

**AN EVALUATION OF YOUTH MINISTRY IN THE EVANGELICAL
CHURCH WINNING ALL (ECWA) NIGERIA: A CASE FOR
PROFESSIONALISATION**

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DECLARATION

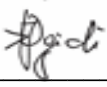
This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other award in any other university.

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Date: 6th June, 2024

Dr. David C. Ononogbu

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to God, my father, who cared for me by providing for all my needs in a foreign country. This research work is also dedicated to all the youth workers in ECWA Nigerian and the passionate youth workers in Kenya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As I perused through various academic works during this research, particularly theses and dissertations, I could not help but notice a common trend in their acknowledgement sections. Almost all these works begin with a note of gratitude to God, which made it seem like this was a mere formality that researchers felt compelled to include. However, I must emphasise that acknowledging God in this thesis is not just a box that needs to be ticked. Instead, it is an expression of gratitude to God for the divine guidance, support, and help he gave me throughout my academic journey. I know this research would have been impossible without God's help.

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As I conclude this acknowledgement, I would like to express my appreciation for a particular group: The Daisy Road Life group, now called the Muthaiga North Life group. You people are fantastic! You encouraged me with words and prayers and supported me financially. Thank you so much!

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ABSTRACT

This study indicates that youth ministry in ECWA is not regarded as a distinct field that needs trained and qualified workers. The study explored the following questions: (1) what is the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria? (2) What is the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria? (3) How can the professionalisation of the youth ministry enhance its perception and practice in ECWA Nigeria? To answer these questions, the study adopted Richard Osmer's (2008) practical theology framework and employed qualitative research methods to investigate the experiences of youth pastors in ECWA through in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews. Following the literature reviewed and the data gathered from the ECWA youth pastors interviewed, the study revealed that professionalisation is essential in improving the perception and practice of youth ministry in ECWA. In that regard, three implications were discussed: first, ECWA needs to establish standards, minimum qualifications, and requirements for individuals who want to work as youth pastors to bridge the gap between the youth ministry perception and practice; second, to improve the perception of youth ministry, ECWA should make it mandatory for people who want to serve in youth ministry to undergo formal theological training that equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge; thirdly, to counter the negative perceptions surrounding youth ministry, ECWA should focus on raising awareness, education, and support for the significance of youth ministry through organised campaigns and communications. The study also offered seven recommendations with practical steps and strategic directions to translate the findings into action.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

CE – Christian Education

CED – Christian Education Department

CEO – Christian Education Organiser

CES – Christian Education Secretary

DCC – District Church Council

DYC – District Youth Council

ECWA – Evangelical Church Winning All

EE – ECWA Executives

GCC – General Church Council

GYC – General Youth Council

LCC – Local Church Council

LCB – Local Church Board

LYC – Local Youth Council

LYB – Local Youth Board

JETS – ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos

DEFINITION OF TERMS

This study provides a detailed outline of how the key terms are conceptualised to ensure the research's intended meaning. Doing so gives the reader a comprehensive understanding of the terminology used throughout the research.

Youth

The term youth denotes the development phase between childhood and adulthood (Ogidi, 2019). However, it is essential to note that the exact age range varies across regions and cultures, thus leading to diverse classifications (See Cloete, 2012; Weber, 2015; Badejo et al., 2011). Notably, in Nigeria, the immediate context of this study, youth are considered persons aged 18 to 35 (Badejo et al., 2011).

For this research, a youth is conceptualised as a person, a complete human being, created in the image of God (cf. Genesis 1:27) and between the ages of 18 and 35 (Badejo et al., 2011).

Youth Ministry

It is worth acknowledging that the definition of youth ministry can differ based on the person and particular church or denomination. For example, Nel (2000) defined youth ministry as helping the youth uncover their God-given identity as they, in turn, also help their peers to do the same. Lewis (2009) and Root and Dean (2011) argued that youth ministry means guiding youth to establish personal relationships with God. The United Methodist Church also defines youth ministry as any event where the church engages with and supports young people (Hay, 2008). On the other hand, during the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the Catholic Church viewed youth ministry as a response to the requirements of young people and an opportunity to showcase their talents to the community (USCCB, 1997).

For ECWA, youth ministry is primarily defined as a fellowship focused on spiritually edifying, discipling and mentoring the youth to attain maturity in Christ (Ogidi, 2019). The youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria is an inclusive fellowship that welcomes individuals of all ages, marital statuses, and backgrounds. Their handbook explicitly states no age restrictions, making it an ideal place for young and old individuals to come together and participate. Additionally, being married or unmarried is not a consideration for attendance, as the fellowship aims to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all who wish to participate.

Considering that this research's primary task is to evaluate the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria, it is appropriate to adopt ECWA's conceptualisation of the youth ministry for this study, as indicated above.

The Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

Professionalisation is defined by De Vos et al. (2005) as “the extent to which an occupation has developed towards the ideal model of the fully-fledged profession” (p. 8). In the context of this research, the professionalisation of youth ministry would mean the extent to which it is considered an occupation developed toward an ideal model of a fully-fledged profession. By an ideal model of a fully-fledged profession, this research refers to the state of practice that requires liberal education and learning or its equivalent, competencies and techniques, values and principles in that field, and a regulatory body that recognises it (De Vos, & Schulze, 2002; De Vos et al., 2005). For this to occur, Bouffard and Little (2004) stated that certain conditions must be present, such as higher education and pre-service training for new staff, in-service training, credentialing systems, and conferences. Additionally, it should be self-regulating and autonomous (Curry et al., 2012).

In line with the above, this research argues that the professionalisation of youth ministry implies that youth ministry in ECWA should be considered an independent and self-regulating ministry within the church. The study upholds that to become a youth pastor in ECWA, individuals must possess a comprehensive education and skill set, including competencies, techniques, values, and principles. This entails obtaining higher education training in youth ministry from a recognised institution, achieving a minimum educational qualification, undergoing pre-service training and orientation, otherwise known as induction course in ECWA, and demonstrating a commitment to ongoing in-service training and conference attendance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The chapter begins with an introduction to the background of the study. This gives a brief overview of the research, explains the variables involved, and establishes the problem that led to the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The problem statement follows to provide a clear picture of the issue the research aimed to address. In this chapter, the research objectives, hypothesis, and research questions are presented, along with the assumptions of the study. The justification and rationale of the study are also discussed, followed by a clear outline of the scope of the study and the limitation and delimitation of the study. As Osmer (2008) noted, a good research study acknowledges its limitations and, most importantly, its delimitations. Therefore, this chapter also highlights the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Background to the Study

There has been scholarly discussion surrounding the existence of youth ministry in the church (Sercombe, 2004; Bowie, 2006; Baucham, 2007; Episten, 2007). Baucham (2007), for example, argued against establishing youth ministry in the church, contending that it lacks Biblical justification and should not be adopted by the church. To support this assertion, Baucham (2007) cited the documentary “Divided,” which was directed by Scott Brown (2007), and highlighted that the Bible does not mention anything about age-segregated ministry but rather age-integrated ministry. Baucham (2007) and Brown (2007) rightly observed that children were consistently present with their parents and other adults during New Testament church

gatherings, thus suggesting an age-integrated approach to ministry. However, Baucham (2007) and Brown (2007) conflated the concept of youth ministry with children and failed to distinguish between the two groups. This flawed perspective led to their erroneous interpretation of the New Testament church gathering that included children, which they used to argue against the concept of youth ministry.

Kelly (2016), on the other hand, conducted a comprehensive Biblical analysis of the concept of “Youth” while ardently advocating for youth ministry. During that research, Kelly (2016) uncovered a striking discrepancy between the Biblical perspective of youth and the assertion made by Baucham (2007). Contrary to Baucham's assertion that children and youth are inseparable, Kelly (2016) argued that the Bible distinctly separates the two. Hence, he recommended that the church establish youth ministry and approach it intentionally because the Bible portrayed them as prone to dangerous life decisions due to their youthful inexperience. As a result, Kelly (2016), in conjunction with other researchers such as Neil (2003), urged the church to embrace youth ministry as a distinct, professional entity.

One profound challenge, however, is that youth ministry has historically relied on passionate volunteers with no formal theological training to execute their roles. Though untrained, Adams (1994) delineated that these passionate individuals have been pivotal in shaping the youth ministry landscape. While their zeal is laudable, their lack of formal theological training challenged the youth ministry's growth and development. For example, due to their lack of professional training in youth ministry, these volunteers could not see the need to develop a blueprint for it, nor do they have the expertise to do so. Hence, each volunteer comes with his ideas, plans and philosophies and steers the youth ministry in a particular desired direction, and once he is done, mostly frustrated or burned out, the next passionate volunteer comes

on board and steers the youth ministry towards another direction, which is mostly opposed to the previous volunteer. Sercombe (2004) compared this situation with the “Heart of Darkness” scenario that is described in Conrad’s classic (1927), where the leader is the sole determinant of proper practice of everything; things become okay because the leader says they are OK. Sercombe (2004) also noted that such people present themselves as messiahs and “kings of the kids” (p. 5), offering their methods and strategies as the most effective. Hence, they get the most attention from the media and other agencies, but in no time, they get stressed from working 24 hours, run out of programs, burn out, and then disappear.

This study, therefore, posits that the challenge of volunteers tossing youth ministry back and forth with their divergent ideas and philosophies can be monitored and resolved appropriately if professionalised. Upholding this same view, Sercombe (2004) observed that the emergence of these “Charismatic Messiahs or Maverick” and “Kings of the Kids” is because of the absence of a professional structure for youth ministry. This highlights the need for a more structured and organised approach to youth ministry, which can ensure that the best practices are implemented. By creating a professional framework, the volunteers can be trained and equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to effectively serve the youth to the glory of God and help them grow into who God created them to be.

Statement of the Problem

The problem statement is the foundation upon which any research is built, as it defines the core of the study and provides a clear explanation of the specific problem that the research aims to investigate (Chiroma, 2010). The quote “a problem well stated is a problem half solved” (Kettering, n.d) emphasises the significance of clearly

defining the problem. However, it is crucial to identify the problem first, as it is practically impossible to state and solve an unknown problem, one that is not identified.

Thus, the first problem identified in this study is a negative perception of youth ministry in ECWA. As a denomination boasting over four esteemed theological schools, ECWA has clarified that theological training and qualifications are mandatory for all pastors employed within its ranks (Chiroma, 2010). Aspiring pastors must possess the requisite theological knowledge and credentials to be considered for a pastoral position with ECWA. However, there is no such policy in the youth ministry field because it is viewed differently in ECWA. As noted by Ogidi (2019), the youth ministry in ECWA is negatively perceived as a ministerial training ground, and the role of the youth Pastor is typically filled by a passionate volunteer who enjoys working with young people or a recent seminary graduate who has yet to receive confirmation as an ECWA Pastor.

This, unfortunately, implies that the youth ministry in ECWA is merely a space that provides passionate volunteers and fresh seminary graduates with an opportunity to hone their preaching and pastoral skills under the guidance of a senior Pastor instead of being a distinct ministry. This is evidenced when the youth pastor, a passionate volunteer, verifies their call by serving in youth ministry. Once they ascertain the call by excelling in youth ministry, the senior pastor encourages them to pursue theological education in pastoral ministry so that they can be employed as pastors with ECWA. On the other hand, if the youth pastor is a fresh seminary graduate waiting for employment and confirmation as an ECWA Pastor. Suppose they prove their worth and ability to be pastors by serving in youth ministry. In that case,

they can be recommended for the associate pastor position by the senior pastor overseeing their youth ministry progress.

The second problem this study identified and addresses is the flawed perception of the youth Pastor in ECWA. Following a curriculum review of various ECWA theological Seminaries, the ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos (JETS) implemented a bachelor's degree program geared explicitly towards youth ministry. This program was aimed to equip aspiring youth pastors with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in youth ministry. However, despite producing competent graduates in youth ministry, it remains difficult for these pastors to secure employment within the ECWA denomination. This is because the position of a youth pastor in ECWA is often assigned to the associate pastor by the senior pastor (Ogidi, 2019). In the fewer instances where the youth Pastor holds a degree in youth ministry from JETS, he, as ECWA only ordains males, is subject to work under the senior Pastor, making it difficult for the youth Pastor to make and implement decisions independently. This practice, sadly, implies that despite having undergone the same theological education and training as the senior pastor, the youth Pastor is considered inferior in calling, training, and ministry.

Thirdly, research in youth ministry has revealed alarming and disconcerting practices. For example, Sercombe's (2004) findings indicated that some youth workers had been caught sexually abusing the young people they worked with. Others have been found guilty of breaching confidentiality by sharing stories that young people shared with them as sermons or bible study illustrations. More appalling is that some youth workers have also been reported for leading young people to rebel against the church. Regrettably, though disturbing with far-reaching consequences, such

practices often go unaddressed due to the absence of official monitoring and resolution measures.

Therefore, this study seeks to confirm that the professionalisation of youth ministry would create a system that will effectively monitor unethical conduct in the context of youth ministry. Additionally, this study proposes that professionalising youth ministry would enhance its perception and practice in ECWA by offering prospects for those with theological expertise to lead, influence, and minister to youth distinctly and ultimately to the glory of God.

Objectives of the Study

This research has the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria
2. To investigate the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria
3. To explore how the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria can enhance its perception and practice.

Research Questions

Research questions are one of the most critical aspects of every study. They help to structure and guide the research process by setting boundaries, maintaining focus, and identifying the necessary data (Chiroma, 2010 and cited in Punch, 2005). Considering this understanding, the study, guided by the research objectives, developed three questions, which effectively steered the research by setting boundaries, maintaining focus, and identifying critical data. The research questions are as follows:

1. What is the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?

2. What is the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?
3. How can the professionalisation of the Youth Ministry enhance its perception and practice in ECWA Nigeria?

Hypothesis

This research has the following hypothesis:

1. The professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria will enhance its perception and practice.
2. Professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria will provide spaces for the theologically trained youth workers in ECWA Nigeria to minister, independent of the senior pastor, for the glory of God.

Practical Theological Framework

For this research, the four theological hermeneutical tasks that Osmer (2008) promoted were used as the practical theological framework. These four tasks and their corresponding guiding questions are the descriptive-empirical task (what is happening?), the interpretive task (why is it happening?), the normative task (what should be happening?), and the pragmatic task (how can we respond to it?).

Here is an overview of how the four theological hermeneutical tasks were utilised in this research:

1. The descriptive-empirical task: Osmer (2008) explains that this task aims to gather information and understand what is happening in a specific context or situation. This is typically achieved through empirical research methods such as observations, interviews, and surveys to collect data on individuals' and communities' actual practices and experiences. With the research question

What is the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria, this study used the descriptive-empirical task in the first part of its chapter two to answer the question and achieve its number one objective: to evaluate the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. By incorporating existing literature and the researchers' observations of ECWA, the study described the context of youth ministry in ECWA. It clearly depicted the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. Thus, answering the first research question and achieving the research objective number one.

2. The interpretive task: In the first part of chapter two, this study answered the first research question and achieved objective one by describing the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA. The study then used the interpretive task to explain why things are happening as they are. It argued that the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria are as they are because it is not professionalised. This claim was validated by the research findings reported in Chapter 4. Based on the second research question, which focuses on the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria, and objective two of the research, which aims to investigate the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria, the study collected and analysed data in chapter 4. The findings of the data confirmed that the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria are as they are because it is not professionalised.
3. The normative task: As noted earlier, the first part of chapter two used the descriptive-empirical task to assess the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA. The second part used an interpretative approach to understand why things were happening. The normative task was then used in Chapter 4. Based

on the research findings presented in the chapter, it was determined that a professionalized youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria ought to happen.

4. The pragmatic task: To formulate strategies for addressing the issues identified and analysed in Chapter 4 and answer the third research question: How can the professionalisation of youth ministry enhance its perception and practice in ECWA Nigeria? The study utilised the pragmatic task. This was used to develop practical recommendations and strategic directions to translate the research findings into actions to help enhance the perception and practice of the youth ministry in ECWA.

Assumption of the Study

This study operated under the premise that the professionalisation of youth ministry would enhance the perception and practice of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. The study assumes that permission would be granted to conduct interviews with youth pastors in ECWA Nigeria and that they would be willing to engage in the interview process. The research was also based on the assumption that 20 youth pastors would be found within ECWA to participate in the study because youth ministry in ECWA is not fully recognised. Hence, fewer people are employed and appointed to serve as youth pastors.

Justification of the Study

The justification for this study is underpinned by the fact that ECWA as a denomination has shown interest in improving the perception and practice of youth ministry. The General Church Council (GCC) of ECWA has established a dedicated department for youth ministry. This department has also been introduced to one of the ECWA seminaries in Nigeria, enabling theological training for youth pastors. This

progressive move signals ECWA's commitment to improving its youth ministry. As such, this research investigated the professionalisation of youth ministry as another solution to enhancing the perception and practice of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

This research study evaluates the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. The study is limited to the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria because the researcher is a member of the ECWA denomination. The study's aim was to evaluate the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria and offer professionalisation to enhance its perception and practice.

Limitation and Delimitation of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that it evaluated youth ministry and not the other ministries in ECWA. This limitation is because the General Church Council (GCC) of ECWA has made considerable effort to promote youth ministry by creating a specialised department. Additionally, they have launched a bachelor's degree program in youth ministry at the ECWA Theological Seminary in Jos (JETS) to equip aspiring youth pastors with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in youth ministry. These efforts by the GCC are clear indications of ECWA's commitment to enhance the perception and practice of youth ministry, which is aligned with the objective of this study.

Another limitation of the study is that it evaluated the youth ministry in ECWA and no other denominations in Nigeria. This is because the researcher is a member of ECWA, a graduate of the Bachelor of Youth Ministry from the ECWA theological seminary, Jos, and has served as a volunteer youth pastor with the ECWA under the Gombe District Church Council (DCC), Orji and GRA Local Church

Councils of Gombe state, Nigeria, for some years before leaving to undertake this study.

Another crucial limitation of this study is related to financial constraints. Typically, every researcher gathers their data. However, that is not the case for this study because the researcher and target population are in different countries. Therefore, collecting data in the target population's country would have been prohibitively expensive. As a solution, certified research assistants from the target population's country were enlisted to assist with data collection. This approach proved to be a more cost-effective alternative to the researcher physically travelling to and from Nigeria to gather the necessary data.

This study's delimitation is that the selected participants are all from the cosmopolitan area in Nigeria. While this will not affect the research outcome because the youth ministry in ECWA is predominantly present in urban areas, the rationale for this is easy accessibility and security, as it is risky to travel to rural areas due to the insecurities in Nigeria.

Chapter Summary

This chapter laid the foundation for delving into the professionalisation of youth ministry within the ECWA denomination. It commenced with an informative introduction that offered vital background information on the research and problem statement, which is essential for a well-defined investigation. By highlighting the predicament of volunteer-led youth ministry and its ethical implications, the chapter suggested that professionalising youth ministry in ECWA can aid in alleviating these issues and establishing a well-organized ministry that honours God.

This chapter also presented the study's objective, research question and hypothesis, emphasising the potential advantages of professionalising youth ministry in ECWA. The study employed the four theological hermeneutical tasks Osmer (2008) promoted to provide a practical theological framework. Additionally, the chapter detailed the study's assumption, justification, scope, limitation and delimitation.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL INVESTIGATION OF YOUTH MINISTRY IN ECWA NIGERIA AND PROFESSIONALISATION OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Introduction

This chapter has been thoughtfully organised into two parts. The first part analyses the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the study utilises the four theological hermeneutical tasks Osmer (2008) promoted as its practical theological framework. Using the first task, the descriptive-empirical task, the first part of this chapter explains what is happening in the context of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. This was achieved by providing a brief introduction to ECWA, followed by a comprehensive evaluation of ECWA's perception of youth ministry and the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. The first part of this chapter concluded with a comprehensive discussion of the policy, regulations, and guidelines for youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. By doing this, the study addressed the first research question: What is the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria? Furthermore, the study achieved the first objective: to evaluate the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA.

Still utilising the descriptive-empirical task to explain what is happening in youth ministry, the latter portion of the chapter offered a comprehensive examination of diverse literature on youth ministry's professionalisation. Commencing with a thorough analysis of whether or not youth ministry should be professionalised, the second part proceeded to delineate several pertinent issues associated with the professionalisation of youth ministry. These encompass the significance of volunteers, ethical considerations, and the theological underpinnings of youth ministry.

Brief Overview of ECWA

ECWA is a church denomination in Nigeria that is headquartered in Jos, Plateau State. Although ECWA is considered an indigenous denomination, it was founded by an international mission agency called Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), which is now known as Serving in Mission (SIM) (Ogidi, 2019). With a total membership of over seven million people spread across various parts of Nigeria and the world, ECWA is considered one of Nigeria's most prominent and fastest-growing denominations (Chiroma, 2008). For example, ECWA's membership has significantly increased from seven million members in 2008 to over 10 million in 2022 (see Chiroma, 2008; and <https://www.christianevents.com.ng/evangelical-church-winning-all-ecwa/>)

In terms of its leadership, ECWA has a hierarchical system of leadership. Ogidi (2019) stated that at the top of ECWA's hierarchical system of leadership is the General Church Council (GCC), located at the ECWA headquarters and composed of ECWA Executives (EE), District Church Council (DCC) chairmen and secretaries. The following line after the GCC is the DCC, which consists of the DCC executives and all local overseers (LO) of the local church councils (LCC). After the DCC comes the LCC, which comprises all LCC executives and local church pastors. The last part of the ECWA leadership hierarchy is the Local Church Board (LCB), which consists of Pastors and leaders of various church ministry arms: the women's fellowship, Men's fellowship and youth fellowship, also known as the youth ministry. For a visual representation, see Figure 1.

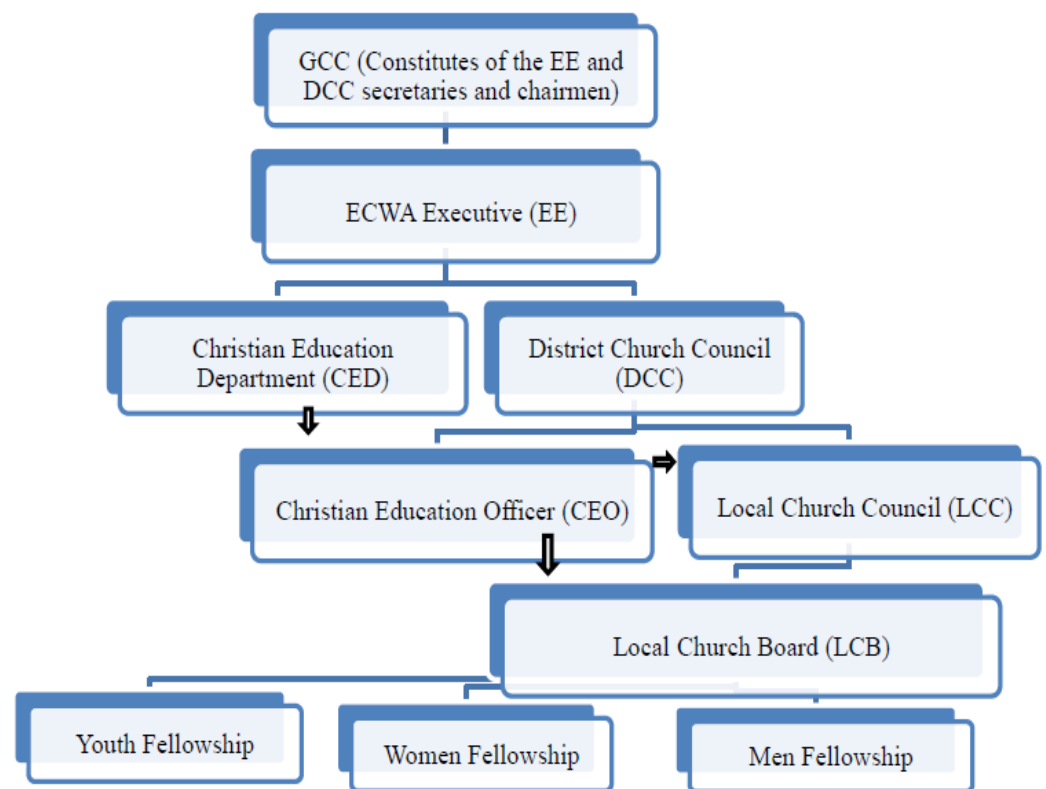


Figure 2.0: ECWA leadership Structure (adapted from Ogidi, 2019, p.302)

Structure of Youth Ministry in ECWA Nigeria

The first research objective of this study is to evaluate the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. To achieve this objective, the study asked, as its first research question, what the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria are. Using the descriptive-empirical task to gather information and understand what is happening by engaging existing literature and observations, the study, in response to the first research question, discovers that the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria follows a hierarchical model that mirrors that of ECWA Nigeria.

As per the ECWA youth fellowship handbook, the youth fellowship functions as a non-autonomous church agency that operates under the oversight of the ECWA Christian Education Department (CED) at the GCC level. The CED Director presides over the board, supervises the operations of all Christian education programs in each ECWA church, and manages the affairs of the youth fellowship in ECWA Nigeria. The Director exercises final decision-making authority on matters that pertain to the youth fellowship. The board that collaborates with the CED comprises the leader, secretary, and treasurer of all the fellowship groups in ECWA. The leader, secretary, and treasurer of the youth fellowship that works with the CED on the board are known as the General Youth Council (GYC) leaders.

The CED and the board are hierarchically followed by the DCC level's Christian Education Organizer (CEO). The CEO, just like the CED, works with a board known as the Christian Education Committee. This committee comprises the leaders, Secretaries, and Treasurers of all fellowship groups at the DCC level. The leader, secretary and treasurer of the youth fellowship who are part of this committee are known as the District Youth Council (DYC). The DYC leaders are followed hierarchically by the Local Youth Council (LYC) leaders, who belong to the board responsible for overseeing Christian education at the LCC level. This board is headed by the Christian Education Secretary (CES).

At the local church board (LCB) level, the Christian Education (CE) Leader collaborates with a Christian Education Committee. This committee is comprised of leaders representing all the church fellowship groups. Within the youth fellowship, these leaders are known as the LYB. Per the guidelines outlined in the youth fellowship handbook, the LYB leaders cannot act without the church pastor's full knowledge and consent. The CE is mandated to inform the Church Pastor of any

actions the LYB takes. Figure 2 visually represents this structure with its various components.

Perception of Youth Ministry in ECWA Nigeria

The second objective of this study is to investigate the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. To achieve this objective, the study's second research question asked, what is the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria? Employing the descriptive-empirical task to investigate what is happening by engaging existing literature, the study reveals that youth ministry in ECWA is perceived as a fellowship where young people gather for programs, activities and events (Ogidi, 2019).

It is important to note that the primary objective of this fellowship is nurturing, mentoring, fostering spiritual growth, and helping the youth mature into committed Christians. Ogidi (2019) reported that while the primary goal of the ECWA youth fellowship is to equip young people to attain spiritual maturity, the youth are often "pre-occupied with the desire and passion to share their Christian faith and life with non-youth fellowship members" (p.25) This denotes that youth fellowship, as a form of youth ministry in ECWA, is concerned with two purposes. The first is to build, disciple and mentor its members, helping them to attain spiritual maturity in Christ. The second objective is to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to reach out to non-youth fellowship members within the church and community.

Policies and Guidelines of Youth Ministry in ECWA

To further understand what is happening in the youth ministry in ECWA, the study applied descriptive-empirical task to investigate the policies and guidelines of the youth ministry in ECWA. By engaging existing literature and observations, the study

discovers that the youth ministry of ECWA operates under comprehensive policies and guidelines outlined in the Youth Fellowship Handbook. According to Ogidi (2019), this handbook is carefully crafted by the ECWA CED and implemented through a structured process. The CED drafts the guidelines and sends them to the DCCs through the CEO, who then ensures their distribution to the LCC via the CES. Finally, the LCBs are responsible for executing the policies and programs with guidance from the CE, who collaborates closely with the LYB leaders.

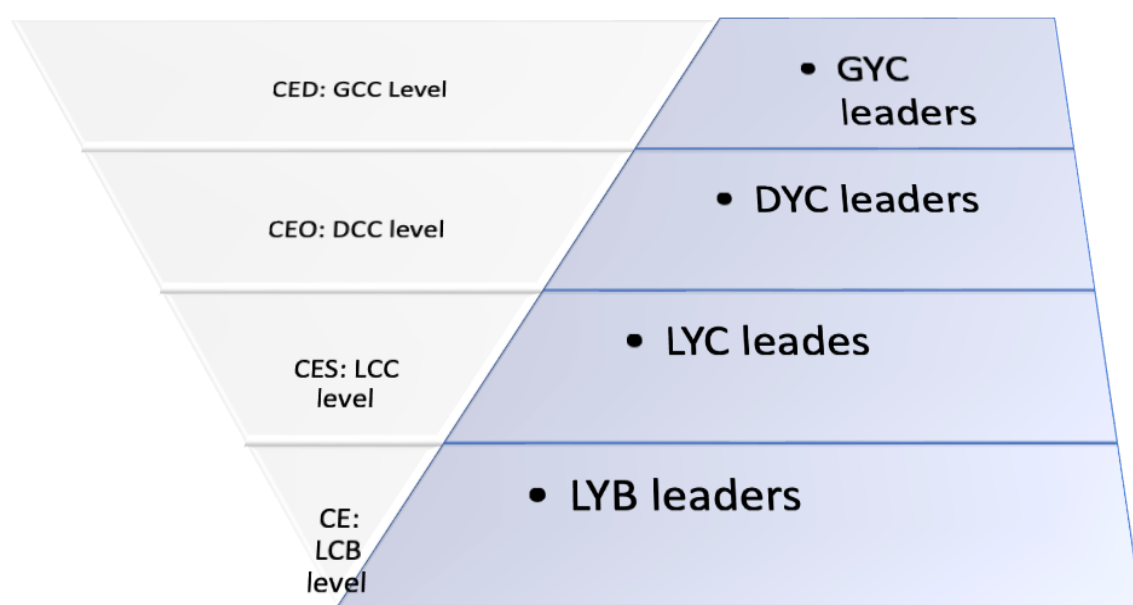


Figure 3.0: Structure of Youth Ministry in ECWA Nigeria (created by the researcher)

Youth Ministry and Professionalisation

In the following section of this chapter, the study delves into a range of themes on the professionalisation of youth ministry. This addressed the third research question: How can the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria

improve its perception and practice? Furthermore, by conducting a comprehensive review of diverse literature on the professionalisation of youth ministry, the study fulfilled its third research objective: to explore how the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria can enhance its perception and practice.

The first theme explored is what necessitates the professionalisation of youth ministry. Using the descriptive empirical task to collect data on individuals' and communities' actual practices and experiences, the study discovers that the need for the professionalisation of youth ministry started to emerge when a range of incredible and unethical practices was reported among some youth workers, especially in Australia (Sercombe, 2004). As previously noted and emphasised by Sercombe (2004), there were cases of sexual abuse by some youth workers towards the young individuals they were working with and instances of misleading them to rebel against the church and government. Sercombe (2004) argued that these practices arose due to the absence of official processes to monitor and resolve the problem.

While the situation mentioned above may not be the exact case in the youth ministry of ECWA Nigeria, some practices still undermine the youth pastors and the ministry itself. For instance, as mentioned earlier, youth pastors in ECWA Nigeria are considered inferior in calling, ministry, and training compared to adult church pastors, even though both pastors receive the same theological training and are called by the same God. Therefore, this research, with the hypothesis that professionalising youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria would create an avenue for theologically trained youth workers to be acknowledged and empowered to minister independently of senior pastors, all for the glory of God, argues that youth Pastors and ministry in ECWA Nigeria will not receive the respect they deserve unless it is professionalised.

Another incentive for the professionalisation of youth ministry is the unfortunate marginalisation that youth workers face and the undervaluing of their professional roles, leading other professionals to regard them as inferior and relegating them to a lower status. According to Sercombe (2004), this frequent marginalisation of youth workers is caused by the lack of professional standing and recognition of youth ministry by others. As a result, some institutions, such as schools, government organisations, and other professional bodies, have grown more hesitant to permit youth workers to work with young people and potentially encroach on their domain. An intriguing parallel can be observed between this pattern and its manifestation in the contemporary church.

In most churches, Youth pastors are frequently relegated to lower status, marginalised and deemed inferior to other pastors. For example, Ogidi (2019) noted that some churches view youth pastors as passionate individuals needing spiritual guidance lest they fall astray. Consequently, several churches consider youth ministry an apprenticeship for aspiring pastors, where the youth pastor is assigned to be mentored and trained for the senior pastor role, irrespective of their calling. One possible solution to this is the professionalisation of youth ministry.

Resistance to Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

The fact that youth ministry has been carried out mainly by volunteers without formal training has made it difficult for professionalisation to be widely accepted among youth workers. According to Sercombe (2004), most youth workers are against professionalising youth ministry because they feel unqualified. Since training for youth workers has been optional in the past, most youth workers did not see the need to pursue any formal education in youth ministry. This has caused many youth

workers to fear losing their jobs when youth ministry is professionalised, given that they might not have the educational qualification to continue working. Unfortunately, this fear has prevented many youth workers from recognising the importance of professionalising youth ministry.

According to Sercombe (2004), Illich et al. (1994) highlighted that the critique for professionalising any work is that it is an attempt by self-interested privileged individuals to make entry into such a profession difficult and disempower clients by using some technical jargon to confuse them. "Each profession," added George Shawn, "is a conspiracy against the laity" (Koehn, 1994, p. 1). Thus, many youth workers have hesitated to embrace the idea of professionalising youth ministry due to pervasive fears that this move is part of a sinister plot to limit opportunities for laypeople and make it more challenging to enter the field. As a result, the push to professionalise youth ministry has encountered significant resistance, and many youth pastors remain sceptical of this concept.

This research analysed the resistance to professionalising youth ministry as part of its scope to offer practical solutions to address the concerns of youth workers, particularly those who volunteer in youth ministry. By examining the challenges youth workers face through the data collected in chapter four, the study identified potential strategies to promote the professionalisation of youth ministry while also addressing the fears and apprehensions of those who oppose it.

The Need for a Theological Foundation for the Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

Many scholars have established the theological foundations for youth ministry, including Barna (2000), Purves (2004), King (2006), Dean (2010), Kelly (2016),

Jackson (2016), and Strong (2016). However, little has been discussed about the theological basis for professionalising youth ministry despite being recognised as a profession (Nel, 2018). Several countries, such as North America, the United Kingdom, Wales, Malta, New Zealand, Finland, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, and South Africa (as listed by Thabethe, 2008), have already taken steps toward professionalising youth work under the Department of Education and Department of Social Services, stating that youth work and social services are interrelated (Sercombe, 2004; Ewijk, 2009; Raitakari & Virokannas, 2009; Mertz, 2017). Additionally, the strategic plan of the Commonwealth emphasised the significance of providing education and training to young individuals, thereby elevating the status of youth work across all Commonwealth nations. This was articulated in the Commonwealth Youth Program (2003) and referenced by Sercombe (2004).

Given the numerous government initiatives that seek to advance the professionalisation of youth work, it is imperative to contemplate the theological perspective on this development. Therefore, this research argues that a theological framework for the professionalisation of youth ministry is crucial because it can serve as a foundation for advocating the importance of professionalising youth ministry. By establishing clear guidelines and standards, the professionalisation of youth ministry can help ensure that young people receive the best possible guidance and support from qualified professionals equipped to meet their unique needs and challenges.

Ethical Consideration in the Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

This study on the professionalisation of youth ministry also encompasses ethical considerations. This is because professionalism requires a commitment to ethics from practitioners and the field they serve (Sercombe, 2004). Magnuson (2012)

stressed the significance of ethical considerations in the youth ministry's professionalisation, as they safeguard young people by identifying and preventing harmful practices. He further proposed that ethical considerations in youth ministry should be guided by principles rather than rules, which signifies a higher level of reasoning (Kohlberg, 1972, as cited in Magnuson, 2012). Additionally, ethics calls for a two-way conversation with oneself, as Magnuson (2012) pointed out. The discussion, as explained by Garfat and Ricks (1995), is based on two vital questions that one must ask oneself: "Am I doing the right thing?" and "Am I being effective?" (p. 393).

In other words, ethical practices require a process of self-reflection and critical evaluation to ensure that one's actions align with moral principles and lead to positive outcomes. Magnuson (2012) stated that these two questions must be kept and answered separately. This is because "it is likely, although unfortunate, that in practice the former [question] comes to mean the latter" (Magnuson, 2012, p. 29). It is common for some people to conflate these questions, thereby missing their intended goal. Therefore, it is essential to understand that these two questions are distinct and must be addressed separately to make ethical considerations authentic and responsible.

To ensure that the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria is conducted with ethical considerations, this research answered the two crucial questions posed by Garfat and Ricks (1995): "Am I doing the right thing?" and "Am I being effective?" In simpler terms, this study sought to determine whether the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria is the appropriate course of action and whether it will make the ministry more effective by answering the two crucial ethical questions: Is the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA

Nigeria the right thing to do? Will the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria enhance its practice and effectiveness?

The Place of Volunteers in the Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

Historically, youth ministry has traditionally relied heavily on volunteers who played a vital role in shaping and developing it (Adams, 1994). Packham (2008) notes that most youth workers have worked or are working alongside volunteers. Despite this, there is little discussion about these volunteers' future in the professionalisation of youth ministry. Even in educational settings that teach youth ministry, Packham (2008) highlighted that the focus is primarily on fostering positive relationships with other professionals. Youth workers are seldom trained to effectively collaborate with volunteers, even though volunteers constitute most of the youth ministry workforce.

The significance of Packham's (2012) statement on volunteerism and its correlation with the professionalisation of youth ministry cannot be overstated in this study. It affirms the belief that while professionalisation is vital in youth work, it does not diminish the value of volunteerism. Instead, it encourages a cooperative and mutually supportive relationship between youth workers and volunteers. Furthermore, this research upholds that the professionalisation of youth ministry will also enhance the contributions of volunteers.

Chapter Summary

This chapter was divided into two sections. Using the descriptive-empirical task in the first part, the chapter evaluated the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria by incorporating existing literature and the researcher's observations of the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. This was done by outlining a concise introduction to ECWA, followed by an in-depth exploration of ECWA's

perception of youth ministry and the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. The chapter further examined the policies, regulations, and guidelines governing youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria.

The second section, while still utilising the descriptive-empirical task, explained what is happening in youth ministry by delving into the literature on the professionalisation of youth ministry. The latter part of the chapter comprehensively explored whether youth ministry should be professionalised and outlined various issues related to this, such as the role of volunteers, ethical considerations, and the theological foundations of youth ministry.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter comprehensively reviews the research methodology used in the study. To help the study understand the data gathered by the descriptive-empirical task that assessed the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA in chapter two, this chapter outlines the research design employed. The chapter also includes the target population, sample size, data type and collection methods, and the analysis procedures.

Research Design

A research design serves as a roadmap or blueprint that outlines the procedures and plans a researcher will use to conduct their study (Mouton, 2001). Simply put, it guides the researcher from broad assumptions to specific details of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2014). The primary objective of a research design is to provide a framework for answering a study's research question(s). It serves as a guide that assists the researcher in their pursuit of answers. Thus, the design is carefully crafted as a comprehensive plan that outlines the approaches that will be used to answer the research question(s).

For this study, the blueprint that guided how the study was conducted was the qualitative research design and not the quantitative, mixed or triangulation research design. The decision to opt for a qualitative research design over quantitative or triangulation research was a deliberate choice, as the study aimed to delve into individuals' perceptions and thoughts on the professionalisation of youth ministry in

ECWA Nigeria through words and narratives. Salkind (2012) states that qualitative research design analyses individuals, institutions, organisations, and social phenomena in a specific context. It provides a roadmap for understanding both globalised and glocalised occurrences within their occurring context. In other words, a qualitative research methodology examines an individual's experiences and perspectives to gain insight into a social phenomenon, institution, or organisation.

In this study, the qualitative research method was employed to evaluate the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria as an institution by exploring the personal experiences, opinions, and thoughts of ECWA youth pastors. By focusing on words and narratives rather than numbers and frequencies, the study sought to understand the perspectives of youth pastors in ECWA on the professionalisation of youth ministry and to explore how the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria can enhance its perception and practice.

Another reason for choosing the qualitative research design for this study was to collect first-hand data from ECWA youth Pastors regarding their perception of the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. This resonates with two of the three research questions of the study: the second research question of the study asked, "What is the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?" and the third research question asked, "How can the professionalisation of the Youth Ministry enhance its perception and practice in ECWA Nigeria?". These two research questions account for the engagement of a qualitative research design, which allows the study to collect first-hand data on the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria and its professionalisation.

Scholars, including Marks and Yardley (2004), Merriam (2009), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006), and Tracy (2013), have argued that a qualitative research method is optimal for comprehending how individuals' lived experiences are influenced by their subjective perspective. This method gathers information from participants about their experiences, behaviours, emotions, and viewpoints in their own words. Therefore, this study employed the qualitative research design to understand the ECWA youth pastors' opinions on the professionalisation of youth ministry in their own words.

Target Population

A target population in research refers to a group of individuals with specific characteristics from which a sample is selected to participate (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Maree & Pietersen, 2007; Singh, 2007). For this study, a sample was drawn and engaged from ECWA youth pastors in Nigeria who are recognised by their DCCs as youth Pastors in ECWA.

Sample Size

Given the impracticability of studying the entire population of youth pastors in ECWA, this research selected a portion of that population to participate. For the sake of objectivity, this research requested the CED at the ECWA headquarters to provide a list of 20 DCCs located in cosmopolitan cities with a form of youth ministry and a recognised youth pastor. The rationale behind selecting DCCs located in cosmopolitan cities is for easy accessibility and security; it is risky for the researcher to travel to rural areas due to the insecurities in Nigeria. Once the list was acquired from the CED, the researcher, with the help of a certified research assistant, contacted these DCCs and relied on the various CEOs to select one youth pastor to participate in the study. The criterion given to the different CEOs in DCCs for selecting the youth

pastors is that the person must be a recognised youth pastor in an LCB or be assigned by the LCB to serve as one.

The total number of participants for the research was 20 youth pastors. Each of the 20 DCCs contacted was requested to select one youth pastor to participate in the study, bringing the total number of participants to 20 youth pastors. Each of the 20 DCCs was requested to select one youth pastor to participate in the study because youth ministry in ECWA is not fully recognised, and few people are employed and appointed to serve as youth pastors.

Types of Data

The type of data used for this research was interviews conducted face to face to gather qualitative data on the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA. Through these interviews, the participants were able to provide their subjective perspectives and opinions concerning the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA. Additionally, using interviews allowed the study to gain a more nuanced understanding of the youth ministry in ECWA, making it possible to delve into the complexities of professionalising youth ministry in ECWA.

Data Collection Methods

As Alexander et al. (2008) stated, data collection methods refer to the various techniques employed to gather information for a research study. Salkind (2012) elaborated that sources for qualitative research may include archival records, emails, open-ended surveys, videos, physical artefacts, direct observation, transcripts, participants' observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. In this research study, the method selected for data collection was individual in-depth interviews.

An in-depth interview was chosen for this study because it fosters a sense of closeness and mutual openness between the researcher (interviewer) and participant (informant), encouraging the informant to express their thoughts and emotions more thoroughly than other types of interviews. An in-depth interview involves a conversation between the interviewer and informant, guided by questions and answers, and takes place face-to-face (Conrad & Schober, 2008; Tracy, 2013). This type of interview, as earlier stated, gives both parties a sense of mutual, encouraging the informant to express their thoughts and emotions more thoroughly. One of the most significant advantages of conducting interviews is gathering detailed knowledge, information, and participant insights. By speaking with the ECWA youth pastors who participated in the in-depth interview, this study gained valuable insights into their context, experiences, thoughts and opinions concerning the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA.

During an interview, questions can fall into three categories: closed-ended, open-ended, or a combination of both (Hansen, 2013; Picardi & Masick, 2014). Closed-ended questions limit respondents from freely expressing their experiences (Picardi & Masick, 2014), requiring them to precisely answer a predetermined question without the opportunity to expand on their opinions. In contrast, open-ended interview questions allow participants to share their experiences and views without being confined to a fixed, structured question. According to Picardi and Masick (2014), an open-ended question is an interview segment where the respondent can provide a freeform response with any level of detail they see fit. This study opted for open-ended interview questions, allowing respondents to express their thoughts and experiences in their own words (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

In addition to collecting data through in-depth interviews guided by open-ended questions, the study also conducted a semi-structured interview using a flexible set of open-ended questions that allowed participants to share their thoughts. This approach provided flexibility in questioning and encouraged open-ended responses (Mason, 2010). The researcher followed pastoral and research ethics to ensure confidentiality during the in-depth semi-structured interviews. Before recording the interviews and taking notes, the interviewees were assured confidentiality. The research assistant hired to transcribe the interview recordings was required to sign a confidentiality agreement before transcribing.

Instrument Pre-Testing

A pilot study was carried out to determine the feasibility of the research and, primarily, the reliability and strength of the qualitative measuring instrument. Following the argument by Miller (2012) that a researcher can use a mobile phone to conduct a pilot study and considering the financial implication of travelling to Nigeria to conduct a pilot study, this research telephonically interviewed one ECWA youth Pastor from a DCC that is in the cosmopolitan area to test the reliability of the qualitative measuring tool. The youth pastor interviewed for the pilot study was contacted directly by the researcher based on the criteria developed for the study. Identifying and contacting the youth pastor was easy because the researcher is an ECWA member.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Ensuring the validity of a research instrument is vital in obtaining reliable answers to research questions (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, researchers must verify whether the data collection instrument can provide the necessary information (Kumar,

2011). According to Creswell (2018), to establish an instrument's validity, researchers must evaluate whether it accurately measures its intended measure.

In this research, face validity was utilised to establish the reliability of the instruments used to collect qualitative data. The researcher aligned the questions for the individual interviews with youth pastors in ECWA with the study's objective to see if a logical link exists between the two (Kumar, 2011). Similarly, content validity was employed to aid in drawing meaningful interpretations from the outcome of the collected data. This was done by ensuring that the questions asked in qualitative data collection covered all the issues measured in the study (Kumar, 2011).

Reliability of the Research Instrument

Instrument reliability in research refers to the consistency of the results obtained from the research tools used (Taherdoost, 2016). Qualitative research focuses on ensuring credibility and confirmability, meaning the study should accurately represent the interviewees' perspectives (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This study's credibility is achieved by ensuring that the research outputs accurately reflect the original views of the ECWA youth pastors interviewed without bias or misinterpretation. Appropriate themes were also identified and supported by verbatim responses while reporting the research results and findings to achieve instrument reliability for this study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a systematic and scientific approach to converting raw data into valuable information to help answer research questions (Samani, 2016). For this study, thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. This involved identifying patterns and themes within the data to draw out a set of thoughts,

behaviours, or experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Thematic analysis was appropriate for this study, given its focus on qualitative data. This study hand-coded the data collected following a rigorous process that involved identifying, retrieving, isolating, grouping and re-grouping meaningful data chunks. The transcribed interview, depicting the youth pastors' thoughts and experiences, was discussed under the themes generated in the findings section.

Ethical Consideration

In research studies, ethical considerations are crucial as they safeguard participants' dignity, well-being, and privacy. As cited by Creswell (2018), Israel and Hay (2006) emphasised the significance of ethical practices in research studies, stating that upholding ethical standards not only ensures the credibility and accuracy of the research but also helps build trust with participants and prevents any misconduct or negative consequences for the organisation.

Before the data collection for this study, the research proposal was submitted to the ethics committee of PAC University for review and approval. With the approval of the PAC ethics committee (see Appendix C), the university granted an introduction letter, which was used to seek permission to conduct the research in ECWA (see Appendix D). The authority to conduct the study was given by the leadership of ECWA at the GCC level from the headquarters in Nigeria. With the permission granted by the ECWA headquarters to conduct the study, the researcher notified the youth pastors and sought their consent to participate voluntarily by answering the interview questions. All data collected were treated with confidentiality, and they will be destroyed after one year.

Chapter Summary

This chapter offered an overview of the research methodology utilised in the study. It provided detailed information about various aspects of the methodology, including the research design, target population, sample size, types of data, data collection methods, instrument pre-testing, and assessment of the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Additionally, the chapter elaborated on the data analysis procedures used and highlighted the ethical considerations that were considered throughout the research process.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter delves into the research data analysis and discusses the findings. It also applied the normative task to determine whether ECWA should professionalise its youth ministry. The chapter did this by reflecting on the research questions, presenting the demographic information of the research participants, and then analysing the key themes that emerged from the collected data. After interacting with thoughts and arguments between the literature reviewed in chapter two and the contextual findings from the sampled population, this chapter resolved that ECWA should professionalise its youth ministry. To aid in comprehension, the chapter included visual aids such as figures to convey the findings (Pexman & Nicol, 2010).

Reflection on the research objectives

This study has the following research objectives:

1. To evaluate the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria
2. To investigate the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria
3. To explore how the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria can

The first research objective was accomplished in the first part of the literature review in Chapter 2. This chapter addresses the second and third objectives through the data gathered from in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with youth pastors in ECWA. As described below, the results and findings from Category B

outline the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria, thus achieving objective 2. Objective 3 was achieved in Category C by using the research results and findings to describe how professionalising youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria can enhance its perception and practice.

Reflection on the research questions

The research question for this study, as guided by the objectives of the research, are:

1. What is the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?
2. What is the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?
3. How can the professionalisation of the Youth Ministry enhance its perception and practice in ECWA Nigeria?

While the first research question has been addressed in the first part of the literature review in chapter two, the study aimed to investigate the second and third research questions in this chapter by breaking them into smaller units to analyse the viewpoints, experiences, and understanding of the youth pastors in ECWA. The research developed guiding questions to analyse the qualitative data collected from the participants. This was done to gain a better understanding of the following:

1. Who are the people serving in ECWA as youth Pastors?
2. How did they become youth pastors in ECWA?
3. What theological educational qualification determined their appointment as youth pastors in ECWA?
4. What is the experience of youth pastors serving in youth ministry in ECWA?
5. How do other ECWA pastors view youth pastors and youth ministry?

6. How do ECWA youth pastors conceptualise the professionalisation of youth ministry?
7. Do the youth pastors in ECWA believe that the professionalisation of youth ministry can help with its perception and enhance its practice in ECWA?

Data Findings

As discussed in Chapter Three, the data on which the research's findings are based was collected from individual interviews. The people interviewed were individuals recognised as youth Pastors in ECWA Nigeria. The interviews provided insights on professionalising youth ministry in ECWA by exploring youth pastors' viewpoints, experiences, and understanding of the topic.

Categorisation of the interview questions and participants

The questions asked during the interviews were categorised into three categories: (A) Serving as Youth Pastor in ECWA; (B) Perception of Youth Ministry in ECWA; (C) Professionalisation of Youth Ministry in ECWA. These categories were designed to help this study understand the participants' experiences and perspectives on youth ministry in ECWA and its professionalisation. Hence, the questions asked in each category were directed towards smaller units of the research topic. For example, in Category A, all the questions asked concerned the participants' viewpoint on their qualification to serve as a youth Pastor in ECWA and their experience. In Category B, the questions asked were about the participants' viewpoint on the perception of youth ministry by other Pastors in ECWA. In Category C, the questions concerned the participants' viewpoint on the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA. In the same manner, the findings of the research were classified into these three categories. All the themes concerning the qualifications and

experience of serving as a youth Pastor in ECWA were discussed in category A. The themes on the perception of youth ministry in ECWA were analysed and discussed under category B, and themes on the professionalisation of youth ministry in category C.

The participants for the data collection were youth pastors in ECWA. By youth Pastors, this research refers to individuals recognised as youth pastors in an LCB or assigned by the DCC to serve as one. The study identified 20 youth pastors in ECWA, and all were individually invited to an interview at an agreed time and date. Due to the country's economic instability during the research and the rising insecurity issues, the interviews were conducted online via Google Meet and Zoom. Out of the 20 youth Pastors in ECWA who were to be interviewed, only 13 could attend their interviews. The participation rate is presented in Figure 3.0.

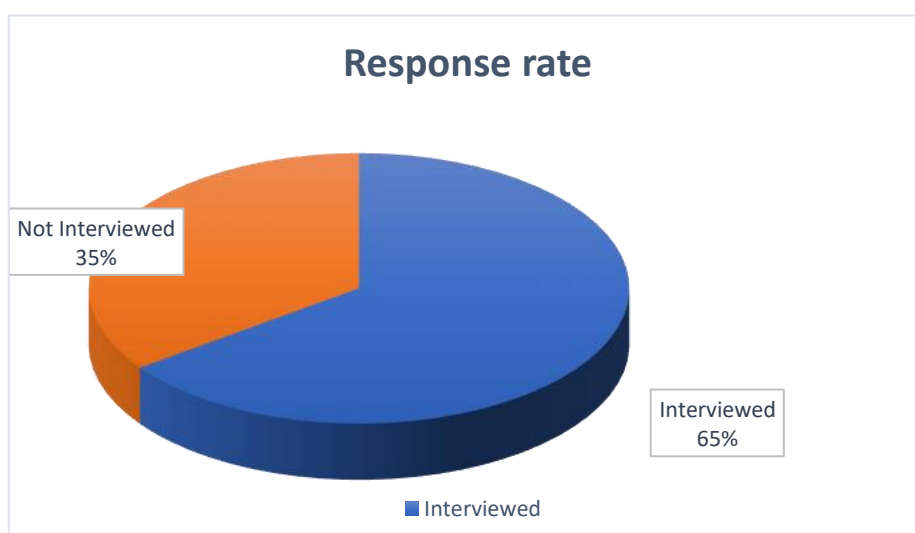


Figure 3.0: Participants' Response Rate

The rest of the youth pastors could not participate in the interview due to unforeseen circumstances and factors beyond the control of this research study.

Demographic Profile of the Interviewed Participants

Each participant was asked to answer demographic questions on age, marital status, and employment region. The research did not ask questions on gender because all the identified youth Pastors in ECWA who attended the individual interviews were male, which is not surprising because ECWA, as a denomination, does not allow women to serve as pastors (Ogidi, 2019).

Below is a description of some selected demographical details of the 13 interviewed youth pastors:

Age Range

Of the 13 youth pastors interviewed individually, one was born in the 1970s, six were born in the 1980s, four were born in the 1990s, one was born in the early 2000s, and one youth pastor declined to state his birth year. Figure 4.0 highlights the age range of the youth pastors.

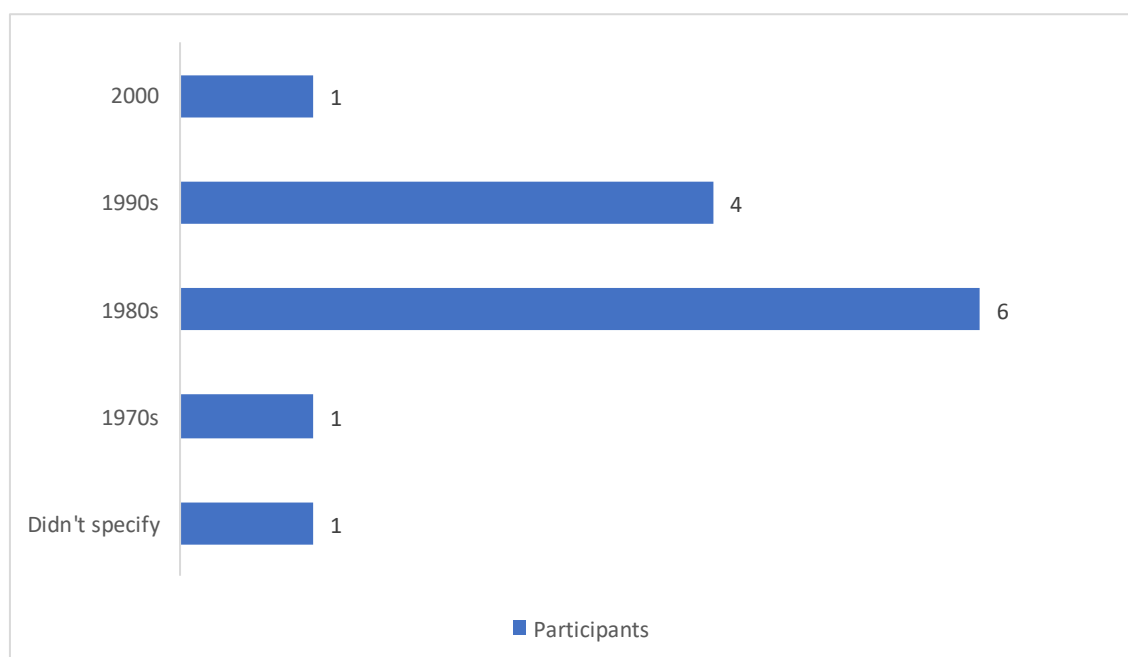


Figure 4.0: Participants age range

Marital Status of Participants

The majority of the youth pastors interviewed were married. Ten out of the 13 youth Pastors interviewed stated that they were married, and only three were not. In other words, 77% of the pastors interviewed were married, and only 23% were unmarried. This data is represented in Figure 5.0.

Years of service as a youth pastor

All the 13 youth pastors interviewed acknowledge being in youth ministry for some years. The length of their service varied from 3 to 18 years. Only two youth pastors could not recall how many years they have served in their role.

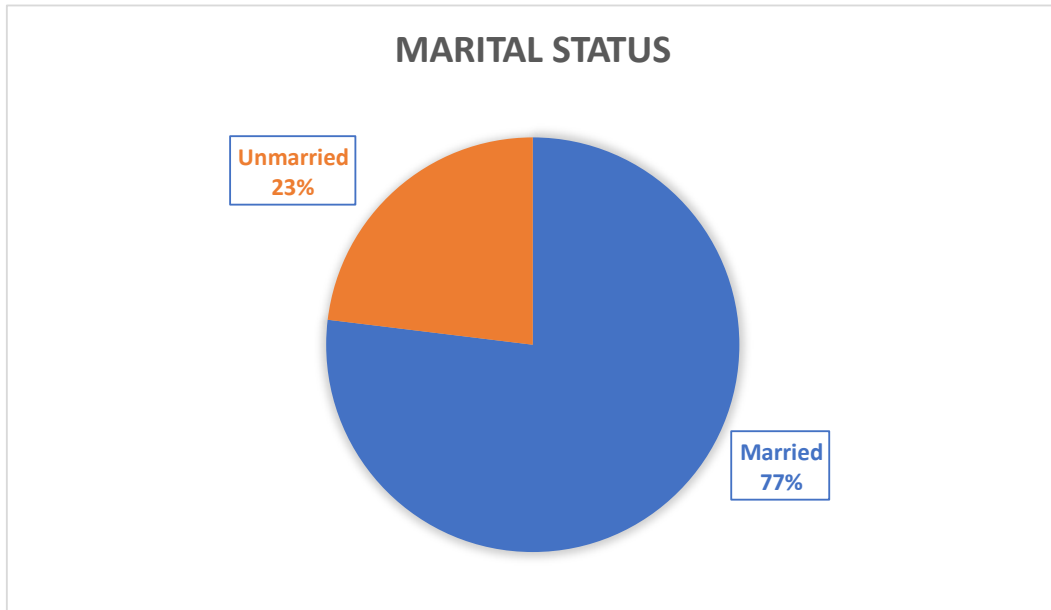


Figure 5.0: Participants marital status

Reporting the findings

Category A: Serving as Youth Pastor

All the youth pastors interviewed were asked how they became youth pastors in ECWA. The response varied from being asked to serve in that capacity by their senior pastor to seminary graduates volunteering to serve and individuals compelled by their passion and concern for the youth. In response to this question, one of the youth pastors stated that:

It was the need I first observed from my earlier years as a youth leader. It hurt me then that the church leaders did as they pleased with us. During that time, I felt the call for ministry [pastoral ministry], and I left for the seminary, and from there, I understood that there is something called youth ministry. As a seminarian, anytime I go home... I am always in the [youth] fellowship. A few years later, I was elected as an elder in charge of all church fellowship[s].

There, I began my ministry with the youth as I learned and understood the needs of the youths in the church.

Two other youth pastors stated in their respective interviews that the need they saw in the church compelled them to volunteer to serve in youth ministry. Supporting this view, another youth pastor stated that he got into youth ministry because he had “a great concern towards helping the youths to grow in maturity for Christ. ”

Other youth pastors highlighted during the interview that they got into youth ministry because they were asked to serve in that capacity. One of the pastors stated, “I became a youth pastor due to my interest and interaction with the youth, and how I relate with them, though, through songs, I was requested by a church to serve as their music/youth pastor.” Another said, “I became a youth pastor when one of my mentors directed me to lead a program among the youth.”

Some of the youth pastors stated that they were initially serving as associate pastors, and somehow, along the line, they were requested by their senior pastors to serve as youth pastors. “I am the associate pastor of the church, so I am asked to look after the youth,” said one. In the same line, another stated, “I am the associate pastor, and somehow, the lord has gifted me with some abilities to do youth ministry. That is why I am acting in the capacity of the youth pastor.”

To determine how they became youth pastors in ECWA, they were also asked if they had any formal theological training in youth ministry that qualified them to serve. None of the 13 youth pastors interviewed has formal theological training in youth ministry. By formal theological training in youth ministry, this study referred to a certified youth ministry course in a theological seminary, where the participants are given an academic certificate that confers on them the right to read and write on youth

ministry matters. While none of the youth pastors have formal theological training in youth ministry, some outlined that they have theological training in pastoral studies, with some aspect of youth ministry as part of its contents. Others affirm that they have attended seminars and training on youth ministry, which they found very helpful. One of the youth pastors stated that:

The training has helped me widen my scope of understanding toward addressing and mingling with youth... [it] helped me understand that [in] relating with this set of persons [the youth], there is a need to understand their languages, area of interest and many other things that are relating to youth activities.

Another youth pastor responded, “The little I learned from the course has helped with a few dynamics of the youth ministry.”

Category B: Perception of Youth Ministry

Before asking about the perception of youth ministry by other ECWA pastors, the youth pastors were asked about their experience working as youth pastors, especially with other ECWA pastors. Three of the youth pastors gave a one-word response. They declined to expand on it. “surprising,” “very interesting,” and “fantastic” were the words they used to describe their working relationship with other ECWA pastors.

The other youth pastors outlined that their experiences have been a mixture of highs and lows. One of such youth pastors stated that “it has been good to an extent though with some challenges.” Another outlined that “some of them have been so

instrumental to my spiritual growth, and some of them have been so discouraging.”

Affirming this, another youth pastor noted that his experience has been:

Full of wonders how some people think. Some of the pastors are very supportive, especially those who have experience with other youths in the church and the community, while some of the pastors think that I am just looking for attention to be the favourite in the eyes of the congregation.

Other responses indicate that the youth pastors did not have a good working experience with other ECWA pastors. “My experience with other pastors,” said one youth pastor, “has been a drama, actually, especially with those who have been in the ministry for Long... [Because] they consider it unspiritual to mingle with these young people. In fact, some of the old pastors call it childishness.”

Another youth pastor stated that.

Sometimes, I feel like it looks to them as if I am unnecessarily adding trouble to myself. Some of them feel like I don’t have much to do; that’s why I am troubling myself with the youths.... I see many pastors today having little or no knowledge of youth ministry. So maybe it’s not entirely their fault because they are not trained for it, and maybe they don’t have the calling and interest for it. So, my experiences with other pastors are just like I am doing something that is strange to them.

Affirming the challenge of working with other ECWA pastors, another youth pastor outlined that:

It’s indeed challenging. At some points, some pastors give no consideration and no opportunity for the Youths to be trained in the youthful perspectives given the rise in the postmodernism that is devouring our youths today. Many

other pastors give very little or no attention to the youth wing of the church.

And that makes it difficult for some of us to work with the youth.

Concerning the perception of youth ministry by other ECWA pastors, the youth pastors interviewed stated that most ECWA pastors do not recognise it as a viable ministry. One of the youth pastors said, "Some of them do not see youth ministry as anything serious, and they see youth pastor as something not necessary." "Sometimes," said another youth pastor, "youth ministry is looked down on by some church pastors."

In addition, another youth pastor stated that "the view of the youth ministry for some pastors is too poor. Some see it as a threat due to ignorance or naivism... [and] some see it as a disturbing element..."

In the same line, other youth pastors outline that other ECWA pastors have a distorted view of youth pastors. For example, one youth pastor stated that "pastors in the adult Church tend to look at the Youth Pastors as someone who has not yet started the ministry. They think that one is an inexperienced Pastor..." in line with that, another youth pastor stated "some pastors are thinking that youth pastors are looking for work to do, and when there is none, they [use] youth ministry as an entry job into ministry.

Another outlined that "some of them see me as an attention seeker... some see me as one who wants to divide the youth from the church." Similar to this, another youth pastor noted that:

Some of the pastors view youth pastors as something that does not require specialisation. They feel that youth ministry could lead to breaking out of a

church. The mindset they have is actually a lack of knowledge. They feel a youth pastor will likely break out of the denomination. Therefore, [they insist that] each pastor should be able to maintain all church members in one service.

Out of the 13 youth pastors interviewed, only two stated that other ECWA pastors perceive youth ministry as an essential ministry in the church, although they seldom support it. “Most of the pastors I meet usually claim to appreciate the youth ministry but seldom support it,” said one. The other youth pastor stated, “Many of them admit how important the youth ministry is, [although they] see it as only for junior pastors”.

After gathering the various perceptions of other ECWA youth ministry pastors, the youth pastors were each asked what they think can help improve this view of youth ministry. Some of the youth pastors stated that creating awareness of the importance of youth ministry would be helpful. One of the youth pastors upholding such a view said, “...general awareness should be made to inform the pastors that youth ministry is Paramount in this 21st century... This can only be done if chances are given by those who are professionally trained to be youth pastors”.

Other youth pastors stated that organising theological trainings, workshops, seminars, and conferences on the importance of youth ministry can help improve its perception by other ECWA pastors. In addition, some youth pastors uphold that orientation and training for other ECWA pastors on supporting and partnering with youth ministry can help improve its perception. Some of the youth pastors interviewed believe that having renowned pastors in ECWA serve in youth ministry will help other ECWA pastors realise the importance of youth ministry.

One of the youth pastors interviewed, with reference to the former ECWA president, stated:

In my view, though not all, but, many ECWA pastors need proper training and re-orientation with the rudiments and confidence needed for youth ministry, especially in this dynamic era. This is in consonant with what Rev. DR. Jeremiah Gado, former ECWA president, observed in his forward contribution to the work of John Obma. Rev Dr Gado observed, "Many Ministers of the gospel erroneously believe that they can keep doing things in their old-fashioned ways and expect to get new results. Pastors and all those who are involved in the process of spiritually moulding the lives of our youths must come to terms with the reality that the world we live in today is quite different from the world of yesteryear. Therefore, whoever is serious about reaching out to our modern-day youths and turning them into spiritual giants that will powerfully spread the true Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ must learn and master some strategies that are germane to youth ministry. We must adopt new strategies and methods of Reaching out to these youths while at the same time maintaining the unchangeable gospel message.

Another youth pastor, in response to how the perception of youth ministry can be improved, stated that other ECWA pastors need to "let go of the idea of youth fellowship [because] many are blinded to the idea of fellowship, [we] have gone past that now. God is calling us to do ministry, the idea of ministry is holistic. It's not limited to how many people come to fellowship".

However, another youth pastor stated that the perception of youth ministry by other ECWA pastors can be improved when “pastors in the adult church understand that the ministry among the youth people is as important as the ministry among the adults”.

Category C: The Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

All the 13 youth pastors interviewed were asked to state their understanding of “professionalisation of youth ministry”. The responses indicated that all the youth pastors have a relatively good understanding of the professionalisation of youth ministry. Most understood the professionalisation of youth ministry as having formally trained people in youth ministry who are also called to work with the youth. One of the youth pastors stated that:

The word professionalisation generally connotes the act of being an expert in a particular field. As relates to youth ministry, the concept of Professionalisation could mean the act of training expert persons who will operate in the arm of youth, in moulding them through church ministry. In other words, the concept refers to employed full-time pastors in order to pursue and develop set standards and needed values expected from Christian youths.

Another youth pastor outlined that “professionalisation of youth ministry... is the making youth ministry a full operating ministry, having staff who are trained... in that discipline to engage in it and be its administrators.”

Additionally, “professionalisation of youth ministry”, said another youth pastor, “may be defined as the process or act of putting in measures towards training to proficiency on the aspect of ministering to the Youths... [and making] one a specialist in youth ministry”.

With such an understanding of what the professionalisation of youth ministry means, the youth pastors were asked two follow-up questions. The first question was whether they thought the professionalisation of youth ministry could help with its perception in ECWA. In response to the question, the youth pastors affirmed that the professionalisation of youth ministry can help with its perception in ECWA. One of the youth pastors, in explaining how the professionalisation of youth ministry can help with its perception in ECWA, stated:

I feel professionalising youth ministry in ECWA will better the perception...Because it will have a structure and people passionate about the youth ministry can fully focus on it. Secondly, it will give the ministry its natural value, in the sense that it will no longer be seen as a starting point for newly employed pastors whether or not they have passion for [it and] adequate training and qualification in the area of youth ministry.

Another youth pastor outlined that the professionalisation of youth ministry would improve its perception because:

That would help ECWA see the need to employ Youth Pastors into the full-time ministry to be on their own, unlike today, where the Pastor of the Church will just appoint an elderly man or woman in the Church to handle the Youth ministry. At the same time, other senior Pastors would use their associate Pastor to oversee the activities of the Youth in the Church.

The second follow-up question asked if the youth ministry's professionalisation would help enhance its practice in ECWA, and all 13 youth pastors answered yes. In supporting their answers, some youth pastors asserted that

professionalising youth ministry is what ECWA need. For example, one of the youth pastors stated,

It will not just enhance [its practice], but it will make it more effective and restful. It will encourage people to engage in the ministry [and to those] who seek significance [and] titles. It would serve as a motivation, and for those who are passionate, it would serve as an open the door to do better.

Other youth pastors outlined that the professionalisation of youth ministry will enhance its practice by bringing out the beauty of the ministry. Additionally, it will help to reduce the derogative expressions by other ECWA pastors and encourage others, including senior pastors, to respect it. “As a matter of fact, professionalising youth ministry is a need in ECWA today,” said one youth pastor. “Let ECWA [professionalise] Youth ministry and see how her Youth will develop and the Church will have greater hope tomorrow”, said another.

In addition to this claim, another youth pastor highlighted that “if we professionalise youth ministry in ECWA as a denomination, it will help the church have the attention of the youth... [and] it will empower youth to grow spiritually and make them disciple-makers.

Thematic Discussion on the Findings

Category A: Serving as Youth Pastor

Two key themes arise from this category: diverse pathways to becoming a youth pastor and lack of formal theological training in youth ministry among youth pastors in ECWA.

Diverse Pathways to Becoming a Youth Pastor. The first theme in this category is the myriad pathways to becoming youth pastors in ECWA. The youth pastors' responses show that everyone follows no particular path to becoming a youth pastor within ECWA. This confirms the assertion by the literature reviewed in chapter two of this study that ECWA has no policy that defines the pathway to becoming a youth pastor. As Ogidi (2019) outlined, the youth ministry in ECWA is perceived negatively as a ministerial training ground. Therefore, everyone is welcome to serve as a youth pastor. To make it even more attractive and accessible, no policy was developed by ECWA to define the path of becoming a youth pastor.

So, anyone can be a youth pastor in ECWA, and the way that happens, as revealed by the youth pastors' responses, varies from church to church and person to person. Below are some of the ways individuals become youth pastors in ECWA, as revealed by the responses of the youth pastors interviewed, include:

1. **Personal motivation and calling:** Many youth pastors interviewed expressed different motivations for taking on their roles. While some felt a strong sense of calling and passion for youth ministry, “[I had] a great concern towards helping the youths to grow in maturity for Christ”, outlined one participant. Others saw the need to guide the youth within the church. “It was the need I first observed,” said another youth pastor.
2. **Being asked to serve:** Another pathway to becoming a youth pastor highlighted by some of the youth pastors interviewed is being asked to serve either by a church, a mentor or some persons of authority. “I was requested by a church,” said one respondent, “to serve as their youth pastor. Another

Respondent stated, “I became a youth pastor when one of my mentors directed me to lead a program among the youth.”

3. Pastoral Transition: The youth pastors interviewed highlighted that there were instances where they initially served as associate pastors with broader roles and responsibilities and were, over time, requested by their Senior pastors to take on the additional responsibilities of overseeing the youth ministry. This particularly corresponds to the observation made by Ogidi (2019) that the position of a youth pastor in ECWA is often assigned to the associate pastor by the senior pastor. One of the youth pastors interviewed said, “I am the associate pastor of the church, so I am asked [by the senior Pastor] to look after the youth”. Similarly, another youth pastor stated that as the church's associate pastor, he also acts in the capacity of the youth pastor.

It is important to note that the diverse pathways to becoming a youth pastor in ECWA can positively and negatively impact youth ministry. On the one hand, youth pastors with diverse backgrounds can bring different perspectives and use their unique experiences to connect with a broader range of youth. They can address youth's multifaceted needs and concerns within the ECWA youth ministry. On the other hand, the diverse pathways into youth ministry reveal the importance of providing specialised training and support. Since youth pastors may have varied experiences and backgrounds, it is crucial to have mechanisms that equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to minister to the youth effectively.

The professionalisation of youth ministry becomes necessary to prepare youth pastors for their roles adequately. This involves establishing standardised training and certification processes that equip youth pastors with the required competencies,

knowledge, and skills to effectively minister to the youth in ECWA for the glory of God.

Lack of Formal Theological Training in Youth Ministry. The second theme concerns the lack of formal theological training in youth ministry. Most youth pastors interviewed did not possess formal training or qualifications in youth ministry. Instead, they came into these roles based on their experiences, calling, and interactions with young people. While not having formal youth ministry training, a few youth pastors did have theological training in pastoral ministry with a limited focus on youth ministry. Some youth pastors mentioned attending seminars and training sessions related to youth ministry to acquire additional skills and knowledge, which they found beneficial for their roles.

It is essential to note that despite lacking formal theological training in youth ministry, all interviewed youth pastors recognised its importance. This finding contradicts Sercombe's (2004) idea that youth workers resist the professionalisation of youth ministry. According to Sercombe (2004), many youth workers oppose professionalising youth ministry because they lack the necessary qualifications. Since training for youth workers was optional in the past, most youth workers did not pursue formal education in youth ministry. As a result, many fear losing their jobs if youth ministry becomes professionalised, as they may not have the required educational qualifications to continue working.

This, however, is not the case with the youth pastors in ECWA Nigeria. The findings from interviewing the youth pastors in ECWA show that they acknowledge the importance of professionalising youth ministry and support the idea. The consensus among the interviewed youth pastors is that professionalising youth

ministry in ECWA will not lead to job losses, as outlined by Sercombe (2004). Instead, it will establish formal theological training programs and courses to empower them and anyone interested in serving in youth ministry with the necessary education and skill development to excel in their roles. They also believe that the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA will enhance the credibility of youth pastors and the youth ministry, as a recognised qualification and formal training will validate the expertise of youth pastors and foster greater trust and respect from youth and other pastors. Additionally, the youth pastors interviewed asserted that the professionalisation of youth ministry will help them stay abreast of current youth ministry practices, making their work more effective.

Category B: Perception of Youth Ministry

The first theme in this category is the predominantly negative perception of youth ministry held by other ECWA pastors. The responses outlined that most people in ECWA, especially other pastors, have a distorted view of youth ministry.

Negative Perception of Youth Ministry. The literature reviewed in this study revealed that youth ministry in ECWA is perceived negatively. According to Ogidi (2019), the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria is considered inferior. Sadly, this claim is validated by the research findings in this study. According to the youth pastors' responses, many ECWA pastors appear to undervalue the importance of youth ministry within the church. Some youth pastors reported that they believe their peers do not consider it a necessary aspect of church work, leading to a lack of support and recognition. One of the youth pastors highlighted, "Some of them do not see youth ministry as anything serious, and they see youth pastor as something not necessary."

Additionally, some youth pastors noted that other ECWA pastors often consider them inexperienced and only use youth ministry as a stepping stone to pastoral roles within the church. This finding confirms the unfortunate reality that the youth ministry in ECWA is negatively perceived as merely a space that provides passionate volunteers and fresh seminary graduates with an opportunity to hone their preaching and pastoral skills under the guidance of a senior Pastor instead of being a distinct ministry. The youth pastors interviewed stated that this negative perception is why other ECWA pastors look down upon youth ministry and view youth pastors as inferior in calling, training, and ministry despite being called by the same Triune God and undergoing the same theological education and training as the senior pastor.

As revealed by the literature reviewed and confirmed by the research findings, ECWA pastors underestimate and undervalue the importance of youth ministry, which, unfortunately, leads to a negative perception of it. Evidently, this has had detrimental effects on the impact of youth ministry in the church, as it does not receive the necessary investment in resources, time, and leadership. Additionally, the lack of recognition of youth ministry as essential in ECWA has affected the support available. This negative perception has also reduced youth engagement and participation within the church, causing young people to feel marginalised.

This study, therefore, upholds that professionalising youth ministry will help address this issue. By formally training and certifying youth pastors, ECWA can bolster the ministry's credibility and demonstrate that it is a specialised area requiring dedicated professionals who are called and trained theologically to minister to the youth in ECWA.

Potential for Improvement. The second theme in this category is the potential for improving the perception of youth ministry by other ECWA pastors. The interviewed youth pastors outlined various strategies and actions that could help improve the perception of youth ministry in ECWA. Some of these strategies include:

1. **Theological Training and Workshop:** Some youth pastors highlighted that organising youth ministry-specific theological training, workshops, seminars, and conferences is an effective way to enhance its importance among pastors in ECWA.
2. **Orientation and Training for Senior Pastors:** Orientation and training for senior pastors on supporting and collaborating effectively with youth ministries can bridge the gap and improve overall acceptance.
3. **Leading by Example:** Some youth pastors suggested that having senior and renowned pastors actively participate in youth ministry can set an example and demonstrate the importance of youth ministry in ECWA.

Important to note is that promoting professionalisation encapsulates all the strategies above, making it a better solution for improving youth ministry in ECWA. By highlighting the importance of formal training and certification in effective youth ministry, ECWA can encourage other pastors to appreciate the professionalisation process. Professionalisation can also address misconceptions about youth ministry by emphasising the specialised skills and knowledge required. This dispels the idea that anyone can handle youth ministry without specific training. As youth pastors receive formal training, the quality of youth ministry services and programs improves, leading to better spiritual development and growth of youth and, ultimately, the overall vitality of ECWA.

Category C: The Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

Before exploring the opinions of the youth pastors on the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA, they were first asked to define what they understand by the term “professionalisation of youth ministry.” All 13 youth pastors interviewed demonstrated a clear understanding of the concept. They described it as making youth ministry a specialised and full-fledged field within the church. This involves having individuals who have been formally trained and recognised as experts in youth ministry. The youth pastors emphasised that professionalisation means setting recognised standards and values within youth ministry, and part of the process involves creating a structured approach to ministering to youths within the church. Furthermore, they highlighted that professionalisation requires full-time pastors dedicated solely to working with the youth. These pastors are not just appointed based on convenience but are specifically trained and equipped for youth ministry.

The Professionalisation of Youth ministry can enhance its Perception in ECWA. The first recurring theme in this section is that the professionalisation of youth ministry can improve its perception in ECWA. For the sake of emphasis, it is important to mention again that the consensus among the youth pastors interviewed for this study is that ECWA should professionalise its youth ministry. Instead of being hesitant to embrace the idea of professionalising youth ministry due to pervasive fears that the move could be a part of a sinister plot to limit opportunities for laypeople and make it more challenging to enter the field, as outlined by Sercombe (2004) with reference to Illich et al. (1994), the youth pastors interviewed are unanimously in support of it. All 13 youth pastors interviewed for this study agreed that professionalising youth ministry would significantly enhance its perception in ECWA.

This buttresses that professionalising youth ministry, contrary to Sercombe (2004), is a welcome idea among youth pastors in ECWA Nigeria. “I feel professionalising youth ministry in ECWA,” said one youth pastor, “will better the perception.”

During the various in-depth semi-structured interviews, the youth pastors also underscored the significance of elevating the standards of youth ministry to a professional level. They pointed out that this would help eliminate stereotypes associated with it, including the misconception that it is reserved for inexperienced pastors. The various youth pastors also indicated that professionalising youth ministry in ECWA would give it the proper recognition it deserves rather than being perceived as a casual or ancillary form of ministry. This elevation, some of the youth pastors added, would enable other ECWA pastors to appreciate the value of youth ministry, integrating it as an essential component of the church.

Professionalising Youth ministry will Enhance its Practice in ECWA. The youth pastors unanimously agreed that professionalising youth ministry would also enhance its practice in ECWA. They believe it would make youth ministry more effective and efficient. Other ways the youth pastors interviewed believe the professionalisation of youth ministry will enhance its practice in ECWA include:

1. **Motivation for Youth Pastor:** The youth pastors noted that the professionalisation of youth ministry will give them a sense of significance, recognition, and the drive to excel in their roles. The youth pastors also believe that recognising their profession as a legitimate and respected field will empower them and elevate their status in the church. This, in turn, will lead to increased job satisfaction, better performance, and ultimately, improved outcomes for youth ministry in ECWA.

2. **Attracting Talent and Passion:** The youth pastors strongly advocated for the professionalisation of youth ministry, believing it would draw individuals with a sincere passion and dedication to the field. These skilled professionals would bring their expertise and talent to the table, positively impacting the youth ministry in ECWA. By improving the standards of youth ministry, the youth pastors believed that they could positively influence the lives of the young people they work with, leading to a brighter future for the youth ministry in ECWA.
3. **Reducing Derogatory Attitudes:** Youth ministry is often viewed as a less significant or professional aspect of the church. This attitude from other pastors can lead to derogatory comments and a lack of support. However, by professionalising youth ministry, the youth pastors interviewed believe that youth ministry in ECWA will become a well-respected and acknowledged ministry with trained and skilled professionals equipped to meet the unique needs of the youth in ECWA. This can also lead to a more positive and impactful approach towards youth ministry and greater unity and cooperation among pastors in ECWA.

In conclusion, the consensus among the ECWA youth pastors interviewed is that the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA can enhance its perception and practice. This will help dispel the stereotypes, including the misconception Ogidi (2019) outlined that youth ministry is for inexperienced pastors and a stepping stone to pastoral ministry. By professionalising youth ministry, ECWA will demonstrate that youth ministry is a significant and cherished component of the church, as that will position the youth ministry on par with other church ministries. It will also lead to recognising the value of youth ministry in the church and its impact on the spiritual

growth and development of the youth in ECWA. When this value is acknowledged, it garners more respect and support from other ECWA pastors.

Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed the research data and discussed the findings. The chapter started with a reflection on the research questions. After presenting the demographic information of the research participants, the chapter analysed the key themes that emerged from the collected data in three categories and interjected thoughts and arguments between already published literature and the contextual findings of the study from the sampled population. In each category, the chapter outlines the implication of the theme to the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA. Using the normative task and the research findings, the chapter determined that ECWA should professionalise its youth ministry to enhance its perception and practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In the previous chapters, the study evaluated the Youth Ministry in ECWA Nigeria, examining its nature, structure and perception by other ECWA pastors and members. This final chapter reflects on the research questions, objectives, and findings, analysing their significance and implications for youth ministry in ECWA. The chapter contains the following sections: reflection on the research question and objectives, a summary of the findings, conclusions derived from these findings, and implications for youth ministry and ECWA. Using the fourth hermeneutical task of the practical theological framework, the chapter applied the pragmatic task to discuss seven practical recommendations and interventions to help ECWA translate the research findings into actions. Finally, four areas for further research were outlined at the end of the chapter.

Reflection on the Research Question and Objectives

This study aimed to evaluate the youth ministry in ECWA and highlight the need for its professionalisation. The research questions that guided the study are:

1. What is the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?
2. What is the idea the perception of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria?
3. How can the professionalisation of the Youth Ministry enhance its perception and practice in ECWA Nigeria?

These questions were addressed as follows: question 1 was discussed in the first part of the literature review, and questions 2 and 3 were discussed in chapter 4.

The objective of this study was to evaluate the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria, investigate the perception of youth ministry in ECWA, and explore how the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria can enhance its perception and practice. Objective 1 was achieved in Chapter 2 when pertinent literature on the nature and structure of youth ministry in ECWA was reviewed. Objectives 2 and 3 were achieved in Chapter 4 when the results and findings of the research were used to describe the perception of youth ministry in ECWA and how the professionalisation of youth ministry can enhance its perception and practice in ECWA.

Summary of the Key Findings

This section presents the study's key findings and implications for youth ministry in ECWA, following the literature review and the data gathered from in-depth semi-structured interviews with youth pastors in ECWA.

Diverse Pathways to Becoming a youth pastor in ECWA

One significant theme that emerged in this study is the multitude of pathways that lead individuals to become youth pastors in ECWA. The study discovered from the responses of the youth pastors interviewed that there is no one-size-fits-all pathway to being a youth pastor in ECWA but rather a mosaic of motivations and influences that stem from personal calling, mentorship, or pastoral transitions. While this diversity can be a source of valuable perspectives and experiences, it also underscores the importance of the professionalisation of youth ministry, which entails

structured training and pathways to ensure that youth pastors have the necessary skills and knowledge to engage with the youth in ECWA effectively.

Absence of Youth Pastors with Formal Theological Training in Youth Ministry

Another theme from the interviews with youth pastors is their lack of formal theological training in youth ministry. Most youth pastors interviewed had no formal theological qualifications in youth ministry. Instead, they relied on their calling, experience, and interactions with young people to fulfil their roles. This absence of youth pastors with formal theological training in youth ministry is a critical concern that raises questions about the credibility and effectiveness of youth ministry in ECWA. It highlights the need to professionalise youth ministry by establishing standardised training and certification processes to equip youth pastors with the required competencies to minister to the youth effectively to the glory of God.

Negative Perceptions of Youth Ministry in ECWA

The research finding highlighted a negative perception of youth ministry among other ECWA pastors. According to the youth pastors interviewed, other ECWA pastors often underestimate the importance of youth ministry and do not consider it essential within the church. This perception has caused a lack of support, limited recognition, and an overall undervaluation of youth ministry. Furthermore, some youth pastors feel they are viewed as inexperienced or merely using youth ministry as a stepping stone to more significant pastoral roles. However, by professionalising youth ministry, ECWA can encourage the ministry's authority and demonstrate that it is a specialised area requiring dedicated people who are called, trained theologically and certified as youth pastors to minister to the youth in ECWA.

The need to transform the perception of youth Ministry in ECWA

The youth pastors interviewed noted a need to transform the perception of youth ministry in ECWA. They suggested several approaches to improve the perception of youth ministry, such as creating awareness, offering theological training, and organising workshops and seminars. They also propose providing orientation and training for senior pastors to support youth ministry effectively and having esteemed pastors actively participate in setting a positive example. These strategies all lead to the same conclusion: professionalising youth ministry. By highlighting the importance of formal training and certification, the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA will dispel the misconception that youth ministry is an amateur endeavour. This, in turn, will foster recognition and support among other ECWA pastors, leading to a transformed perception of youth ministry in ECWA.

Professionalisation as a Catalyst

All the youth pastors interviewed clearly understood the professionalisation of youth ministry. Their understanding of the concept involves transforming youth ministry into a specialised and respected field within the church. This process requires formally trained and recognised experts in youth ministry, along with established standards and values. It entails organising youth ministry with dedicated, full-time pastors who undergo specialised training. This research showed that professionalising youth ministry can improve its perception and practice in ECWA. It can also catalyse raising standards, motivating youth pastors, attracting passionate talent, and reducing negative attitudes. Furthermore, it will create opportunities for a youth ministry that is highly respected, well-supported, and exceptionally impactful in ECWA.

Implications for Youth Ministry in ECWA

The implications drawn from this research are far-reaching and significant for youth pastors, ECWA, and the broader field of Youth Ministry. These implications offer practical steps and strategic directions for translating the study's findings into action.

Professionalisation as an Imperative

This research underscored the significance of professionalising youth ministry in ECWA. To effectively bridge the disparity between perception and practice, ECWA should concentrate on offering formal training and certification for youth pastors. This entails setting up standards, minimum qualifications, and requirements for youth pastors. By cultivating a pool of formally trained and committed youth pastors, ECWA can elevate the status of youth ministry and encourage a more profound comprehension and admiration among other ECWA pastors.

Enhancing Youth Ministry Standards through Formal Theological Training

The absence of formally and theologically trained youth pastors in the youth ministry in ECWA calls for immediate action. To address this, ECWA should take prompt action by insisting that people who desire to serve in youth ministry must undergo formal theological training that equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge. This program, offered in one of the ECWA theological seminaries, would help train youth pastors on handling youth issues and challenges. By raising the bar for youth ministry, ECWA can be guaranteed that youth pastors will be adequately equipped to minister to the youth for the glory of God.

Challenging Misconceptions

To counter the negative perceptions surrounding youth ministry in ECWA, the ECWA leadership must focus on raising awareness, education, and support. ECWA should create awareness about the significance of youth ministry through organised campaigns and communications. Providing theological training and support to senior pastors is vital to shifting attitudes and promoting collaboration. The involvement of respected pastors in youth ministry can also set a positive example and highlight its importance. By systematically addressing these misconceptions, ECWA can elevate youth ministry to its rightful place as an essential component of the church.

Conclusion

The empirical findings of this study revealed that the professionalisation of youth ministry is essential in improving the perception and practice of youth ministry in ECWA. The Youth pastors interviewed unanimously agreed that structured pathways to youth ministry and dedicated full-time pastors with formal theological training in youth ministry are necessary to elevate youth ministry in ECWA. The youth pastors' consensus is that professionalisation is essential and transformative for youth ministry in ECWA to rise above misconceptions, stereotypes, and negative perceptions. It will enable youth ministry to become a fully respected, well-supported, and exceptionally impactful component of ECWA.

Recommendations

Based on the practical theological framework used in this research, the study applied the pragmatic task in this section to formulate strategies for addressing the issues identified and analysed in Chapter 4. As Osmer (2008) outlined, the goal of the

pragmatic task is to develop practical recommendations and interventions based on the research findings. Therefore, based on the findings of this research, which offer a solid basis for suggesting practical measures to enhance the perception and practice of youth ministry in ECWA, the study offers the following recommendations to help ECWA translate its findings into actions:

1. ECWA should develop and implement a youth ministry professionalisation

Framework: The first recommendation is the creation and implementation of a comprehensive youth ministry professionalisation Framework. This framework should encompass youth pastors' formal training and certification, ensuring they are well-equipped to serve effectively. The framework should include clear guidelines, standards, and required qualifications for youth ministry. It should be developed in consultation with experienced youth pastors, theological experts, and ECWA leadership. To implement this recommendation, this study proposes the following steps for ECWA:

- a. Establish a competent committee of experienced youth pastors, theological experts, and GCC representatives. The committee's primary objective is to conduct extensive research to gather relevant data, engage with stakeholders to obtain their input and draft a comprehensive framework that will serve as a blueprint for the professionalisation of youth ministry in ECWA. This may also involve studying other church denominations' professionalisation frameworks to identify best practices and strategies.
- b. Based on the research findings, the committee would develop clear and comprehensive guidelines, standards, and qualifications for becoming a youth pastor in the youth ministry in ECWA. These guidelines

should encompass crucial aspects such as educational requirements, pastoral skills, ethical standards, and professional development expectations to ensure youth pastors are well-equipped to serve the youth ministry effectively.

- c. The committee must conduct a pilot-test phase in selected ECWA DCCs before finalising the framework. This phase is a crucial step in the process and a valuable opportunity for youth pastors and church leaders to provide feedback, identify challenges, and suggest revisions or improvements to the framework, ensuring its alignment with the church's needs.
- d. Once the framework is finalised, ECWA should conduct training sessions and workshops to educate youth pastors and church leaders about the professionalisation guidelines. The training programs can cover topics such as understanding the framework, complying with standards, and accessing resources for professional development that would equip the youth pastors with the necessary skills and knowledge.
- e. After the training phase, ECWA can officially roll out the professionalisation framework across all DCCs. Establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the framework, including regular assessments and feedback loops, is essential to ensure that the youth pastors adhere to the guidelines, elevating the status of youth ministry and standardising its quality in ECWA.

2. Encourage formal theological training in youth ministry for youth Pastors: In line with the professionalisation framework, ECWA should encourage its youth pastors to pursue formal theological training in youth ministry. Newsletters and church announcements can communicate this information to the youth pastors in ECWA. Additionally, ECWA can build partnerships with the youth ministry department at the ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos (JETS), and churches to provide scholarship opportunities or financial assistance to support youth pastors' educational pursuits. Besides formal theological degree programs in youth ministry at JETS, ECWA can also develop short-term training programs, workshops, or seminars focusing on youth ministry topics. Such programs can supplement formal education and provide practical insights, skills training, and networking opportunities for youth pastors. Experienced youth ministry practitioners and theologians can be invited as guest instructors or facilitators.
3. Promote ongoing professional development: Professionalisation is an ongoing journey. ECWA can offer a range of professional development opportunities for youth pastors. These include regular workshops, seminars, and training sessions on various aspects of youth ministry, such as leadership development, discipleship strategies, counselling techniques, youth culture, and ministry innovation. The ECWA leadership can invite experienced practitioners, theologians, and specialists to share their expertise and insights as speakers or facilitators in these professional development programs. In addition to offline events, ECWA can leverage online platforms to provide accessible and flexible professional development opportunities for youth pastors. This may involve creating webinars, video courses, podcasts, and discussion forums

where youth pastors can access relevant content, connect with peers, and exchange ideas. ECWA can also invest in leadership development initiatives tailored to youth pastors, such as leadership retreats and intensive training courses. These initiatives could focus on developing essential leadership competencies, decision-making skills, and strategic thinking capabilities to empower youth pastors to lead confidently and effectively. To ensure that professional development programs remain relevant, impactful, and responsive to evolving needs, ECWA can use regular feedback mechanisms and performance evaluations. ECWA should periodically solicit feedback from youth pastors, participants, and stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of these professional development initiatives and identify areas for improvement.

4. Foster collaboration and awareness: Addressing negative perceptions of youth ministry requires active cooperation between ECWA leadership, youth pastors, and other pastors. This can be done by launching awareness campaigns within ECWA to emphasise the importance of youth ministry and its impact on the spiritual growth of the youth. These campaigns should highlight the value of formally trained youth pastors and their role in nurturing the youth. Additionally, ECWA can organise educational workshops, forums, and panel discussions to address common misconceptions, concerns, and questions about youth ministry. Youth pastors, experts, and representatives from ECWA leadership can be invited to participate in these events and engage in open dialogue with church members. ECWA leadership can also partner with the ECWA Television and radio stations to disseminate information about youth ministry initiatives, achievements, and impact.

Regular updates and success stories highlighting the positive contributions of youth ministry can be broadcast to raise awareness of the significance of youth ministry and challenge any damaging misconception.

5. Encourage senior Pastors' support: ECWA leadership should actively involve senior pastors in youth ministry initiatives. By providing orientation and training for senior pastors on how to collaborate effectively with youth ministry, misconceptions and negative attitudes can be challenged. When senior pastors actively participate in youth ministry programs, it sets a positive example and reinforces the significance of youth ministry in ECWA. To practically do this, ECWA would need to periodically organise orientation programs and training sessions designed for senior pastors to help them understand the importance of youth ministry within the church. These sessions can cover various topics, such as young people's unique needs, practical strategies for engaging youth, and the role of youth ministry in discipleship and mission. Moreover, ECWA can celebrate the involvement and contributions of senior pastors in youth ministry. This can be done through public acknowledgement and church-wide celebrations of the positive outcomes resulting from their engagement and the impact of their support on young people's spiritual growth and development.
6. Monitor and evaluate progress: Establishing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the impact of professionalisation efforts is essential. ECWA should periodically review the implementation of the professionalisation framework, training programs, and awareness campaigns. This assessment should include feedback from youth pastors and other pastors in ECWA. Regular evaluations will ensure that the recommendations

effectively transform the practice and perception of youth ministry. A practical way to do this would be to establish clear and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with the ECWA's mission, vision, and strategic priorities. These KPIs should cover different aspects of youth ministry, such as leadership development, program effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, and youth participation. KPIs include youth attendance rates, youth pastor retention rates, feedback from youth ministry participants, and changes in youth ministry practices. Periodic assessments and evaluations should be conducted to track progress towards these KPIs. Maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the monitoring and evaluation process is crucial, so evaluation findings, progress reports, and action plans should be shared with relevant stakeholders and seek their input and feedback. It is also important to encourage youth pastors and other stakeholders to reflect on evaluation results, share lessons learned, and collaborate on strategies for improvement.

7. Recognise and celebrate success stories: Success stories within youth ministry should be recognised and celebrated. ECWA can highlight the achievements and positive outcomes of youth ministry initiatives through newsletters, church announcements, and gatherings. ECWA can also consider hosting special events and ceremonies to recognise and celebrate success stories within youth ministry formally. By inviting youth pastors, ECWA leadership, church members, and other stakeholders to participate in these events and share their reflections on the significance of youth ministry professionalisation, ECWA can further challenge negative perceptions and inspire others to support and engage in youth ministry.

Areas for Further Study

1. **Comparative Analysis of Youth Ministries:** This study was limited to evaluating the youth ministry in ECWA Nigeria. A potential area for further research is a comparative analysis of youth ministries across different denominations in Nigeria. By studying youth ministries in various churches and denominations, insights can be gained on how different denominations approach youth ministry, their strategies, and how professionalisation affects youth ministry in each context. This comparative study can provide a broader perspective on best practices and innovative approaches to youth ministry.
2. **Long-Term Impact of Professionalisation:** While this study calls for the professionalisation of youth ministry, it is essential to investigate its lasting impacts on the church. A comprehensive study that follows the lives of those who participated in ECWA's youth ministry programs can evaluate how formal training, certification, and the elevation of youth ministry status have influenced their spiritual growth and life paths. Such research can offer valuable insights into the consequences of professionalisation on youth ministry in the long run.
3. **Comparative Study on Professionalisation in Other Ministries:** This study only investigates the professionalisation of youth ministry. However, it is worthwhile to explore other ministries, such as counselling ministry in the church, beyond the scope of this study. This approach will provide a more complete understanding of how the church is professionalising its different aspects of work. Researchers can identify similarities and differences in methods and outcomes by examining the professionalisation efforts in various ministries.

4. Cross-Denominational Collaboration: This study aimed to evaluate the youth ministry in ECW Nigeria and how professionalisation enhances its practice and perception. An area of further research is exploring collaboration opportunities across church denominations in youth ministry professionalisation and how that can improve quality and impact through sharing resources, training programs, and best practices.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Demography

1. Surname and Name.....
2. Marital Status
3. Year of Birth.....
4. District Church Council (DCC)
5. Local Church Council (LCC)
6. Local Church Board (LCB)

Questions

Category A: Serving as Youth Pastor

1. How did you become a youth pastor in ECWA?
2. How long have you been a Youth Pastor in ECWA?
3. How has your experience been?
4. Do you have any formal theological training in youth ministry?
 - a. If yes, how has that been helpful in your practice as a youth pastor?
 - b. If no, do you think it is something that can be helpful?

Category B: Perception of Youth Ministry

5. How has your experience been working with other ECWA Pastors?
6. How do these pastors view youth ministry and youth pastors?
7. What can be done to improve this perception?

Category C: The Professionalisation of Youth Ministry

8. What do you understand about the professionalisation of youth ministry?

9. Can professionalising youth ministry help with its perception in ECWA?
 - a. If yes, why?
 - b. If no, why not?
10. Can professionalising youth ministry enhance its practice in ECWA?
 - a. If yes, why?
 - b. If no, why not?

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Research: An Evaluation of Youth Ministry in the Evangelical Church
Winning All (ECWA) Nigeria: A Case for Professionalisation

Principal Investigator: Obed Lewi Yusuf

Email: lewi.obed@students.pacuniversity.ac.ke

Phone: +254706651720

Institution Contact: Pan Africa Christian University, Nairobi.
P. O. Box 56875 – 00200.
Email: enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke
+254730955000, +254730955555

1. Introduction

My name is Obed Lewi Yusuf, a member of the ECWA Gospel Urushalima, Bagadaza quarters, Gombe West DCC, Gombe State. I am also an alumnus of the ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos (JETS), class of 2018. After obtaining a Bachelor in Youth Ministry from JETS, I am pursuing my Masters in Children and Youth Ministry at the Pan Africa Christian University, Nairobi. As part of the requirements for my studies, I am conducting research for my thesis titled “An Evaluation of Youth Ministry in the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) Nigeria: A Case for Professionalisation.”

2. Potential Benefits

Participating in this study can provide valuable insights into the youth ministry in ECWA. Additionally, the data collected and analysed from this study may be used to inform policies and practices to improve the youth ministry in ECWA, especially concerning its professionalisation.

3. Potential Risks and Discomforts:

There are no known risks attached to participating in this study

4. Confidentiality

All information taken from the study will be coded to protect your name. No names or other identifying information will be used when discussing or reporting data.

7. Compensation:

You will not be compensated for participation in this study

8. Voluntary Participation and Authorization

Your decision to participate in this study is entirely voluntary, and you withdraw at any time without penalty. However, any data collected before the withdrawal will be analysed and included in the study.

I/We voluntarily agree to participate in this research program

Name of Participant(s):

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

	Certificate of Ethical Clearance	 Pan Africa Christian University Thika Road Campus Valley Road Campus P.O. Box 56875-00200 +254 730955000 +254 730955501/2 enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke www.pacuniversity.ac.ke INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (ISERC)	
This Certificate is awarded to Yusuf Obed Lewi(MCYM/14258/0/19) For the research titled An Evaluation of Youth Ministry in the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) Nigeria: A Case for Professionalisation Ref/PAC/ISERC/30/6/23 having complied with PAC University Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee's guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for ethical clearance.			
This Certificate is issued subject to compliance with the following requirements: i. Before commencing the study, you are required to obtain a Research License from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) as well as other institutional clearances as and where needed. ii. Only approved documents including research instruments and informed consent forms will be used. iii. All changes including amendments and/or deviations are to be submitted for review and clearance by PAC University Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee before use. iv. Any expected or unexpected changes that may increase the risks to study participants or affect the integrity of the study must be reported in writing to PAC University Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee within two days. v. Any request for renewal or approval must be submitted to PAC University Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee at least four weeks prior to the expiry of this Certificate and must be accompanied by a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.			
Date of issue	27/6/2023	Expiry date	27/6/2024
DR.JANE KINUTHIA  Secretary PAC_ISERC			

APPENDIX D: INTRODUCTION LETTER FROM PAC UNIVERSITY

30TH June, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

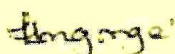
RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION & ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER FOR
YUSUF OBED LEWI REG. NO: MCYM/14258/0/19

Greetings! This is an introduction letter for the above named person a final year student at Pan Africa Christian University (PAC University), pursuing Master of Arts in Children and Youth Ministry.

He is at the final stage of the programme and he is preparing to collect data to enable him finalize on the thesis. The thesis title is ***“An Evaluation of Youth Ministry in the Evangelical Church Winning all (ECWA) Nigeria: a case for Professionalisation.”***

We kindly request that you allow him obtain a research permit so as to proceed and collect data from Evangelical Church Winning all (ECWA) Nigeria.

Kind Regards,



PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
REGISTRAR
P.O. Box 56875 - 00200.
TEL: 0721 932050 0734 400694
NAIROBI, KENYA

Dr. Lilian Vikiru
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APPENDIX E: INTRODUCTION LETTER FROM ECWA NIGERIA



Evangelical Church Winning All

ECWA Headquarters

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November 20, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Greetings in Jesus Name

I wish to introduce to you Pastor Gayus Samson Kasa who works with the Diocese of Bukuru, Anglican Communion. He is conducting a Research on behalf of Obed Lewi Yusuf, a student of Pan Africa Christian University (PAC) with the student number MCYM/14258/0/19. He is a Masters' student with the University in Nairobi, Kenya. He has our consent to collect data for Obed Lewi Yusuf's thesis, titled "An Evaluation of Youth Ministry in ECWA Nigeria: "A case for Professionalism".

Pastor Gayus Samson Kasa is personally known to me as one whom I taught at Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS).

I therefore, request that you help him identify Youth Pastors in your DCC and allow him to interview them for the purpose of the research please.

Please feel free to contact me for further details.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Benjamin Nasara
Director, Church Related Ministries
Phone No: 08036060400 (Personal)
Email: bnasara@gmail.com (Personal)

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