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Reasons why the Anglican Church in the diocese of Embu lacks programs that address the boy-child crisis

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Abstract

This study investigated the reasons behind the lack of programs addressing the boy-child crisis within the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu, Kenya. Despite the church's ongoing efforts to engage the youth, numerous challenges hinder the development and implementation of effective programs. The research used a descriptive survey design and was conducted across the Anglican Church Diocese of Embu County, Kenya. The accessible population comprised 26,108 men, women, and youths from ACK churches in the Diocese. The study involved 50 churches stratified into 7 archdeaconries, with a sample of 254 men and women and 73 youths selected through stratified proportionate random sampling. Additionally, 21 priests and 35 church elders were purposively selected, resulting in a total sample size of 383 respondents. Data collection was achieved using interviews, questionnaires, and focused group discussions. Findings revealed several critical issues: inadequate mobilisation of youths and leaders, financial constraints impeding counselling programs, a shortage of skilled personnel to manage youth crises, limited follow-up mechanisms, insufficient passion among church members to address youth issues, community reluctance to engage in church programs, and communication challenges causing organisational confusion. The study recommends enhancing mobilisation strategies, securing funding and training personnel, implementing robust follow-up systems, fostering a passion for youth welfare, engaging the community actively, and improving communication to develop effective programs for supporting the boy-child.

Keywords: Communication practices, community engagement, financial constraints, mobilisation strategies, personnel shortage.



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INTRODUCTION

The Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu faces a critical challenge in addressing the boy-child crisis, a pressing issue that has significant implications for the community. The lack of programs targeting the specific needs of boys within the church context necessitates a thorough examination of the underlying causes. Addressing these issues is vital for developing effective strategies to support and engage young males, fostering their holistic development and ensuring their active participation in church activities. One of the key factors contributing to the lack of programs for boys is inadequate mobilisation among youths and church leaders.

Mobilisation is crucial for the success of any community initiative, and its absence can lead to disengagement and inactivity. Research by Njoroge (2015) highlights that effective mobilisation strategies are fundamental to encouraging active participation in church programs. The lack of such mobilisation can perpetuate a culture of inertia, where youths and leaders are not adequately motivated or organised to initiate and sustain programs aimed at addressing the boy-child crisis. Financial constraints are another significant barrier to the implementation of counselling and support programs within the church. Johnson (2017) points out that financial limitations can severely hinder the ability of religious institutions to offer comprehensive counselling services, which are essential for addressing the psychological and emotional needs of young individuals. Limited funding affects various aspects, including training, staffing, and program development, making it challenging to provide consistent and effective support for boys facing crises. The availability of skilled personnel is also critical in addressing the boy-child crisis.

Gootman and Eccles (2002) emphasise the importance of having trained professionals who can effectively manage and support youth through their challenges. Without adequate training and expertise, the church's ability to develop and implement successful counselling programs is significantly compromised. This shortage of skilled personnel can lead to ineffective program delivery and a lack of trust among the youth in the church's ability to support them.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of youth programs is often hampered by limited follow-ups. Follow-up mechanisms are vital for maintaining engagement and ensuring the sustainability of youth initiatives. Otula et al. (2022) discuss the importance of robust follow-up systems in mentoring programs, highlighting that consistent follow-ups can enhance the growth and development of youth programs. Without adequate follow-ups, the initial impact of youth programs may diminish over time, leading to reduced participation and interest. Passion and commitment among church leaders and members are essential for the successful implementation of youth programs. Kinnaman and Hawkins (2011) note that a lack of passion can result in a failure to address youth crises effectively, as it diminishes the drive to engage with and support young individuals.

Passionate leadership is crucial for inspiring and mobilising the community to actively participate in initiatives aimed at helping the boy-child. Community engagement is another critical aspect of supporting youth programs within the church. Checkoway (2012) underscores the importance of fostering environments where communities are actively involved in youth-focused endeavours. The reluctance or indifference of the community towards church-led youth programs can significantly impede their success. Understanding and resolving the factors that contribute to community disengagement is vital for creating inclusive and supportive programs. Lastly, effective communication within the church is paramount for organisational clarity and cohesion. Carson (2005) highlights the significance of clear communication in managing the complexities of contemporary church dynamics. Miscommunication or lack of proper communication can lead to confusion and misunderstandings, which can further hinder the implementation and success of youth programs.

In summary, addressing the boy-child crisis within the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving mobilisation strategies, overcoming financial and personnel challenges, enhancing follow-up mechanisms, fostering community engagement, and ensuring effective communication. By tackling these issues, the church can create a supportive and engaging environment for youth development, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and active community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The boy-child crisis is a significant concern within many communities, including religious institutions. This literature review examines existing research and theories related to the challenges faced by the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu in addressing this issue. Key areas of focus include youth mobilisation, financial constraints, skilled personnel shortages, follow-up mechanisms, passion for youth issues, community engagement, and communication practices. Understanding these factors lays a foundation for developing effective strategies to support and engage young males within the church context.

Effective mobilisation of youth and leaders is critical for the success of church programs. Njoroge (2015) highlights that mobilisation strategies are essential for encouraging active participation in church activities. In the context of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu, a lack of targeted initiatives and leadership involvement has led to a culture of inactivity among the youth, perpetuating disengagement. This disconnect limits the church's capacity to address specific needs, such as those of the boy-child. The findings from Njoroge (2015) underscore the need for tailored mobilisation strategies that resonate with the unique challenges faced by the Diocese of Embu. Financial constraints are a pervasive issue affecting the implementation of counselling and support programs within churches. Johnson (2017) notes that limited financial resources severely hinder religious institutions' ability to provide comprehensive services, including counselling. This financial shortfall impacts training, staffing, and program development, creating challenges in sustaining initiatives aimed at supporting boys in crisis. The Diocese of Embu faces similar financial limitations, which impede the establishment of robust programs for the boy-child. The link between financial constraints and the effectiveness of youth programs is evident, highlighting the need for innovative funding solutions and resource management strategies.

The availability of skilled personnel is important for effective youth management and support. Gootman and Eccles (2002) emphasise the importance of trained professionals in community programs designed to promote youth development. In the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu, inadequate training and a shortage of skilled personnel can result in ineffective program

delivery and erode trust among the youth. The findings from Gootman and Eccles (2002) suggest that investing in professional growth and training is vital for enhancing the church's capacity to support young males effectively. Robust follow-up mechanisms are vital for maintaining engagement and ensuring the sustainability of youth programs. Otula et al. (2022) discuss the significance of follow-up systems in mentoring programs, noting that continuous engagement is necessary to nurture the growth and development of youth initiatives. Without adequate follow-ups, the impact of initial programs may diminish over time, leading to decreased participation and interest. For the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu, implementing effective follow-up mechanisms can enhance the long-term success of youth programs and ensure ongoing support for boys in crisis.

Passion and commitment among church leaders and members are essential for addressing youth crises effectively. Kinnaman and Hawkins (2011) explore the reasons behind young Christians' disengagement from the church, identifying a lack of passion and genuine concern as critical factors. In the Diocese of Embu, insufficient enthusiasm and dedication to youth issues can undermine efforts to engage and support young individuals. The findings suggest that fostering a strong sense of commitment among church leaders and members is crucial for driving meaningful interventions and addressing the boy-child crisis effectively. Community engagement is a cornerstone of successful youth programs within the church. Checkoway (2012) underscores the importance of creating supportive environments where communities actively participate in youth-focused initiatives. In the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu, community reluctance or indifference towards church programs can significantly hinder their success. Understanding and addressing the factors contributing to community disengagement are crucial for developing inclusive and supportive programs for the boy-child.

Effective communication within the church is paramount for organisational clarity and cohesion. Carson (2005) highlights the role of clear communication in managing contemporary church dynamics. Poor communication practices can lead to confusion and misunderstandings, further impeding the implementation and success of youth programs. For the Diocese of Embu, ensuring transparent and effective communication channels is

essential for aligning the church's mission with its activities and fostering a sense of community.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a cross-sectional descriptive design to investigate the boy-child crisis in the Embu Diocese and the role of the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) in addressing it. The research was conducted in the Embu Diocese, located in Kenya's Eastern Province, targeting clergy, church elders, men, women, and the boy-child demographic. The target population was 26,108 members across 50 ACK churches, including 63 clergy, 165 elders, 5,994 boys, and 20,114 men and women. Using probability and non-probability sampling techniques, a sample size of 383 respondents was determined. Systematic sampling selected 67 parishes across seven archdeaconries, and stratified random sampling was employed to choose 254 men and women, 73 boys, 21 clergy, and 35 elders. Data collection involved questionnaires, interviews, and focus group

discussions (FGDs). Questionnaires with open and closed-ended questions were distributed to gather quantitative data on the crisis and the church's interventions. Interviews with clergy provided in-depth qualitative insights, while FGDs with boys offered perspectives on their experiences. Data were analysed using SPSS version 26.0, applying thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics for quantitative data to identify key patterns. Ethical approval was obtained from Chuka University and NACOSTI, ensuring confidentiality and informed consent throughout the process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reasons Why the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu Lacks Programs that Address the Boy-Child Crisis

The study determined the reasons why the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu lacks programs that address the boy-child crisis.

Table 1: Reasons why the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu Lacks Programs that Address the Boy-child

Factor	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of mobilisation among the youths and leaders encourages laziness in the church programs	Disagree	22	8.0
	Undecided	9	3.3
	Agree	91	33.2
	Strongly Agree	152	55.5
	Total	274	100.0
Inadequate finances hinder implementation of counselling programs in the church	Disagree	7	2.6
	Undecided	8	2.9
	Agree	148	54
	Strongly Agree	111	40.5
	Total	274	100
Lack of skilled personnel to handle crises among the youth hinders development of counselling programs in the church	Disagree	17	6.2
	Agree	71	25.9
	Strongly Agree	186	67.9
	Total	274	100.0
Limited Follow-Ups Hinder Growth among the Youth Programs in the Church	Disagree	25	9.1
	Agree	156	56.9
	Strongly Agree	93	33.9
	Total	274	100.0
Lack of Passion to Handle Youth Crisis in the Church	Strongly	7	2.6

	disagree		
	Disagree	29	10.6
	Agree	110	40.1
	Strongly agree	128	46.7
	Total	274	100.0
Community Shuns Church Programs Geared at Helping the Youth	Disagree	104	38.0
	Undecided	66	24.1
	Agree	84	30.7
	Strongly Agree	20	7.3
	Total	274	100.0
Lack of Proper Communication Leads to Confusion in the Church	Disagree	66	24.1
	Agree	168	61.3
	Strongly Agree	40	14.6
	Total	274	100.0

The data above present perceptions on several critical issues impacting church programs and initiatives that help the boy-child, including the lack of mobilisation among youths and leaders, inadequate finances for counselling programs, insufficient skilled personnel to handle youth crises, limited follow-up mechanisms, lack of passion for addressing youth crises, community reluctance to engage in church programs, and communication challenges within the church. These findings highlight significant concerns among respondents, emphasising the need for effective strategies to enhance participation, mobilise resources, and foster engagement within the church community. The findings underscore the significance of addressing these multifaceted challenges to ensure the growth and sustainability of church programs aimed at supporting youths.

Lack of Mobilisation among the Youths and Leaders Encourage Laziness in the Church Programs

Lack of mobilisation among the youths and leaders encourages laziness in the church programs, which highlights a concern within church communities where insufficient efforts to engage and mobilise young people and leaders can cause a general lack of enthusiasm and participation in church activities Njoroge (2015). This situation may result in decreased productivity and a decline in the vibrancy and effectiveness of church programs, as the potential contributions and dynamism of both youth and leaders are not fully utilised. This suggests that proactive measures and strong leadership are essential to inspire active involvement and prevent complacency within the church. Findings of this

research indicated that a significant majority of respondents, comprising 152 individuals (55.5%), strongly agreed that lack of mobilisation among youths and leaders encouraged laziness in church programs. Additionally, 91 (33.2%) agreed with this assertion, while a smaller proportion of respondents, 22 (8.0%), disagreed, and 9 (3.3%) remained undecided.

These findings highlight a prevalent concern among respondents regarding the impact of inadequate mobilisation among youths and leaders on church program engagement and productivity. Considering a significant majority (55.5%) who strongly agreed that insufficient mobilisation contributes to laziness within church activities and an additional 33.2 per cent who agreed, this indicates a consensus among the surveyed population. However, a minority disagreed (8.0%), while a small percentage (3.3%) remained undecided, possibly due to differing interpretations of mobilisation effectiveness. Overall, the data underscores the importance of effective mobilisation strategies to enhance participation and productivity within religious communities. These findings resonate with the scholarly perspective presented by Njoroge (2015) in the doctoral dissertation on factors affecting youth participation in church programs within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kajiado Presbytery, Kajiado County, Kenya. Njoroge explored lack of mobilisation as a challenge and barrier faced by youths and leaders in actively engaging with church programs, shedding light on the implications of lack of mobilisation for participation and commitment within the church community.

Inadequate Finances Hinder Implementation of Counseling Programs in the Church

The assertion inadequate finances hinder the implementation of counselling programs in the church sheds light on a significant obstacle faced by churches in establishing and maintaining counselling initiatives. This statement emphasises how financial constraints directly impede the implementation of such vital programs within the church community. Due to limited resources, churches may struggle to allocate funds towards hiring qualified counsellors, acquiring necessary materials, or providing training for volunteers. Consequently, this financial shortfall restricts the scope and effectiveness of counselling services offered, hindering the church's ability to address the diverse emotional and psychological needs of its members. By acknowledging and addressing these financial challenges, churches can better prioritise the allocation of resources to support the establishment and sustainability of counselling programs, thereby enhancing their capacity to provide crucial support and guidance to individuals in need within the congregation. In this research, results indicated that a significant portion of respondents, comprising 111 individuals (40.5%), strongly agreed that inadequate finances hinder the implementation of counselling programs in the church. Additionally, 148 respondents (54.0%) agreed with this assertion, while a smaller proportion of respondents, 7 (2.6%), disagreed, and 8 (2.9%) remained undecided.

The research findings, indicating that a significant portion of respondents strongly agreed (40.5%) and a majority agreed (54.0%) with the assertion that inadequate finances hinder counselling program implementation in the church, indicate a widespread acknowledgement among respondents regarding the challenges posed by financial limitations in church settings. However, a small percentage disagreed (2.6%), and some remained undecided (2.9%). This variability in viewpoints may have stemmed from differing perceptions or awareness levels regarding counselling program funding intricacies. Overall, the data highlights the critical role of financial resources in facilitating effective counselling services delivery within religious contexts, emphasising the need to address these constraints to adequately meet congregants' needs and provide essential support within the church community. These findings align with challenges outlined by scholars such as Johnson (2017), who examined the

implementation of counselling programs within church contexts. Financial constraints often emerge as a barrier to the effective delivery of counselling services, limiting resources for training, staffing, and program development. This resonates with the broader literature on church-based interventions and underscores the importance of addressing financial barriers to ensure accessible and effective counselling support within religious communities.

Lack of Skilled Personnel to Handle Crisis among the Youth Hinder Development of Counseling Programs in Church

Lack of Skilled Personnel to Handle Crisis among the Youth hinders the development of Counseling Programs in the church and underscores a critical barrier to the establishment and growth of counselling initiatives within religious communities (Gootman & Eccles, 2002). It highlights how the absence of qualified individuals capable of effectively addressing the diverse and complex crises faced by young people impedes the development and implementation of counselling programs in churches. Without skilled personnel trained to navigate these challenges, the church may struggle to provide adequate support and intervention for youth experiencing crises such as mental health issues, substance abuse, or family conflicts. This shortage of expertise not only limits the effectiveness of counselling services but also hampers the church's ability to fulfil its pastoral responsibilities towards its younger members. By investing in training and recruiting skilled professionals or equipping existing staff and volunteers with relevant skills, churches can better meet the pressing needs of youth in crisis and foster a supportive environment conducive to their holistic well-being.

The findings of this research indicated that there is a significant concern among respondents regarding the hindrance posed by a lack of skilled personnel to handle youth crises in the development of counselling programs in the church. Specifically, 186 individuals (67.9%) strongly agreed with this notion, while 71 respondents (25.9%) agreed. In contrast, a smaller proportion of participants, comprising 17 individuals (6.2%), disagreed. These findings underscore a consensus among respondents regarding the vital role of skilled personnel in the effective development of counselling initiatives within church contexts. These findings align with the perspective of Gootman and Eccles (2002) as presented

in their work on community programs to promote youth development. They emphasise the crucial role of well-trained personnel in addressing the diverse needs of young individuals. The data indicating a lack of skilled personnel hindering the development of counselling programs in church settings resonates with Gootman and Eccles' viewpoint, highlighting the importance of investing in personnel training to effectively support youth and address their crises within religious institutions.

Limited Follow-Ups Hinder Growth among the Youth Programs in the Church

The limited follow-up practices within the youth programs of the church hinder their growth and effectiveness (Njoroge, 2015). Without consistent and thorough follow-up procedures, the church fails to sustain the momentum generated by its youth programs, hindering their overall development. This deficiency in follow-up efforts results in missed opportunities to provide ongoing support, mentorship, and guidance to young participants, ultimately impeding their growth and engagement within the church community. By implementing robust follow-up strategies, the church can nurture stronger relationships with youth members, foster their spiritual and personal development, and ensure the longevity and success of its youth programs. Research findings showed that a significant proportion of respondents recognise the hindrance posed by limited follow-ups on the growth of youth programs in the church. Specifically, 156 (56.9%) agreed, while 93 respondents (33.9%) strongly agreed with this assertion. In contrast, a smaller group of participants, comprising 25 individuals (9.1%), disagreed.

These results highlight a prevailing concern among respondents regarding the adverse effects of inadequate follow-up mechanisms on the progression of youth-focused initiatives within church settings. The data underscores the significance of establishing robust follow-up systems to nurture the growth and sustainability of youth programs in the church. Limited follow-ups can impede the effectiveness of these initiatives by hindering ongoing support, guidance, and engagement with young individuals. This may result in missed opportunities for mentorship, spiritual development, and community involvement, ultimately affecting the overall success of youth programs. The work of Otula, Ogal, Papu, Odhiambo, and Osei-Bonsu

(2022) resonates with the findings, as they emphasise the importance of effective mentorship programs within the church community. Their work on biblical-theological strategies for mentorship underscores the need for comprehensive follow-up mechanisms to ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of youth initiatives. Otula et al.'s (2022) perspective reinforces the significance of addressing issues related to limited follow-ups to facilitate the growth and development of youth programs in religious contexts.

Lack of Passion to Handle Youth Crisis in the Church

The lack of passion to handle youth crises in the church is a significant concern, as highlighted by Dean (2004). When individuals within the church lack the fervour and commitment necessary to address the crises faced by young people, it diminishes the effectiveness of the church's response. Without a passionate approach to youth ministry, the church may struggle to provide the necessary support, guidance, and intervention when crises arise. This lack of passion not only hampers the church's ability to effectively minister to its youth but also risks alienating young people who may perceive the church as indifferent or unresponsive to their needs. By embracing and practising passion in youth ministry, the church can create a more supportive and empowering environment that is better equipped to address the crises and challenges confronting its youth members. Research findings revealed a notable recognition among respondents regarding the presence of insufficient passion in addressing youth crises within the church. Specifically, results showed that 128 (46.7%) agreed, while 110 respondents (40.1%) strongly agreed with this sentiment. Conversely, a smaller segment of participants, consisting of 29 individuals (10.6%), disagreed, and 7 respondents (2.6%) strongly disagreed.

The data underscores the critical importance of passion and commitment in effectively addressing youth crises within the church. Insufficient passion may hinder the implementation of proactive measures and support systems necessary for addressing the diverse challenges faced by young individuals. This lack of fervour could result in missed opportunities for meaningful engagement, mentorship, and support, potentially exacerbating issues and alienating youth from the church community. The perspective of scholars Kinnaman and Hawkins (2011) aligns with the findings as they examine

the reasons behind young Christians' disengagement from the church. Their work emphasises the need for churches to reevaluate their approaches and prioritise genuine engagement and support for youth. Kinnaman and Hawkins' insights underscore the significance of addressing the lack of passion in handling youth crises within the church, emphasising the importance of fostering environments that actively support and nurture young individuals in their faith journeys.

Community Shuns Church Programs Geared at Helping the Youth

The phenomenon where the community shuns church programs geared at helping the youth presents a significant challenge to the effectiveness and reach of these initiatives (Checkoway, 2012). When the broader community does not engage with or support youth programs offered by the church, it undermines the potential impact of these efforts. Such disengagement can stem from a variety of factors, including a lack of awareness, perceived irrelevance of the programs, or previous negative experiences. This lack of community support not only hampers the church's ability to connect with and assist young people but also limits the resources and opportunities available to them. By fostering stronger community relations and actively involving locals in the planning and implementation of youth programs, the church can enhance participation and ensure that these initiatives are more inclusive, relevant, and impactful. Analysis of the data reveals varied attitudes among respondents regarding the involvement of the community in church programs for youth assistance. Notably, 104 individuals (38.0%) disagreed with the notion that the community shuns such programs, while 66 respondents (24.1%) remained undecided. On the other hand, 84 participants (30.7%) agreed, and 20 individuals (7.3%) strongly agreed with the assertion that the community indeed avoids involvement in these church initiatives.

The findings suggest a complex landscape where perceptions regarding community engagement with church-led youth programs are divided. While a significant portion of respondents disagree with the notion of community avoidance, a notable proportion remains undecided or expresses agreement with this perspective. This variability in viewpoints underscores the need for further exploration to understand the underlying factors influencing community attitudes

towards church initiatives aimed at youth support. Addressing any barriers or misconceptions hindering community involvement is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of such programs. Checkoway (2012) provides insights into the dynamics of community engagement with initiatives targeting young individuals in his research on youth participation and community change. His work emphasises the importance of fostering supportive environments where communities actively engage with youth-focused endeavours. This perspective underscores the significance of understanding and addressing factors that may contribute to community reluctance or indifference towards participating in church-led youth programs (Checkoway, 2012).

Lack of Proper Communication Leads to Confusion in the Church

Effective communication is vital for any organisation to function smoothly, including religious institutions such as churches. The lack of proper communication causes confusion within the church, as highlighted by Carson (2005). When communication channels are unclear or ineffective, it can result in misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and a general sense of disarray among church members. This confusion can affect the coordination and execution of church activities, hinder the dissemination of important information, and create conflicts within the congregation. Proper communication is essential for fostering a cohesive and harmonious church environment where members are well informed and aligned with the church's goals and initiatives. By prioritising clear, transparent, and effective communication strategies, the church can mitigate confusion and ensure that all members are on the same page, thereby enhancing the overall functionality and unity of the church community. Results of this research indicated that a significant proportion of respondents perceived communication challenges within the church context. Specifically, 66 respondents (24.1%) disagreed with the notion that lack of proper communication leads to confusion, while 168 (61.3%) agreed, and 40 (14.6%) strongly agreed with this assertion. These percentages highlight a prevailing concern among church members regarding the clarity and effectiveness of communication channels within their religious community.

The high percentage of agreement and strong agreement suggest a consensus among respondents regarding the

detrimental effects of inadequate communication. This sentiment likely arises from experiences of misinterpretation, ambiguity, or lack of information within the church environment. Furthermore, the relatively low percentage of disagreement indicates that only a minority of respondents perceive communication within the church as satisfactory or free from confusion. This minority perspective could stem from various factors, such as effective communication practices in specific church departments or individual experiences that differ from the general sentiment. Overall, these findings underscore the significance of addressing communication challenges within the church context.

Effective communication is vital for promoting transparency, fostering a sense of community, and ensuring alignment with the church's mission and values. By acknowledging and addressing these challenges, religious institutions can enhance organisational clarity, cohesion, and member satisfaction. In his work on becoming conversant with the emerging church, Carson (2005) emphasises the importance of communication within evolving religious movements. His research underscores the need for effective communication strategies to navigate the complexities of contemporary church dynamics. Aligning with Carson's perspective, the findings of this study underscore the significance of prioritising clear and open communication channels within the church to address confusion and promote organisational clarity and cohesion.

Challenges Faced by the Clergy in their Endeavour to Help the Boy-child

Muchangi (OI, 2024) highlighted the lack of commitment among boys as a significant challenge hindering intervention efforts in Nginda Archdeaconry. This issue suggests a need for further engagement strategies to instil a sense of responsibility and dedication among the youth. Addressing this challenge may require tailored programs that inspire and motivate boys to actively participate in initiatives aimed at their development and well-being. In contrast, Munene (OI, 2024) from the Cathedral Archdeaconry pointed out the low turnout of boys for youth activities as a major concern. This problem could stem from various factors, such as lack of interest, competing priorities, or barriers to participation. To address this issue, there may be a need for outreach efforts to understand the reasons behind the low turnout and develop strategies to make

activities more appealing and accessible to boys. Manase (OI, 2024) and Wachira (OI, 2024), both serving the Cathedral Arch-Deaconry, identified drug addiction among boys, scarcity of resources, and unwillingness to accept help as significant challenges. These issues underscore the complexity of the problems facing boys and the need for multifaceted approaches that address not only behavioural issues but also structural and attitudinal barriers.

Collaboration with relevant stakeholders and resource mobilisation efforts may be essential in overcoming these challenges and providing comprehensive support to boys in need. Ireri (OI, 2024) from Kianjokuma Archdeaconry noted that society's contentment with the current situation poses a challenge to intervention efforts. This observation highlights the importance of community engagement and advocacy to raise awareness about the issues affecting boys and garner support for initiatives aimed at addressing them. Njiru (OI, 2024) from Kagaari Archdeaconry and Gitonga (OI, 2024) from the same archdeaconry highlighted the absence of boys in meetings and a lack of participatory attitude among them as obstacles. These challenges underscore the importance of creating inclusive and welcoming spaces where boys feel valued, respected, and empowered to actively engage in discussions and activities related to their well-being.

Kariuki (OI, 2024) serving the Kigari Archdeaconry expressed concerns about the impatience of most boys, while Njue (OI, 2024) from the same archdeaconry highlighted their non-response to meeting calls. These issues may reflect underlying communication and engagement challenges that need to be addressed through targeted communication strategies and efforts to build trust and rapport with boys. Kithinji (OI, 2024), serving Karungu Archdeaconry, mentioned financial constraints as a significant challenge. Limited resources may impede the implementation of effective programs and interventions, highlighting the importance of resource mobilisation and sustainable funding mechanisms to support initiatives aimed at assisting boys. Similarly, Muriithi (OI, 2024) and Mutugi (OI, 2024), both serving Nembure Archdeaconry, identified financial constraints as a significant problem. Overcoming these challenges may require creative solutions such as partnerships with other organisations,

fundraising activities, or advocacy for increased investment in youth development programs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions: The study highlights several interrelated challenges faced by the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Embu in its efforts to support boy-child programs. Key issues include ineffective mobilisation of youth and leaders, which diminishes engagement and enthusiasm, as noted by 88.7 per cent of respondents. Financial constraints, agreed upon by 94.5 per cent, limit the church's ability to fund and sustain counselling services due to an inability to hire qualified personnel. Additionally, a shortage of skilled staff (93.8%) and inadequate follow-up mechanisms (90.8%) further undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of youth programs. There is also a general lack of passion among church members for addressing youth issues, as reported by 86.8 per cent of respondents. Community involvement is mixed, with some perceiving a lack of support for youth initiatives, and poor communication within the church is identified as a significant issue, affecting 75.9 per cent of respondents. Overall, these findings suggest that improving mobilisation, funding, skilled staffing, follow-up practices, and communication are crucial for enhancing the church's youth programs.

Recommendations: There is a need to prioritise financial resources for counselling programs. The church

should explore diverse funding sources, such as partnerships with external organisations, fundraising events, and community contributions, to alleviate financial constraints and support the development of counselling services. To overcome the shortage of skilled professionals, the church should invest in training existing staff and volunteers or recruit qualified personnel. Collaborations with educational institutions or professional organisations could facilitate this process. Establishing robust follow-up systems is crucial for the growth of youth programs. The church should create structured follow-up procedures to provide ongoing support and mentorship to youth, ensuring that they remain engaged and benefit from the programs. To enhance community support for youth programs, the church should engage in outreach efforts to raise awareness about the benefits of these initiatives. Building partnerships with community organisations and hosting events that showcase the impact of the programs can help increase involvement and support. The church should prioritise clear and effective communication channels to reduce confusion and improve coordination. Implementing regular updates, feedback mechanisms, and transparent information-sharing practices can enhance organisational clarity and member satisfaction.

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