

**THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IN THE INTEGRAL FORMATION OF
TEMPORARY PROFESSED SISTERS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ST PAUL, NAIROBI,
KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem: Though spiritual direction among temporary professed, Daughters of St Paul in Nairobi Kenya has been practiced, there is still need for improvement through the implementation of listening for fruitful formation and integral growth. The researcher concludes that if this skill is not employed, the sisters will still find spiritual direction not interesting and consequently they will have unbalanced growth. Through this study, the researcher hopes to find a solution to the improvement of the practice of spiritual direction.

Purpose of the Study: This study investigates the role of Spiritual direction in the integral formation of the temporary professed sisters of the Daughters of St Paul in Nairobi Kenya. The objective of the study is to investigate the value of listening in spiritual direction for integral formation of temporary professed sisters of the Daughters of St Paul in Nairobi Kenya.

Research Methodology: The study is guided by the five stages of the Ignatian Pedagogy. The author used qualitative research method in which data was collected through interview guide and focused group discussion guide. Under qualitative research method, the author used case study design and phenomenology, which looks on people's experiences in a specific group.

Findings: The findings of the study show that proper implementations of listening, facilitates the improvement of the practice of spiritual direction. The study also indicates that training of the spiritual directors is essential for the effective spiritual direction. For fuller freedom, openness and in order to avoid the confusion of the roles, the study reveals that it is advisable to have a spiritual director outside the community.

Conclusion: The study concludes that the implementation of the listening will improving the practices of spiritual direction.

Recommendations: There should be more trained persons for spiritual direction in order to facilitate smooth running of the practice of the spiritual direction.

Key Words: *Spiritual direction, integral formation, temporary professed sisters.*

1.0 Introduction

The decision to explore the role of spiritual direction in the integral formation of the Daughters of St. Paul was motivated by the gap the researcher observed, that, though spiritual direction is valued by the Daughters of St. Paul, its practice by the temporary professed sisters is not very effective. This could be that the spiritual directors may not be effective in the use of the skills of spiritual direction. Thus, the need to carry out this study is to investigate the role played by spiritual director through listening skill in order to motivate the sisters to be more committed to this valued spiritual exercise.

From the religious perspective particularly among the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul, the Founder Blessed James Alberione made it clear that spiritual direction is necessary for one's growth. According to him, a well-balanced Pauline is like a car on four wheels; community life, apostolate, study and prayer in which spiritual direction is inclusive.¹ According to Alberione, none of the four should neither miss nor considered less important as they all carry similar weight but different roles.

Existing literature on spiritual direction shows that understanding and integration of the listening skill in spiritual direction will facilitate an integral formation of the religious in their relationship with self, with God and others.² The Church as Mother and Teacher, aware of the struggles and challenges involved, has been at the forefront in guiding her children towards this intimate union by continuously providing adequate and relevant means to achieve it.

In the Hebrew Scripture, though we do not have explicitly words "spiritual direction," there are some instances whereby we can acknowledge the presence of spiritual direction. The Sons of the Prophets recognised Elijah and later Elisha too as their guide, director (2Kgs 2:15-18). Spiritual direction serves as an opportunity for growth in relationship with God and with self. "It has to do with our relationship with ourselves and how we come to grow in the life of virtue, resolving obstacles that stand in the way of love that is truly self-giving."³ Before Elijah handed over his ministry, he made some journey with Elisha. It was a friendly and spiritual one whereby the incoming prophet was able to clarify his doubts, fears and be strengthened for the new mission (2Kgs 2: 1-18). Still in the Old Testament, there are many such evidences such as; David directed by Nathan (2Sam 12: 1-15) and Joshua being directed by Moses.

Then Moses summoned Joshua and in the presence of all Israel said to him, "Be strong and steadfast; for you shall bring these people into the land which the Lord swore to their ancestors he would give them; it is you who will give them possession of it. It is the Lord who goes before you; he will be with you and will never fail or forsake you. So do not fear or be dismayed" (Dt 31:7-8).

Moses too encourages and affirms his successor the continuous presence of God in the mission was about to embrace.

¹ Famiglia Paolina, *Opera Omnia Multimediale*. Beato Giacomo Alberione, <http://operaomnia.alberione.org/capitolo.php>? Accessed on 24th July 2021.

² Leslie A. Hay, *Hospitality: The Heart of Spiritual Direction* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2006), 22-24.

³ FR Thomas Acklin OSB, *What Is Spiritual Direction? A Spiritual Director Explains*, St Paul Center, 17th September 2018, <https://stpaulcenter.com/what-is-spiritual-direction-a-spiritual-director-explains/>. Accessed on 27th July 2021.

In the New Testament, especially the gospel of Mark, Jesus instructed and guided his disciples on various occasions (Mk 3:7-35), the explanation of the parable of the sower (Mk 4: 13-20) and the Coming of the end time (Mk 13:3-8). In the Acts of Apostles however, Paul, after his conversion was sent by Jesus to Ananias for some direction on what to do (Acts 22:6-10). Paul was also instructed by Barnabas.

2.0 Listening Skills in Spiritual Direction and Integral Formation

Listening is an art which is required both for the director and the directee but more for the director who is called to have a higher degree of listening with great patience and full responsibility.⁴ The demands of patience and responsibility call for total dedication of time, mind, will and heart to the person who is sharing his sacred journey. “The whole purpose of spiritual direction is to penetrate beneath the surface of a man’s life, to get behind the façade of conventional gestures and attitudes which he presents to the world.”⁵ Patience allows the Spirit of God to work in the directee and responsibility to cooperate in the graces revealed. It goes beyond mere hearing to reach its fruition.⁶ The director ought to listen from ordinary to global level. It entails three levels which are: concentration on oneself, concentration on the speaker and finally a global one which concentration is given to the speaker in a wider sense.⁷ Listening to the third level helps the director to notice and sense what in ordinary listening could not be heard or seen. It provides a richer and objective way of response and assistance.

According to Pope Francis, “listening and accompaniment”⁸, call for three distinct and complementary kinds of sensitivity: First, is that which is directed towards the individual which involves willingness to listen and to spare time for the person who is sharing. A good example is that of the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35). Second, is sensitivity through discernment which marks the grace present. It helps to discern the prompting of the Holy Spirit and the snares of the evil spirit. Third, the ability to perceive the driving force in the other person which goes deeper beyond the likes and feelings as it seeks to discern their ultimate intention.⁹ This approach of Pope Francis could be analogously compared to Alberione’s approach to Jesus as Truth, Way and Life. Truth, that is, listening to the mind, way, being able to discern and Life, to make a definitive decision on the life to follow.¹⁰ The spiritual director’s role is not only to listen but to be present body, mind and Spirit so as to be of great support to the directee.

Listening is an art which calls upon not only going beyond ordinary listening but also listening in the Spirit. Guenther explains the art of listening as holy listening, giving an example which was given by St Antony the Great who quoted Abba Paphnutius saying, “I have seen a man on the banks of the river buried up to his knees in mud and some men came to give him a

⁴ Janet K. Ruffing, *Spiritual Direction* (New York: Paulist Press, 2019), 101.

⁵ Peter Madsen Gubi “Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment.” In *Therapy, Culture and Spirituality*, Creg Nolan, William West, Ed., (2015). 175.

⁶ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, The Joy of the Gospel *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 171: AAS 12 (2013), 1091.

⁷ Elizabeth Ngozi Okpalaenwe, *Psychological Counselling for Africa: Handbook on Psychotherapy and Cultural Counselling in African Context* (Onitsha, Nigeria: Laurans Prints Limited, 2014), 219-221.

⁸ Pope Francis, Post- Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christ is Alive *Christus vivit* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 291.

⁹ Pope Francis, Post- Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christ is Alive *Christus vivit* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 292-294.

¹⁰ James Alberione, *Opera Omnia: Ut Perfectus Sit Homo Dei* (Rome: Centre of Pauline Spirituality, 1998), 148.

hand to help him out, but they pushed him further in up to his neck.”¹¹ Guenther continues that, “Whatever we do as spiritual Directors, we are neither to mess with them nor push them further into the mud.”¹² To avoid this, the spiritual director has to ask for the grace of God so as to be docile to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The main role of the director in spiritual direction is to listen so as to help the directee deepen his relationship with self, others and God. Good listening will also facilitate the skills of direction. “Not because the director is somehow ‘better’ or ‘holier’ than the directee, but because in this covenanted relationship the director has agreed to put himself aside so that this total attention can be focused on the person sitting in the other chair”.¹³ This disposition will not only encourage the directee to share but also will make her feel listened to and heard.

Dell’ Antonio Andrew, comments that hearing in listening was more emphasized by our Catholic spiritual leaders during reformation whereby they drew up a model known as *recte sentire* which translates as a true way of feeling/thinking that could guide the righteous Christian toward the correct understanding and embodiment of one true faith. Today *sentire* is translated as to hear.¹⁴ Thus, our listening ought to lead us in hearing and in order to attain quality hearing our faculty has to be well trained on the quality listening. It implies wisdom which calls for listening even to what was not said correctly.¹⁵ In addition, good listening, makes the directee feel accepted and helps her to gain self-confidence.¹⁶ Even though the director is not there to solve problems or give some solutions but in case any response is given from this wise listening, it will be a solid and comprehensive one.

The directee must listen in order to become aware of God’s presence in his life and the invitation or message that God wants to communicate to him. Recollected kind of listening not only facilitates free sharing but also helps us to be in touch with our feelings.¹⁷ The directee is encouraged to be free to let the Holy Spirit leads wherever he wants. Hence, there is no set of programs on what to speak or how to speak it.

From the literature reviewed on listening skills the gap is clearly shown. The synod of youth raised concern on the intensity of the matter. They emphasized on the need to train consecrated persons and lay people, to improve on the aspect of listening in order to collaborate with the Holy Spirit who works within the communities.¹⁸ The claim, however, may look more outside religious life context but some truth may not be completely ignored because even in the consecrated life some of the reasons of not having spiritual direction is lack of trained or qualified spiritual directors. Furthermore, the claims of other authors however, like, Dell’ Antonio Andrew on listening and hearing and that of Carolyn Gratton on recollected listening, are well embraced and used with our trained and qualified Spiritual directors.

¹¹ Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening: The art of Spiritual Direction* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 2019), 3.

¹² Ibid.,

¹³ Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening: The art of Spiritual Direction* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 2019), 3.

¹⁴ Dell’ Antonio, Andrew. "Proper Listening." In *Listening as Spiritual Practice in Early Modern Italy*, 66-94. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2011. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1pnh3w.7>. Accessed on 17th July 2021.

¹⁵ Edward P. Liptak, *Religious Formator* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 40.

¹⁶ Joe Currie, *The Barefoot Counsellor* (Bengaluru: Asian Trading Corporation, 2016), 98.

¹⁷ Carolyn Gratton, *The art of Spiritual Guidance* (New York: CROSSROAD Publishing Company, 1997), 71

¹⁸ Pope Francis, Post- Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christ is Alive *Christus vivit* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 244.

The author suggests that using the Ignatian pedagogy which is faculty-student relationship, the spiritual directors are in a good position of implementing the listening skill for fruitful spiritual direction and integral formation of the directee.

2.1 Five Stages of Ignatian Pedagogy

These are presented as: Context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation. *Context* is predisposition to prayer. “In the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius makes the point that the experience of the retreatant should always give shape and context to the exercises that are being used.”¹⁹ The director, therefore, will facilitate this disposition and discerning of the Spirit to take place by trying to have beforehand the life experience of the candidate. The awareness will make the whole process easier and fruitful for the context will be relevant.

Context in Spiritual direction requires that, the spiritual director “adopt to the condition of the one who is to engage.”²⁰ It will therefore help the spiritual director whenever he has to bring in some interventions be relevant and in touch with the directee’s life and experience.

Experience includes “knowing the facts, concepts and principles.”²¹ This for Ignatius meant to know things in a deeper way and internally. The experience is beyond intellectual. It calls for the person to undergo complete formation that is mind, will and heart. It involves both affective and cognitive dimension of human person. The human experience can either be direct, that is getting direct information as through newspaper which conveys the truth about the happening but also through vicarious experience. The spiritual director like a medical doctor, will not only deal with the outward signs but also go deeper through the application of attentive listening skills.

St Ignatius’ life was a life of *reflection* which made him to be always conscious of the effort he was making towards the good as well as awareness of his inclination towards the evil. He became aware of the desire to serve others and fight the tendency for egoism.²² It is through this great way of his on reflection that he became master in discernment which he took it as a way of clarifying his internal motivation and reasons before making a judgement. For the spiritual director, it implies wisdom and personal judgement.

St Ignatius believed that love was expressed in deed and not in words. The thrust of the Spiritual Exercises was to enable the retreatant to know the will of God and to do it freely. The Jesuits showed great interest on the formation of students’ attitudes, values, and ideals according to which they would make decisions in a wide variety of situations about what action were to be done.²³ Through this theory the researcher hopes that the spiritual direction will not only bring the person closer to God but also will lead to the formation and transformation of the whole person body, mind and Spirit.

¹⁹ Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*. <http://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/IgnatianPedagogyAbridged/MASTER.pdf>. Accessed on 19th July 2021.

²⁰ Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*. <http://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/IgnatianPedagogyAbridged/MASTER.pdf>. Accessed on 19th July 2021.

²¹ Ibid.,

²² Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*. <http://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/IgnatianPedagogyAbridged/MASTER.pdf>. Accessed on 19th July 2021.

²³ Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*. <http://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/IgnatianPedagogyAbridged/MASTER.pdf>. Accessed on 19th July 2021.

At this stage the *evaluation* is to see the effectiveness whereby transformation ought to happen as a result aiming at “growth as a person for others.”²⁴ Being a special moment where we feel encouraged due to the success achieved or discouraged due to the obstacle encountered, the spiritual director too can use the same skills to evaluate himself and entire process for the better approach and improvement. Evaluation can be like asking for feedback in spiritual direction.

The Ignatian pedagogy theory is preferred for this study because it fosters attention to experience, reflection and understanding beyond personal interest. It looks at the totality of the person and his growth. At the same time doing the research in the Congregation of the Daughters of St Paul, I found this theory appropriate in our Spirituality. Our Founder Blessed James Alberione was of the same mind as St Ignatius whereby Alberione also spoke of the formation of the whole person: body, mind, and Spirit so as to live Christ as Master Way, Truth and Life.²⁵ This is part of our spirituality and is what every Daughter of St Paul is called to live not only for spiritual direction but for all our aspects of life.

2.2 Strength of the Theory

The theory is good, practical and reliable. In spiritual direction, the five stages of Ignatian pedagogy theory; context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation can be applied for both the spiritual director and the directee so as to bring to fruition the formation process to deeper relationship with God.

The theory is faith based and it calls for walking for freedom and dignity of all people.²⁶ The practice of the spiritual direction requires freedom both from the directee and the director and it calls the director to assume with respect the person he or she is guiding. The theory proposes that the director who acts like a teacher to adopt to the situation of the directee.²⁷ This implies that, the director should have at least some basic information about the cultural background of the directee.²⁸ Whatever the directee has shared can also be a point of reflection so that whatever affirmation or support given may be for growth. Often, the action is taken by the directee out of his or her own conviction. The director, however, can use his or her skill to help the directee to take action but without any compulsion. Finally, the process of direction ought to be evaluated so as to improve the good of the directee as well the director.

2.3 Weakness of the Theory

One of the weaknesses of this theory is immaturity which may happen on the side of the director. The application of the theory has to be done with both human and spiritual maturity. The act of being open to another person is a true sign of humility and trust which the director ought not to take for granted but to treasure it and be of great help to the directee. Any problem

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Marie Paul Curley, *Spirituality*, <http://www.daughtersofstpaul.com/PaulineCharism/ArticleID/2842/Jesus-Master-Way-Truth-and-Life>. Accessed on 15th July 2021.

²⁶ Vincent J. Duminuco, *Ignatian Pedagogy: Practical Approach*, 7. <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1528915304/fairfield/lqghol3cgz2wffgbgrij/IgnatianPedagogy.pdf>. Accessed on 15th July 2021.

²⁷ Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*. <http://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/IgnatianPedagogyAbridged/MASTER.pdf>. Accessed on 19th July 2021.

²⁸ Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*. <http://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/IgnatianPedagogyAbridged/MASTER.pdf>. Accessed on 19th July 2021.

of immaturity on the side of director like biasness or revealing of what the directee has shared, not only hinders his or her growth but distorts the whole meaning of spiritual direction. Hence, the director while observing the ethics of the spiritual direction, must help the directee to be as open as possible so as to shy away from the deceit of the evil one.

Just as the aspect of freedom and transformation can be misinterpreted in the society so that those who receive their education under this theory at times can be perceived by the oppressive system as rebels and threats to the society, like what happen in El Salvador in 1989 whereby six Jesuits, a mother and her daughter were murdered.²⁹ In a religious perspective, it can create fear when the aspect of freedom is not well understood.

2.4 Justification of the Theory

Indeed, the faculty-student relationship is highly accepted and encouraged across Jesuits' schools. Being a faith based and even more a Catholic oriented in line with Ignatian Spirituality, when adopted for spiritual direction will create freedom, confidence and personal transformation. Consequently, the transformed persons will in turn transform others through their ministries.

Moreover, the role of the spiritual direction is to inform, form and transform, the aspects which are also expressed in the Ignatian Pedagogy. To inform can be compared to understanding of the context in faculty-student relationship whereby just as the teacher is able to relate well with the student and give relevant support due to the capacity of being in the context, the spiritual director too can offer relevant support when he or she is familiar with the background of the directee.

To be formed according to the Ignatian Pedagogy, invites the directee not only to look on the intellect of the director but also his experience and knowledge on other disciplines related to it such as knowledge on counselling, psychotherapy as well as theology. We cannot refuse that the art of spiritual direction is a gift, but the gift alone is not enough and needs to be guided. "I prefer someone with training –gift or no gift. Even if the person clearly has the gift, I'd prefer it be honed and matured by the wisdom of a teacher or mentor."³⁰ Hence, gift, knowledge and experience work together for the better formation of the candidate. Similarly, action and evaluation play the role of transformation in which one becomes conformed to Christ.

Lastly, the theory points out to the development of the individual to a more transformed person. Though Ignatian pedagogy is not a feminist pedagogy, it encourages freedom from disordered inclinations.³¹ The Church too, calls for the consecrated women to adapt the new way in fostering Christian doctrine and moral, family, and social life in keeping with the dignity of the human person. Consequently, these will be expressed in evangelization, education, promotion of value of life and peace.³² Through spiritual direction, the sisters will be more

²⁹ Lindsey Gruson, *Special New York Times: 6 Priests Killed in a Campus Raid in San Salvador*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1989/11/17/world/6-priests-killed-in-a-campus-raid-in-san-salvador.html>. Accessed on 20th July 2021.

³⁰ Teresa Blythe, *Spiritual Direction: A Guide for Seekers*, <https://Spiritual-Direction-A-Guide-for-Seekers.pdf>. Accessed on 20th July 2021.

³¹ Peterson, MEP Seligman, *Character Strength and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* 2004, <https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cluster>. Accessed on 20th July 2021.

³² John Paul II, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *On the Consecrated Life and its Mission in the Church and in the World Vita Consecrata* (25 March 1996), 58: AAS 70 (1978), 502.

effective and creative in carrying out the mission entrusted to them with great zeal and love, for the salvation of souls and greater glory of God.

Consequently, Blessed James Alberione, in giving great importance to spiritual direction to his daughters and sons, he not only proposed the qualities of good directors but also emphasized on the manner in which it should be done. “Spiritual direction should rarely be by letter; and only in cases where the two persons have already had direct contact.”³³ This brings in the aspect of faculty-student relationship whereby the communication has to be clear and effective. It is through this closeness and proper communication the directee grows not according to the criteria of the director but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who is the main guide.

The true director of souls uncovers the gift of nature and grace, the designs of God, the circumstances, and so on; he knows the real director is the Holy Spirit. The physician and medicine do not create nature; they are a help. Likewise, the physician of souls.³⁴

Therefore, the Pauline model which was suggested by Blessed Alberione, is closely related to the Ignatian Pedagogy whereby, the director in helping through facilitating the process of spiritual direction, the directee, in particular Daughter of St Paul, will be well guided and able to make her own decision according to the prompt of the Holy Spirit.

3.0 Research Methodology

This section presents research methodology for the study. It includes the research design, the target population and the sample size, and sampling techniques, sampling procedure and data collection instruments. It also presents the validity and reliability of the research instruments, pilot testing, and description of the data collection procedure, data analysis procedure as well as the ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design

Research design “is an important tool for the planning, the substantiation and the practical guidance of research procedures.”³⁵ It is the “master plan specifying the method and procedure for collecting and analysing the needed information.”³⁶ In this study, the researcher used qualitative research method which is “type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from these data that help understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places.”³⁷ It facilitates the acquisition of quality information whereby it creates a deeper understanding of the attitude, behaviour, interactions, events and social processes that involve in our daily living.³⁸

Under qualitative research, the researcher uses case study design and phenomenology, which looks on people’s experiences in a specific group. “It explore process, activities and events.”³⁹ In this, the researcher is able to understand in an in-depth way the temporary

³³ James Alberione, *Opera Omnia: Ut Perfectus Sit Homo Dei* (Rome: Centre of Pauline Spirituality, 1998), 348.

³⁴ James Alberione, *Opera Omnia: Ut Perfectus Sit Homo Dei* (Rome: Centre of Pauline Spirituality, 1998), 349.

³⁵ Dieter Grunow, *Research Design in Organisation studies: Problem and Prospects*; University of Duisburg, Germany 2016. Accessed on 28th July 2021.

³⁶ Coldwel D. and Herbst F.J., (2004), *Business Research*, Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.

³⁷ Ashley Crossman, *An overview of Qualitative Research Methods*. Updated October 24, 2019. Accessed on 28th July 2021.

³⁸ Ibid., Accessed on 28th July 2021.

³⁹ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design* (Great Britain: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018), 183.

professed sisters’ experience of spiritual direction among the Daughters of St Paul. Together with the reason mentioned, the researcher employed this method for the accuracy and quality using both focused group discussion and interview guide. Considering the population size of the research however, the method was more appropriate, focused and balanced.

3.2 Target Population

It is the entire group of people or subjects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the study findings.⁴⁰ The study targets the temporary professed sisters of the Daughters of St Paul in Nairobi Kenya both from Westlands – Delegation House community which comprises of 5 temporary professed and Karen- Gabriella House, Students’ community which comprises of 27 temporary professed, the delegate superior of the delegation, the superior of Westlands community, the superior and 2 formators of temporary professed sisters in Karen-Gabriella House –Students’ Community of which one is among them one is in charge of student sister from West African delegation, and nine sisters from the formation team. The total population was 46 participants.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The sample size sampling in qualitative research means, “The selection of specific data sources from which data are collected to address the research objectives.”⁴¹ The study purposively selected all the target population to participate in the study. This decision is based on the fact that the population is small and manageable. Therefore, the total of 46 participants among the congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul in Nairobi Kenya were included in the study.

Table 3.1: Sample Matrix

Category	Population	Sample	Percentage	Sampling Technique
Temporary Professed sisters	32	32	69.5%	Purposive Sampling
Formators	02	02	4.3%	Purposive Sampling
Formation team	09	09	19.5%	Purposive Sampling
Superiors (Delegate superior and Local Superiors)	03	03	6.5%	Purposive Sampling
Total	46	46	100%	Purposive Sampling

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The study used purposive sampling. “Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that qualitative researchers use to recruit participants who can give in-depth and detailed information about the phenomena under investigation. The researcher through purposive sampling included all the total of 32 temporary professed sisters, in which she divided them into 8 groups of 4 participants, for the focused group discussion guide. For the interview guide, the researcher purposively involved the 14 superiors and formators.

⁴⁰ <https://www.umsl.edu/~lindquists/sample.html>. Accessed on 28th July 2021.

⁴¹ Gentles, S. J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J., & McKibbin, K. (2015). *Sampling in Qualitative Research: Insights from an Overview of the Methods Literature*. The Qualitative Report, 20(11), 1772-1789. <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss11/5>. Accessed on 13th July 2021.

4. 0 DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

This section presents the findings, discussions and interpretations that focused on the objectives of the study. The responses from the participants, were coded and analysed according to figures then generating themes from them in line with the research objectives of the study. Figure A presents the findings from the directees and Figure B presents the findings from the directors.

4.1 Response Rate

The respondents who participated in the study were formators, superiors, and temporary professed sisters of the Daughters of St Paul in Nairobi Kenya. There were spontaneous and diverse responses whereby the summary of the response rate is presented in table 4.1

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Participant Category	Sample Size	Response Rate	Percentage
Directors (Formators and Superiors)	14	14	100%
Directee (Temporary Professed Sisters)	32	30	94%
Total	46	44	96%

As specified in Table 4.1, the total of 46 participants were expected. These were 2 formators, 9 participants from the formation team three superiors and 32 temporary professed sisters. 44 out of 46 of the expected participants turn up for the study. 2 persons among the directees however, were not able to turn up for the research. The response was still adequate considering that it marked up to 96%.

4.1.1 Interview Guide for the Superiors and Formators

The researcher interviewed the superiors and formators of the Daughters of St Paul who are in charge of the temporary professed sisters and who in accompany them, they also take the role of the spiritual director. The respondents were free and ready to share their experience therefore facilitated the smooth running of the interview and provided adequate responses.

4.1.2 Group Discussions Guide for Directees

The researcher divided the group of the directees into 8 groups of 4 participants in which they were able to be introduced well to the sharing with assurance of the privacy in whatever information they offer and maintaining of the code of ethics. In the process of sharing no one expressed sense of fear or insecurity, rather, the participants were free and open to share their experiences and knowledge on the practice of spiritual direction.

4.2 Presentation and Discussion of the Findings

The presentations and discussions of the findings were provided according to the objectives/questions/hypothesis/ themes. The researcher coded all the findings from the interview Guide and focused group discussion guide under case study design and phenomenology in which the participants have given their experience in this particular field. Thereafter the researcher analysed and discussed them according to the emerging themes.

4.3 Demographic Information

This information was explored in order to understand better the participants' experience in religious life and formation as well as their ability to providing necessary required data. The data was collected from professed religious sisters from 2 to 35 years of experience in religious life. The study also gathered the information of range of age of the participants. The information on the age of the participant in birth and in religious life serve for the purpose of knowing how experience and maturity influence the practice of spiritual direction and hence influence the study.

4.3.1 Respondents' Experience in Age

The study wanted to determine the age of the respondents so as to discover to what extent their response could be relied upon to make conclusions for the study based on their experiences. The findings are presented as Figure 1.

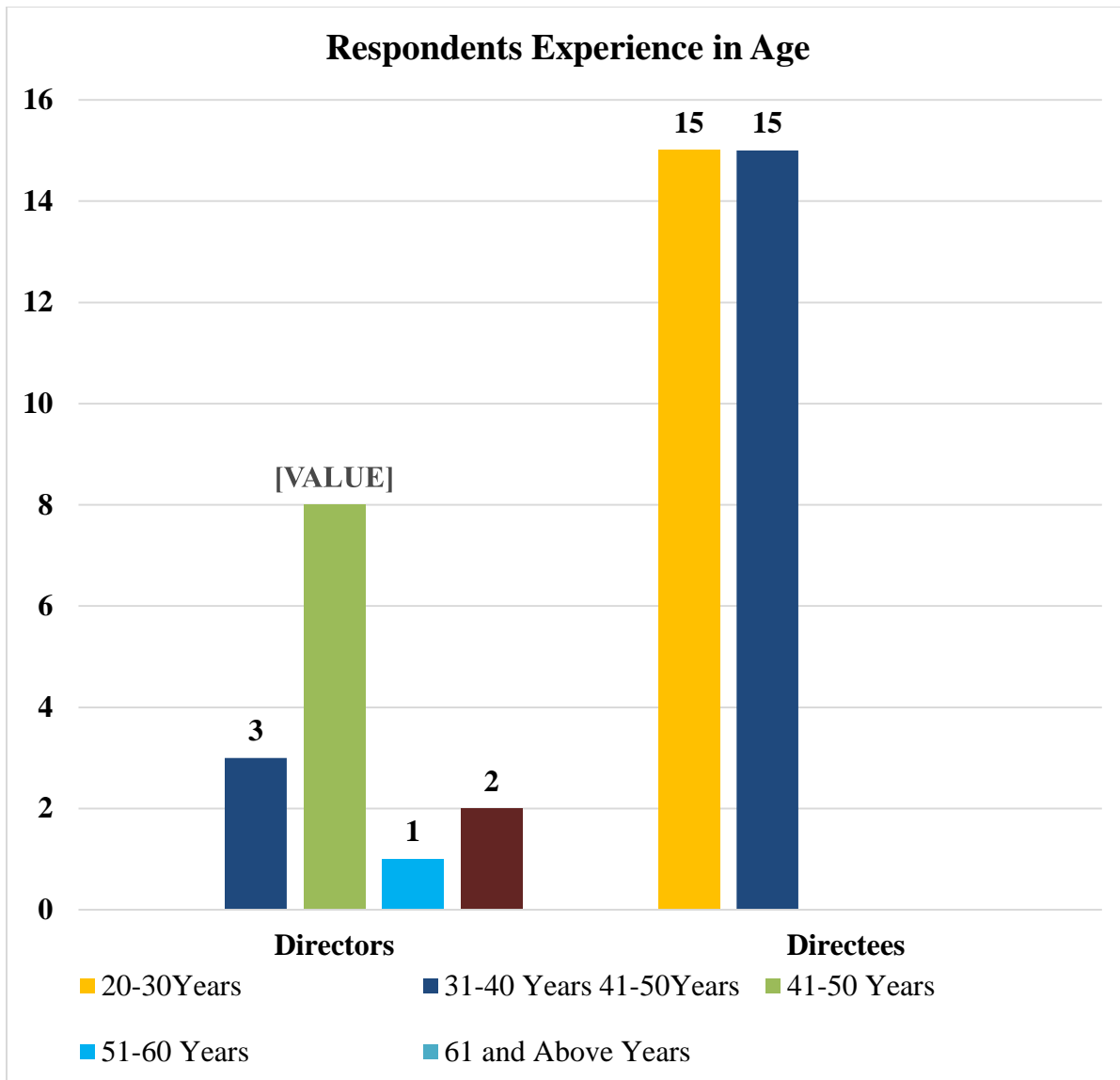


Figure 1: Respondents’ Experience in Age

The results in Figure 4.1 reveal that the directees age lies between two categories; the first half is that of 20- 30 years and the second half is between 31-40 years. According to psychologist, Erick Erikson, age 18-40 years, a period of young adulthood, in psychosocial crisis one experiences intimacy versus Isolation and in religious circle the person can acquire the basic virtue of love.⁴² At this period, from their experience of the practice of spiritual direction, they can either grow more in intimacy with God and others and therefore increase the virtue of love or the opposite may happen too which is isolation. The spiritual director therefore, is required to be a person of integrity, capable of love and ready to journey with the young adult into the journey of spiritual maturity and closeness with God.

⁴²Gabriel A. Orenstein; Lindsay Lewis, *Erikson Stages of Psychosocial Development*. Updated November 22, 2020. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK556096/>. Accessed on 16th May 2021.

On the part of the directors, however, the majority range from 41-50 years. According to Erik Erikson, 40-65 years, is the period of generativity versus stagnation or self-absorption. The virtue which guide the person in this stage is care.⁴³ From this observation, it is expected that if the director was able to live well the previous stage of life, which is intimacy, at this level one will be at the good point of journeying and assisting the young adult who is seeking the way to improve his relationship with God, with self as well as with others.

4.3.2 Respondents' Experience in Religious Life

On one hand, the information of age in religious life on the part of the directees was to discover how this could move the person to seek for spiritual direction. On the other hand, for the directors, the researcher wanted to know their age in religious life so as to determine how their experiences may contribute to the effective or poor practices in spiritual direction. The findings are presented as Figure 2.

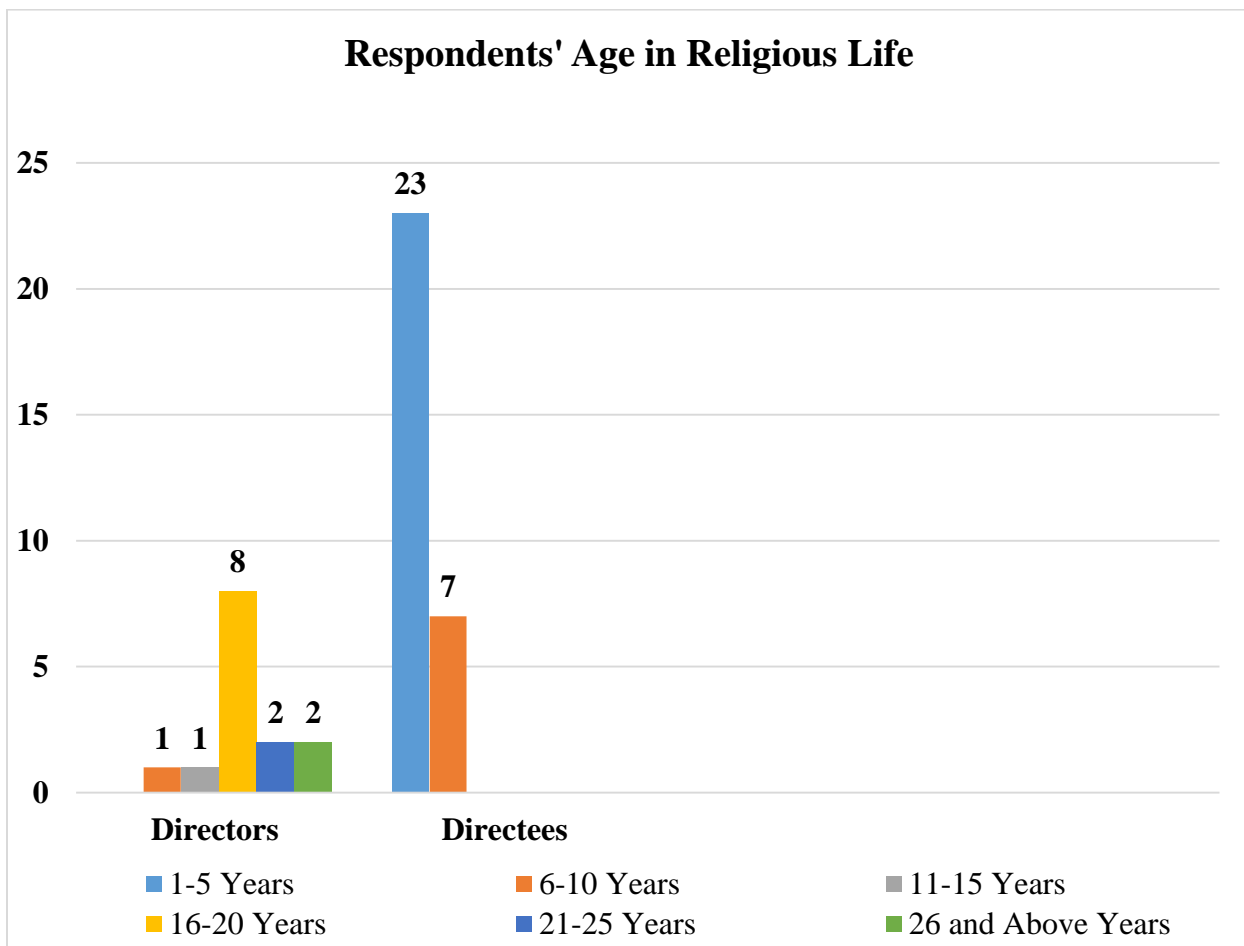


Figure 2: Respondents' Age in Religious Life

According to Figure 2, majority of the directees are between age 1-5 years of religious life, which is total of 23 persons and very few (7 persons) are between 6-10 years. The directors, however, majority of respondents are between 16-20 years in religious life (8 persons) while

⁴³ Kendra Cherry, *Generativity Vs Stagnation*, Reviewed by David Susman, PhD on April 18, 2021. <https://www.verywellmind.com/generativity-versus-stagnation-2795734>. Accessed on 16th May 2021.

very few are above 21 years in religious life. The directors of age 21-25 years in religious life are 2 and age 26 and above are also 2. From the chart, it shows that none of the directors has the same age in religious life with the directees. The two youngest directees are between age 6-10 years and 11-15 years. This implies that apart from knowledge on how to work as spiritual directors in helping the temporary professed sisters they too have their own religious experience which can also be of great help to the directees.

Interview Guide for the Superiors and Formators

The researcher interviewed the superiors and formators of the Daughters of St Paul who are in charge of the temporary professed sisters in accompanying them and taking the role of the spiritual directors. The respondents were free and ready to share their experiences therefore facilitated the smooth running of the interview and provided adequate responses.

4.0 Listening Skills in Spiritual Direction and Integral Formation

The respondents expressed their views on the effectiveness of the spiritual direction when the director is able to listen attentively and maintain confidentiality to the sharing of the directee.

4.1 The Reasons that make the Directee Feel Listened to in her Sharing

The respondents expressed their views on what make them feel that the spiritual director is listening attentively to their sharing. The results of the findings are expressed in Figure 3 (A), as the findings from the directors and 3 (B), as the findings from the directees.

Open Codes

1. Giving feedback.
2. The ability to maintain eye contact.
3. Facial expression.
4. Good responses.
5. The ability to connect the sharing.
6. Ability to give feedback.
7. Seeking of clarifications.
8. Facial expression.
9. Use of body language.
10. Facial expression.
11. The ability to summarise the sharing.
12. Asking questions for clarification.
13. Not sleeping.
14. Maintain eye contacts.

Axial Codes

1. Ability to give feedback.
2. Eye contact.
3. Giving summary.

Selected Themes

Ability to give feedback and

Figure 3 (A)

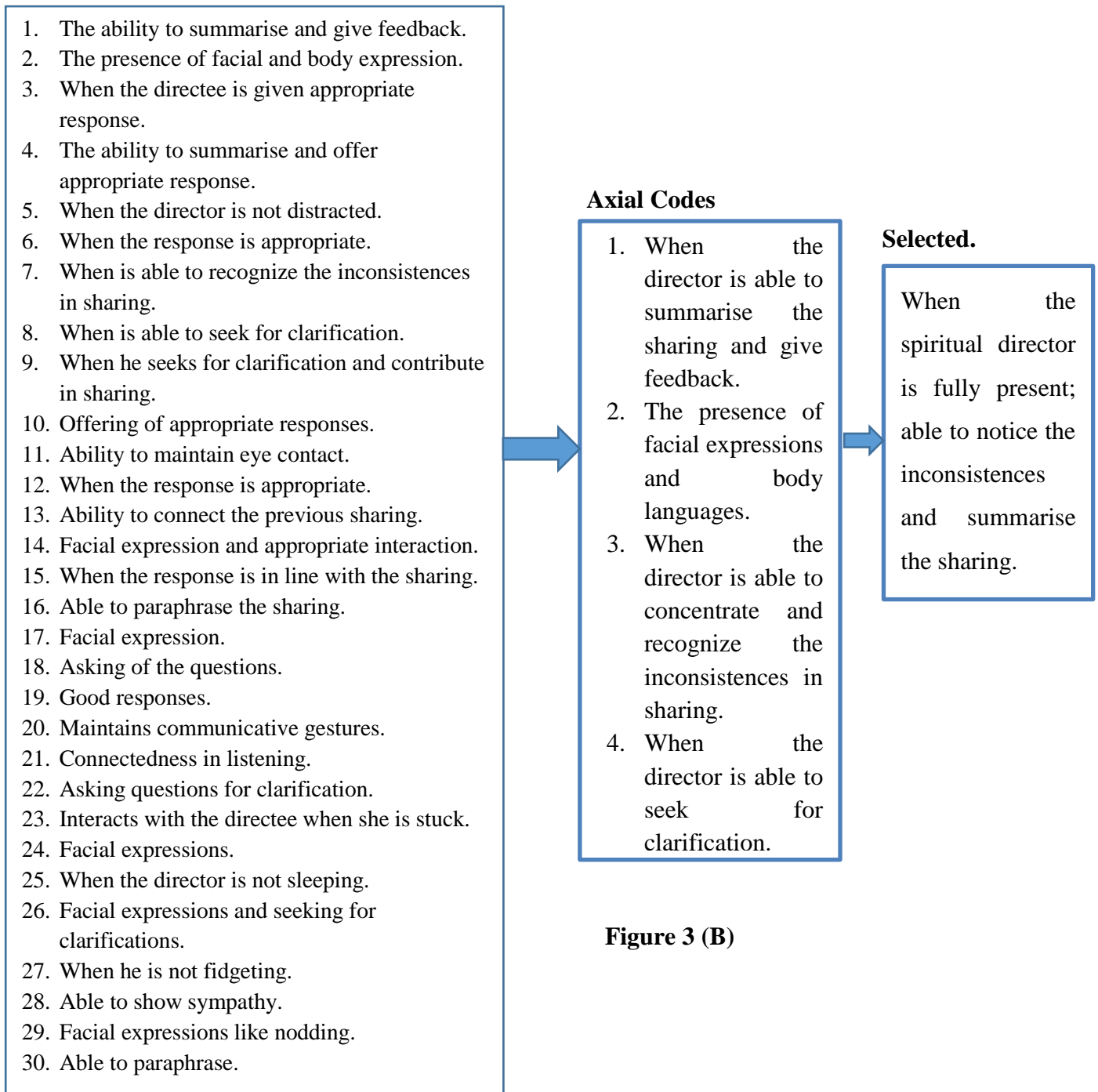


Figure 3 (B)

Figure 3 (A) and Figure 3 (B), expressed that the ability of the spiritual director to summarise the sharing and give feedback to the directee is a true evidence that he is listening. In summarising, one is able to seek for clarification which is very important in sharing.⁴⁴ The directees added that apart from summarising the sharing the capacity to notice the inconsistency is also a great sign that the spiritual director is full present and listening to the sharing.

The respondent's answers are much similar to what was found in the literature review. During the group discussion guide however, the researcher had to clarify to the respondents that, the role of the spiritual director is not to give answers to the sharing but first and foremost is to be present and listen. Whatever response the director will manage to make, will only come from the good listening and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit whom we believe is the main guide of the exercise. When the spiritual director knows this, he or she listens with relaxation without any anxiety on what to answer the directee

4.2 Things that make the Directee Feels that the Director is not Listening

The respondents gave their responses on how they can know that the director is not listening to their sharing. The results of the findings are presented in Figure 4(A), as responses from the directors and 4 (B), as responses from the directees.

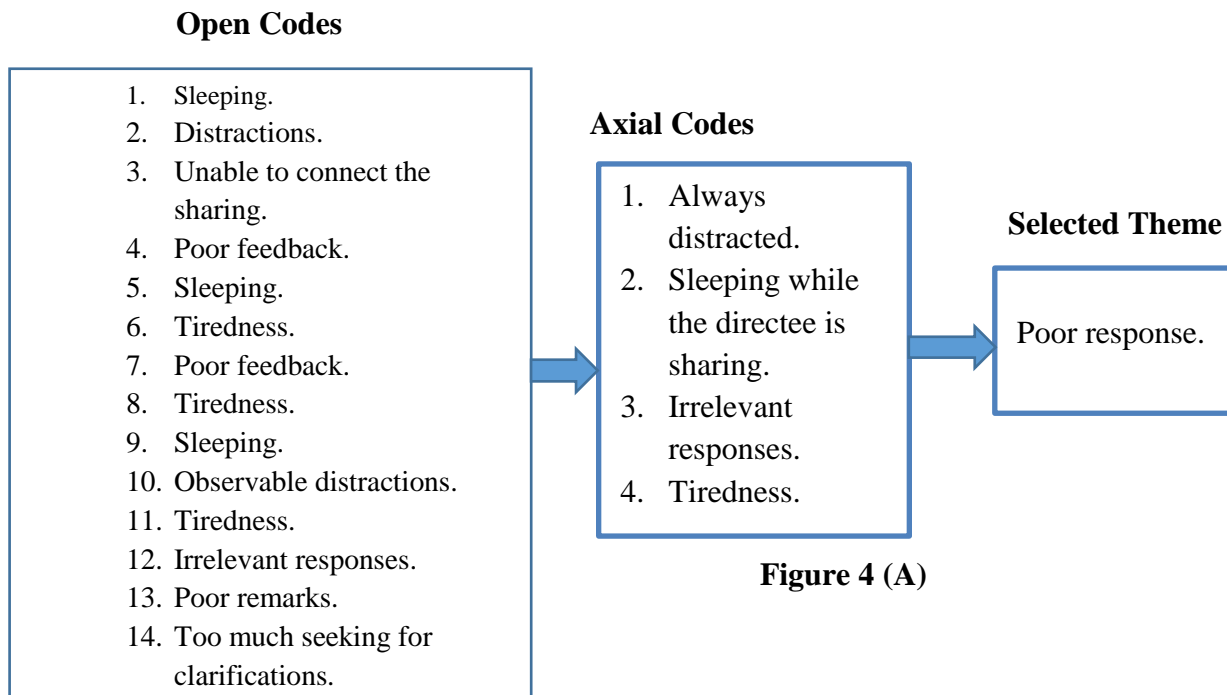


Figure 4 (A)

⁴⁴ Melchior Marandu, *Challenges in Spiritual Direction* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 55.

Open Codes

1. Distracted and looking outside.
2. Sleeps and fails to grasp what directee has shared.
3. Misappropriate messages.
4. When he is preoccupied.
5. If there are no eye contacts.
6. Inappropriate responses.
7. Lack of interest in directees' sharing.
8. Sleeping when the directee is sharing
9. Giving contribution out of context.
10. Giving irrelevant responses.
11. When he sleeps during sharing.
12. Observable distractions.
13. Irrelevant observations.
14. No eye contacts.
15. Response contrary to what has been shared.
16. Unable to paraphrase directees' sharing.
17. Sitting posture and facial expression.
18. Ability to engage the directee.
19. When he is silent throughout the sharing.
20. Poor remarks.
21. Asking many times, "What did you say?"
22. Asking questions contrary to what directee has shared.
23. Facial expression and sitting postures.
24. Distracted with phone calls and messages.
25. Always asking the directee to repeat what she has just shared.
26. Observable distractions.
27. Keeps asking the directee to repeat what she shared.
28. When he fidgets.
29. Too much distractions.
30. Poor remarks.

Axial Codes

1. Always distracted.
2. Sleeping while the directee is sharing.
3. Irrelevant responses.
4. Lack of interest on directee sharing.

Selected Theme

Poor response.

Figure 4 (B)

In figure 4 (A), and 4 (B), the respondents said that poor response from the director gives a clear indication that the director was not listening to the directee when she was sharing. The

director ought to know that listening begins with self⁴⁵ which helps to avoid unnecessary destructions during sharing. The capacity of the director to listen to self will facilitate his or her performance in listening to others.⁴⁶ Listening to self will help the director to have prior preparation before the encounter like putting the cellphone away so that the concentration remains on the directee. When the director is well trained and disciplined to the art of listening, the directee will feel comfortable to share and in turn she will receive good response which will motivate her to continue practice the spiritual direction.

In the art of listening, the director needs a lot of patience and relaxation to allow the directee to share. He or she should not be frustrated about himself or herself rather, he or she has to become aware that some directees need a bit of conversations to warm up or to get in touch with themselves.⁴⁷ In observing this, the director let the directee share what he or she has and will be able to give relevant responses.

In the literature review, Margaret Guenther identifies the listening of the director as holy listening,⁴⁸ which, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the director is able to give proper response for the spiritual growth of the directee. The office for sharing therefore, turns to be a holy ground, even the directee becomes a holy ground too in which the director is invited to enter in her sacred story. There will be no space for dosing for the director but fully present and engaged in the sharing.

4.3 The Consequences of Not Listening to The Directee During Spiritual Direction

The respondents gave their feedback on what happened when the director does not pay attention to their sharing. The results of the findings are presented in Figure 5 (A), from the directors and 5 (B), from the directees.

⁴⁵Melchior Marandu, *Challenges in Spiritual Direction* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 37.

⁴⁶Melchior Marandu, *Challenges in Spiritual Direction* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 38.

⁴⁷Jos Moons, *The Art of Spiritual Direction* (Dublin: Messenger Publications, 2020), 46.

⁴⁸Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening: The art of Spiritual Direction* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 2019), 3.

Open Codes

- 1. Discourages.
- 2. No Spiritual growth.
- 3. Demotivates.
- 4. Poor guidance.
- 5. Causes the directee to withdrawal.
- 6. Discourages the directee.
- 7. Creates doubts.
- 8. Demotivates.
- 9. Directee quits the spiritual direction.
- 10. Poor guidance.
- 11. Directee is forced to terminate the exercise.
- 12. Creates doubts.
- 13. Directee is discouraged.
- 14. Demotivates the directee

Axial Codes

- 1. It demotivates the directee
- 2. End of spiritual direction.

Selected Theme

Demotivates the practice of spiritual direction.

Open Codes

1. No Spiritual growth.
2. The directee will Look for another director.
3. Growth cannot take place
4. Wasting of time.
5. Loss of trust.
6. No Spiritual growth.
7. Lead to lack of interest for spiritual direction.
8. No progress for the exercise.
9. It discourages the directee.
10. No growth.
11. The sharing yield no fruits.
12. It demotivates the directee.
13. Poor guidance.
14. Causes the directee to withdrawal.
15. Directee quits the spiritual direction.
16. Directee is forced to terminate the exercise.
17. Look for better Spiritual director.
18. Directee sees no need of spiritual direction.
19. Directee is discouraged.
20. Leads to loose of interest for spiritual direction.
21. Directee feels wasted.
22. No mutual sharing.
23. No Spiritual Nourishment.
24. It becomes wastage of time.
25. No Spiritual progress.
26. Given wrong advice.
27. No effective growth.
28. Lack of morale.
29. It discourages the directee.
30. Directee loose interest with the director.

Axial Codes

1. Demotivates.
2. Causes mistrust.
3. No mutual sharing.
4. No spiritual growth.
5. Directee stops going for the spiritual direction.

Selected Theme

Discourages the practice of spiritual direction.

Figure 5 (A) and 5 (B), reveal that the consequences of the director not paying attention to the directee in her sharing is that it demotivates the practice of spiritual direction. When the directee set out to look for the spiritual director is looking for a friend whom she or he may be able to share joys and struggles in spiritual life. Thus, the spiritual director is also a friend and not just a friend but a good friend. “Only good people can be friends.”⁴⁹ The goodness which is

⁴⁹ Dennis Billy, *Aelred of Rievaulx: Spiritual Friendship* (United States of America: Ave Maria Press, 2008),53.

identified by Aelred is nothing more than relationship. The respondents said that when the director is not listening, there will be no mutual sharing and consequently the directee will lose trust in the director. Therefore, lack of trust, discourages the whole process of practicing spiritual direction.

According to the literature review, listening as an art and also a discipline, one needs to be well formed. The literature highlighted that the training of the directors⁵⁰ will facilitate better listening and also encourage the practice of spiritual direction. Without limiting the power of the Holy Spirit who inspires and guide the director, well-disciplined, trained spiritual director, will therefore be more resourceful and supportive to the directee.

4.4 The Outcomes of Spiritual Direction when the Director Receives Messages Accurately

The respondents gave their views on how it helps them when the directors receive messages correctly when sharing in spiritual direction. The results of the findings are presented in Figure 6 (A) from the directors and 6 (B), from the directees.

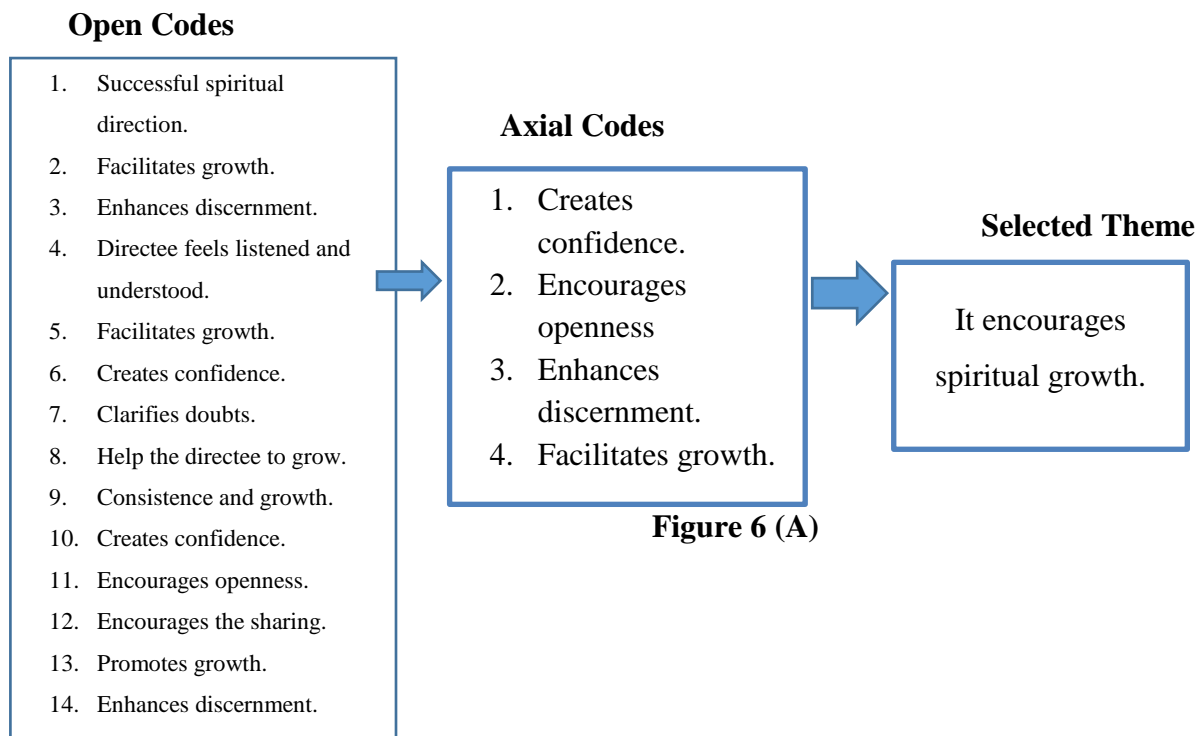
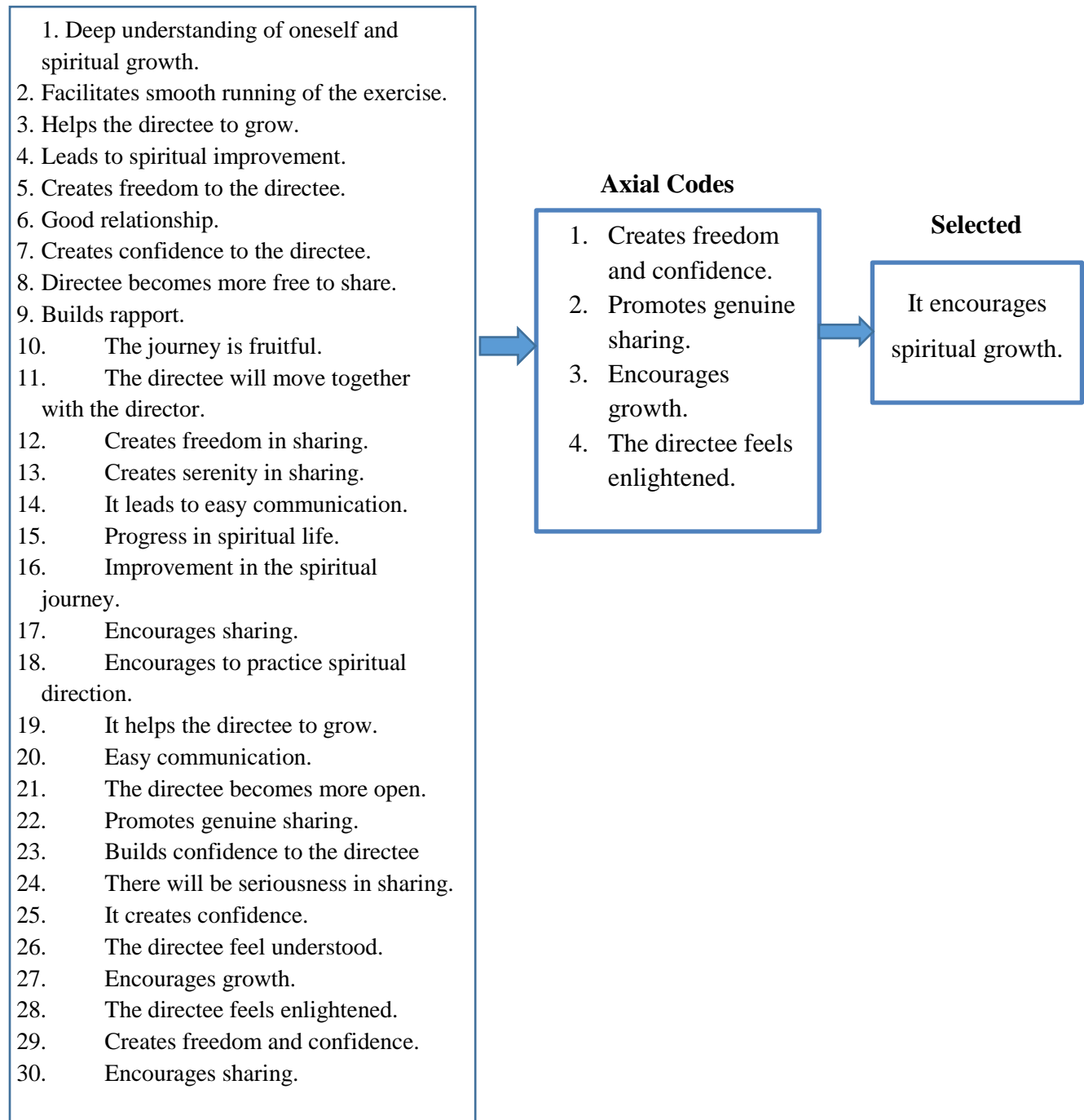


Figure 6 (A)

⁵⁰ Pope Francis, Post- Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christ is Alive *Christus vivit* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2019), 244.

Open Codes



The respondents in Figure 6 (A) and 6 (B), said that, it encourages spiritual growth when the director receives messages correctly. One of the benefits the directee can gain in spiritual direction, is the opportunity to share her or his life story to a receptive and interactive person.⁵¹ Good disposition of the director therefore, will facilitate good interaction as well as clear

⁵¹ Janet K. Ruffing. *To Tell the Sacred Tale: Spiritual Direction and Narrative* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2011) 115.

interpretation of the messages. When the message is received correctly, it also creates freedom and confidence in the directee to share her experience.

From the literature review, it is identified that the director ought to listen with patience and total commitment to the directee in order to give good response.⁵² The growth the respondents identified, can be achieved when the director is able to apply well the skills especially this of listening. A good listener not only receives the messages correctly but also is able to interpret gestures, tone of voice and unspoken words from the directee.

5.0 Conclusion

The purpose of the study is to improve the practices of spiritual direction for integral formation for temporary professed sisters through the implementation of the skills of spiritual direction. A study was done among the temporary professed sisters of the Daughters of St. Paul in Nairobi – Kenya. The study also indicates that training of the spiritual directors is essential for the effective spiritual direction.

6.0 Recommendations

There should be more trained persons for spiritual direction in order to facilitate smooth running of the practice of the spiritual direction. It was found out that, many mistakes which are done in spiritual direction is because some of the directors are able to do it out of obedience, experience and good will but without any training. The researcher without ignoring the grace of the Holy Spirit which works through the spiritual director, and also without denying that practice makes perfect, she urges that the person in the office should be more professional through training. The perfection of the practice will therefore, actualised when the director is practicing using right methods and qualified skills.

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