends school fee, there are students who share their cost-sharing with others who require money for transportation*".(Par14)

The overall finding of the research is that religious involvement and spirituality shapes the heart of the youth for a caring attitude and practices with platforms for the youth to help in any way they can .while they were talking about how helping the needy caring for others is the center of their interest as a Christian and what makes them feel alive, it was with full of energy and excitement.

And from a repetitive report of the participants, it was understood that by teaching the youth about caring as true worship of God the church has developed a means to make the concept practical and to reach for the deprived. And one can see that the caring attitude among the youth is pushing them for practical compassion.

4.6.6 Contribution the youths have to their surroundings

Participants were questioned if they find themselves making a difference wherever they are as a result of the positive development they have attained concerning character, confidence, connections, and competence, and caring and most participants reported that they find themselves making a difference where ever there is a need for something better or situations that need their contribution.

Some discussed that they have things to contribute besides their regular task/ responsibilities within their surroundings, for example, two participants reported that they are a representative at their school, and another participant reported that she was selected as a committee member in her compound (she lives in a condominium), and most participants reported that they help their family in so many aspects even some participants mentioned that regardless of their age they are usually called to contribute something in family matters as part of decision-makers.

Some participants reported that they don't find themselves making a difference always it depends on the environment and the situation it is not always feasible

The church leaders also stated that most of the youths are contributing something good to their surroundings through some youths might not achieve all the good side in life but at least they are not part of the rebellion, conflict, and destructions to their surroundings, and the positive change in many lives, the fact that the youths started making a difference where ever they and families testimonies are what the leaders consider as their measurement for their effectiveness in youth ministry measurement. One participant reported his answer as follow;

"I used to ask myself that 'will I be of any good anything to contribute to my family? And now I thank God I have a lot to contribute to my family have the provision and the heart I tried to fulfill their need as possible as I can".(par12)

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4.7 Youths' opinion on the ministry provided by the church

Most participants reported that the youth-based service in the church is quite wondering full, it addresses the necessary part of what current youth need to hear and apply. They also mentioned that it is a very good implication for many churches and denominations that the church is showing an effort for the young generation who are the next responsible citizens of the country and all the programs held, the training provided, the counseling, and mentoring is an implication how the church is taking responsibility for the youth.

"*What the church is ministering very productive and building. It's an equipping place for what a youth is going to face and for the youth to succeed in every aspect of their life"*. (Par13)

And some participants also commented that a ministry that focuses on an individual should be emphasized more than ever since an individual is the source of a family community and a country.

The ministry from the church is splendid!" Focusing on a person should be given more emphasis than ever to reach into a positive generation".

As the researcher observed there are different platforms for the youth ministry, as it is observed there were around 180 youths who attained the regular service which was held on Saturday, May 15/2021which starts at 3 pm and lasts at 5; 30, the program holds prayer, worship, and teaching sessions. The entire program was handled by the youth ministry leaders, the musicians were boys in the youth age group and the big auditorium of the church was where the program was held.

As the researcher observed that the youths were attentive in every program that was held and after the conclusion of the program there was refreshment time for about one hour which makes most youth interact with one another, greet, talk and discuss different issues with each other.

4.8 Leaders outlook towards their ministry

Leaders were questioned if they believe that they are effective in their ministry and how they would measure that and they have reported that they believe they are effective because this ministry has been alive for the last 20years focusing on the youth the next-generation targeting personal life, healthy family and a prosperous and peaceful country, so they believe that they have done quite good so far though it could not be said one hundred percent perfect.

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" I do believe we are effective, let me tell you a story there was this boy who raises in this ministry and got into a higher position, and he was asked for a favor in a corrupted way with an offering of a lot of money, can you believe after the people who asked him this favor came to the church to speak to the leaders to convince us that this case of theirs is not like the boy thinks and they need us to tell him, I couldn't believe my eyes and ears what the people were saying. we told them that this is a church that we teach a word of God that is what we did with the boy id teaching him the spiritual way of life, so we told them what he thinks is right and the boy stood by his decisions, so the practical way of life the youth are living, the testimony of their families, co-workers and friends are our measurement". (Leader 2)

All respondents reported that the journey they have started as a religious and spiritual person is making them loving, caring, sociable, responsible, confident, and effective in their school grading, workplace, (to use their potential to the fullest), and family (those who are married has mentioned that it led them to be a perfect husband /wife and a perfect mother/father and those who are living with their family has mentioned that it guides them to be a better son/daughter and a better brother/sister).

4.9 DISCUSSION

This particular study has explored the overall understanding and experiences of the participants from the youth and the leaders who are permanent members of Zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church.

This section of the study is used to see the contrast between the current study and existing literature. In this study, most of the findings lean towards a similar conclusion with the existing literature both the empirical and the theoretical literature.

4.9.1 Pursuing the purpose in life by connecting with the supernatural

All participants from the youth and leaders have defined spirituality as their knowledge and understanding as a personal relationship with the ultimate power/supernatural/God to be connected with and to find assistance, guidance, and purpose in life. This definition is consistent with other definitions given by scholars which are spirituality is a pursuit for meaning in life entails both being (realizing ourselves; our true nature) and a journey towards becoming one with the supreme, from this point view, spirituality provides a very practical approach to living one's

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life; because it first enables an individual to identify his or her true nature and then guides how one can live his or her life following that innate self. As a result, it empowers those who are 'conscious' to live in service of the greater good (Giri, 2019).

The other theoretical literature that was reviewed for this research was from Erik Erickson's theory about youth identity and crisis that was summarized by Adams and marshall (1996) which point out that religion can be a source of identity to youth similarly in this research it was found that participants explained they found personal meaning and purpose as they involve in religion which in return gave them a sense of confidence in their day to day life and saved them from confusion.

Most participants reported that life is exciting enough for them not because of what they have but they already know the purpose for their existence and doing what they understand the worth, like some has mentioned for example helping others as something that gives life meaning will give them excitement and peace and the result in this study was found consistent with the concept what is valued in spirituality are not the qualities of the mind which contribute to generating material wealth but the qualities that contribute to spiritual growth (Giri, 2019).

According to the participants' knowledge and reasoning of spirituality consisted with theoreticians' philosophical writings and empirical work concerning the meaning of religious spirituality. As a result of their being spiritual, most participants reported that they have found their purpose in life and trying to achieve that on their daily live basis.

And participants from the youth and church leaders also defined positive youth development as of their understanding which is as most of them explained as a holistic growth/development of youth for the benefit of self and others as it is explained in (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019)as young people's strengths; developmental plasticity; internal developmental assets (such as psychosocial competence) and external developmental assets (such as community influence).

4.9.2, Positive trait development, low risk of substance abuse, and responsibility

The research was done by gathering information through interviews to see if things are similar throughout the diversity of geographical, cultural and gender diversities resulted that religious involvement has a significant role in the life of youth in determining the character and different psychological constructs (King, Clardy, & Ramos, 2013). And this research has also explored

that religious involvement and spirituality has an enormous role in shaping the life of youths and to live their life with taking responsibilities.

And as it was discovered from this research most of the youths who have reported as they used to have a very bad character especially with drug abuse are males and they stated that because of their religious life, they have come out of substance use habits and different addictions such as pornography, as some studies have also confirmed the contribution of religion in the low risk of substance abuse.

A recent review concluded that there is strong evidence that religious or spiritual involvement is associated with a lower risk of substance abuse, people with addictions are more likely to report a lack of religious affiliation and involvement, and spiritually focused interventions (i.e., focused on meaning and purpose, not necessarily on specific religious beliefs) and practices (e.g., prayer) may facilitate recovery (Mueller et.al, 2001).

According to the findings of the youths and the church leaders, the youths have shown a change of character in various aspects, and they have shown this change by taking responsibilities in their life, career, and family, as the church leaders testified that they have seen youths settling in their life, leading a peaceful life with their friends and families, and changing into beneficial individuals. As a result, these studies discovered that religious involvement and spirituality are important in changing character for the better.

Character, according to the 5Cs/6Cs model, represents internal value standards, integrity, and morality for appropriate behavior and adherence to social and cultural norms. So, according to participant reports, the majority of them exhibit positive character in their surroundings, and this was supported by church leaders who stated that most youths have become responsible and reliable.

4.9.3, Belief in self-worth and one's capability

Erikson also pointed out that religion gives youth the answer to an existential question the participants of this research said things signifying that their religious involvement and spirituality are the root for the decisions they make and the lives they currently have. Most participants described that they develop a sense of self-worth when they understand they have a purpose in

life which they get from religious involvement and spirituality; still, here they mentioned that spirituality gave them an essence of identity.

Participants stated that once they realize they are not who people think they are, or even who they think they are, but who God says they are, they develop a sense of self-worth and capability. All participants stated that they are an asset to their surroundings, demonstrating how they accepted themselves as important individuals, and some also demonstrated a sense of independence in making decisions.

According to the findings of this study, participants do not easily give up when faced with challenges in their lives; rather, they tend to sick the way out, as most of them reported. Challenges in their lives drew them into maturity, implying that they have developed their ability to deal with challenges. They have tended to exhibit Lerner's definition of confidence.

4.9.4 A sense of being loved and belongingness for positive social interaction

Another concept Erikson raised is that religion can be a great source of social relationships in the youth's life because due to the frequent participation youth have in a religious organization they have the chance to meet different people from different generations these circumstances help to have larger social groups (Adams & Marshall, 1996). In the same way, the participants of this research said that because of their involvement in a religious activity they have found relationships they would other ways never get and this has helped them to have a sense of belonging and sense of being love as if they have a connection and they can rely on this connection for good and bad days in their lives.

The researcher observed that the youths' refreshment time after Saturday's regular service provided a convenient environment for the youths to fellowship. According to respondents, knowing their true identity as being created in the image of God gives them a sense of being loved and belonging. Furthermore, some participants reported that the friendships they formed in each program gave them the confidence to be interactive and sociable.

As C (connection) from the 5Cs model indicates an individual's positive relationships with other people and organizations such as the interactions between the individual and the social environment (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019). This research has found that participants it can be said all have a positive social interaction with their families, friends, co-workers, neighbor, and so on...

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4.9.5 Accomplishment in school and at work

Inconsistent with the research done by Min lee explained that religious youth involved in religious organization and spirituality have a sense of purpose in life which leads them to have excellence in the careers and educational settings youth on the longitudinal research has a higher possibility of concluding their postsecondary school. (Min lee, Pulg, & Dlark, 2007), this research was proposed to explore the contribution of spirituality and religious involvement for positive youth development regarding competence as a component which was found that the participants have shown high competence in various spheres they are involved and most participants concluded post-secondary school.

Most of them reported that religious involvement and spirituality have a contribution to their accomplishment in life and they acknowledged this idea by mentioning their improvement in school grading, and their positions and success in a different career.

According to the 5Cs model discussed by Lerner in (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019) competence includes educational, cognitive, professional, and social competencies, educational competence is reflected by school grades, school attendance, and test scores, cognitive competence indicates cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, logical thinking and decision-making, professional competence is indicated by work habits and the ability to discover different occupation choices and social competence points to interpersonal abilities such as the ability of conflict resolution.

This research has explored that spirituality creates a sense of excellence in the youths by giving them the knowledge about their relevance according to the bible and to take decisions accordingly.

4.9.6 Sympathy and empathy for others

An additional product of this research was the indication that youth are more caring, show empathy and commitment to social justice. The participants reported a high level of participation in the voluntary activities and that they have the heart to support anyone in need. The other account that was given in this context is from the leaders who testified that the youth are vastly engaged on the platform they have provided for the youths similarly with the founding that directed youth that engaged in religious activities and spirituality are more altruistic and empathic than those who are not involved (furrow, king, & white, 2004).

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Most respondents reported that showing care for others without expecting anything in return, sharing attitudes and a platform to apply it, and showing love for others by feeling their pain is what spirituality and religious involvement has contributed in their life which is similar to the idea from literature stated as qualities like loving relationships with others as well as with the environment, selflessness, non-greediness, practicing ceiling of desires, sharing, cooperation, forgiveness, non-violence, and activities which aim to serve others without expecting anything in return (Giri, 2019).

And from the results in this research religious involvement and spirituality contributes to being selfless and caring for others as well and as most participants reported caring is something one shows or gives practically for others who need help. Caring is discussed in5Cs model the ability to empathize and sympathize with others (Daniel. TL Shek, 2019).

As the researcher observed enormous attention has been given to the youth ministry since their regular Saturday service was held at the big auditorium where the church's regular programs take place and the full equipment (like mikes, pianos, guitars) and sound systems was allowed for them to use.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, religious involvement and spirituality contribute significantly to positive youth development by maintaining the purpose and goal of the youths' life. Being religious and spiritual promotes positive development and protects against various risk behaviors. As youths become religiously involved, they reduce their risk of being exposed to various harmful environments, because, as research has shown, becoming religious and spiritual requires time spent at church, fellowship with fellow believers, and personal prayer time.

As all parents could agree, when a child is growing, his parents expect all parts of his body to develop properly; they do not want one part of his body to be left alone while the other parts grow, and in this study as a measurement frame of positive youth development, achieving the 5Cs/6Cs model is attempting to achieve a holistic development for an effective, confident, compassionate, socially interactive, and responsible individual. As the finding of this study being religiously involved and spiritual has a contribution to have a positive development regarding the 5Cs /6Cs model which measure holistic positive youth development in this study.

And whether religious involvement is used as a protective factor or strength-based development, according to the research, it will help youths identify their true identity, stop settling for less, use their potential to the fullest, reach those who need help, and overall it helps to create a positive use who will be a solution rather than a victim in his/her life.

As a result, youths are connecting to a higher meaning or purpose in life, and according to the study, religious spirituality has a contribution to answer that as many of the research participants have reported, and the role of church leaders is very important for successful positive youth development in creating a platform to build and nurture positive youth development.

Religious involvement and spirituality are a protective factor for many youths, regarding our country's current situation since youths are exposed to a lot of violent activities without rational thinking which is non-beneficial political activities; here is where we can youth religious involvement as a positive influence for peace and development.

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Youths are usually influenced by peer pressure, so when youths spend most of their time in churches and engaged in different religious activities it helps them to stay off the streets and spending their time in the wrong places instead they will be grasping knowledge. Staying in churches is also going to help them to make friends who share the same meaning of life. Generally, religious involvement and spirituality influence youths positively in their day-to-day activities.

5.2Recommendation

- Recognizing the significance of religious involvement and spirituality, the researcher suggests that, as evidenced by the research findings, religious involvement and spirituality have a lot to contribute to the development of a positive character, due to these foundational teachings that aid in the development of a positive character should be provided at churches, prisons, orphanages, and schools.

- The researchers also suggested that the youth leaders share their positive outcomes with other local churches, school youth fellowships, and youth drug rehabilitation centers such as MEQUAMIA drug rehabilitation center(to reveal to the young individuals how religious involvement and spirituality could help in shaping a character, helping in achievement in life, and develop self-worth) as well as any youth-serving organization. Because Ethiopia needs a better generation with positive self-development who can contribute something good for their family, communities, and country and religious involvement and spirituality could serve as fertile ground.

- Recognizing that religious involvement and spirituality have a strength-based effect on positive youth outcomes, different denominations should take serving youths seriously by considering that there is also this physical realm in which people are living their lives right now, in addition to the spiritual realm, which is full of challenges. and youths are the first-hand victims of different challenges. Given the challenges that Ethiopia faces (migration, drug abuse, etc.), religion can serve as a protective factor as well as a capacity-building factor, a motivator for positive social interaction, and a constructive means of caring attitude. As a result, religious leaders must pay special attention to serving youths, viewing them as the country's future generations.

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Appendix

My name is zinash Gudissa. I am a student at St Mary University College as partial fulfillment for my master's degree in social work I am working on a thesis title contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for the positive youth development in the case of zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

Introduction

This research's aim to study the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development

Procedure

You were chosen for this research because you are a regular attendant of the zetseat youth ministry programs and you are a registered member of the youth group. Now I will ask you some questions regarding the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development, I would like to listen to your opinion and idea on the subject.

- You will not receive any type of incentive for the interview.
- The information that is obtained from you will be used only for this research and you will remain anonymous I will be using numbers to represent you.
- You can stop whenever you feel uncomfortable.

Are you willing to participate   yes   no

Signature

Date

Topic guide

Questions to youth participants

Age

Gender

Educational status

Current status

How many times a week do you come to church?

Which religious practice/s is/are you do more often?

Fellowship with a fellow believer

Watching religious media (YouTube, television channels, etc.),

 Prayer attending regular programs,

 Reading the Bible

 Reading religious book

1. What is spirituality to you? Why do you become one?
2. Do you find your purpose in life and is life exciting enough for you, explained?
3. Do you consider yourself responsible? If yes do your religious involvement and spirituality have a contribution to it? Explain?
4. Do you usually find the courage to do things you want without being afraid of failure or other's retribution? Explain?
5. Do you think you are an asset to your family, community, and country? Explain from your past and current belief, attitude, and experience?
6. How do you react to very bad situations, it could be illness conflict?
7. If you have been through any challenging times, does it drew you into maturity or dropped you into a social loss? Tell me your experience?

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8. Do you believe your spirituality has contributed to the accomplishments you have now? (If Yes) how?

9. Do you consider yourself sociable? If yes, does being religiously involved and spiritual have a contribution to it? Explain?

10. How do you explain your social interaction outside the local church environment with people from other religious backgrounds? Explain

11. Do you think the religious involvement you have has contributed to the love and belonging feeling you have? (if yes)How?

12. Do people usually make you feel that you're important? Explain?

13. Do you make a difference wherever you are? Do you think you have something to contribute to your family or your community or your country? Explain

14. What is your opinion on the church's service?

Questions to the church leaders

My name is zinash Gudissa. I am a student at St Mary University College as partial fulfillment for my master's degree in social work and I am working on a thesis title the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development in the case of zetseat Apostolic Reformation Church Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

Introduction

This research's aim to study the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development

Procedure

You were chosen for this research because you are a youth ministry leader at the zetseat. Now I will ask you some questions regarding the contribution of spirituality and religious involvement and spirituality for positive youth development I would like to listen to your opinion and idea on the subject.

- You will not receive any type of incentive for the interview
- The information that is obtained from you will be used only for this research and you will remain anonymous I will be using numbers to represent you

- You can stop anytime if you feel uncomfortable

Are you willing to participate   yes   no

Signature

Date

Age

Gender

Education level

Educational status

Are you a full-time minister? Yes or No

1. What is spirituality for you?

2. How do you explain the content of your youth service?

3. Do you think spirituality and religious participation contribute to the feeling of love and acceptance of youth? How?

4. How do you think religious involvement and spirituality contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness young people have in their school, workplace, and so on...?

5. What is the contribution of religious involvement and spirituality for positive traits?

6. How do religious involvement and spirituality support the self-confidence of young people?

7. How do you think religious involvement and spirituality contribute to the social interaction youths can have?

8. Does Religious involvement and spirituality contribute for young people to engage in social justice, charity works to the deprived, and volunteer-based service?

9. Do you believe you are effective in your ministry? how do you measure it?

OBSERVATION CHECKLISTS

The researcher observes

➢ What is the content of the regular programs in the church?

➢ Is there a formal office for the youth leaders?

➢ Youths' interaction at their meetings.

➢ set-ups for services deliverance, like teaching rooms, counseling rooms, and types of equipment like sound systems and music instruments, which helps for quality and interesting service delivery.