

INFLUENCE OF FAITH FORMATION STRATEGIES ON VOCATION CHOICES OF YOUNG CATHOLIC ADULTS IN RUARAKA DEANERY, NAIROBI ARCHDIOCESE, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: The sought to explore which faith formation strategies can effectively enhance YCA vocation choice sustenance in Ruaraka Deanery, Nairobi Archdiocese.

Statement of the problem: The faith formation strategies are critical in determining the vocation choices of young catholic adults. However, there is scanty literature that addresses faith strategies that can contribute to young Catholic adult's vocation choices in Africa and Kenya and particularly within Nairobi Archdiocese.

Research methodology: The study employed convergent parallel mixed methods. The target population included YCA group, moderators and chaplains from Ruaraka Deanery which is made up of 10 parishes. Non-probability methods, namely, convenience and census methods were used to sample 241 YCA participants. Questionnaires and interviews were the instruments used to collect the data. Quantitative data was analysed using inferential statistics (descriptive statistics and regression) and presented using frequencies and percentages in tables. The qualitative data on the other side was analysed and presented thematically using summaries.

Findings: The correlation results indicated that vocation choices had a statistically significant relationship with faith formation strategies, $r=.750$, $P<0.00$ and the regression coefficient demonstrated that faith formation strategies positively influenced vocation choices ($R = .563$ square, $p<.05$). The interview results indicated that faith formation strategies are able to influence vocation choices to a certain degree. Some of the strategies emerged from the discussions included a deliberate YCA faith formation program training guide to give direction to their faith formation, provide relevant themes, training timeframe and methodology. The parish Christian community to support YCA faith training and activities. Another strategy discovered is the appointment of chaplains who are interested and passionate about YCA.

Appointment of committed mentors and religious sisters and brothers to assist in YCA formation training and mentoring. Use of ICT and social media platforms for training and interactions, link YCA to faith journals, magazines, books physical and online, that have information related to YCA, needs for identity, spirituality, relationships and work, use other faith formation social media platforms like webpages to teach and post faith training content, guide, references, books, videos and also to provide forums for sharing experiences.

Recommendations: The study recommended that effective faith formation strategies need to be developed. Some of the strategies can include YCA faith formation program training guide to give direction to their faith formation and provide relevant themes, training timeframe and methodology. The Christian parish community should support YCA faith training. It is also recommended that committed mentors and religious sisters and brothers be appointed to assist in YCA formation training and mentoring. There is a need to use ICT and social media platforms for training and interactions.

Keywords: *Faith formation strategies, Vocation Choices, Young Catholic Adults, Ruaraka Deanery, Nairobi Archdiocese, Kenya*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The faith formation strategies can be fundamental in determining the vocation choices of young catholic adults (Ikechukwu, 2019). Some of the faith formation strategies that can effectively contribute to the vocation choices sustenance include effective content dissemination, a well-structured program to guide to give direction to the training program in terms of content, method, timeframe, individual efforts in development (Freeks, 2020; Oliver, 2015). The formation program also requires availability, present and passionate faith formation companions/mentors. The envisioned outcome from the training is the right and genuine vocation choices, which leads to realizing one's purpose in life and fulfillment. Some factors can negatively influence the faith formation process and vocation sustenance such as, poor faith formation strategies, including the content, methods, timeframe, a formation timetable that does not favour the trainees and the trainer and language barrier (Vaclavik, 2018). Nevertheless, the predicted outcome of effective faith formation is assumed to be the right vocation in the three levels: discovering one's purpose in life, fulfilling an individual's life, and witnessing faith community.

As YCA transitions in age, life compels them to prepare for adulthood responsibilities. The YCA ongoing faith formation program activities are therefore, meant to help them grow in their knowledge and understanding of faith through the training in the core teachings of the church, and in particular vocation discernment which helps them to develop their faith and vocations knowledge (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), 2010). The deeper knowledge of faith gained through the formation programs is anticipated to help them realize their purpose in life in their vocation choices and sustenance. Some of the consequences of the choices have undermined human dignity, and crushed down the growth and development of the society. Some of the choices made by individuals are against Christian moral values and ethics. One therefore, wonders whether faith formation has the ability to inform or influence young Catholic adults to make right choices and decisions concerning their call to holiness, marriage and work and sustain the will to bear witness to their Christian faith. The foregoing discussions show that the three levels of vocations are experiencing challenges among the rich and the poor, educated and uneducated, employed and unemployed, in the rural and urban areas, not only in Africa as the background of this study has demonstrated, but globally.

Studies conducted on faith and vocation choices sustenance have made various recommendations that can help support faith formation but not on how to enhance vocation choices among young Catholic adults. The common themes of strategies that emerged from the preceding studies include holistic faith formation, spiritual formation, bible study and sharing, activities such as prayer, retreats and workshops, mentorship programs, faith formation curriculum or guide and model, training on cultural diversity and use of resources and tools such as information technology (Weber, 2007; Diao, 2018). However, there is scanty literature that addresses faith strategies that can contribute to young Catholic adult's vocation choices in Africa and particularly within Nairobi Archdiocese, Kenya. This formed the rationale of the study to examine whether faith formation strategies can influence the Vocation Choices of Young Catholic Adults in Ruaraka Deanery, Nairobi Archdiocese, Kenya.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The faith formation strategies are critical in determining the vocation choices of young catholic adults. Some of the faith formation strategies that can effectively contribute to the vocation choices sustenance include effective content dissemination, a well-structured program to guide to give direction to the training program, in terms of content, method, timeframe, individual efforts in development. Nevertheless, there is scanty literature that addresses faith strategies that can contribute to young Catholic adult's vocation choices in Africa and Kenya and particularly within Nairobi Archdiocese. Limited empirical studies exists to provide information on the need of faith formation that empowers youth with the skills of discernment and vocation choice training and response to make the right choices and sustain them through faith. Several scholars have also carried research on a particular level of vocation, concerning young people in general but not about the YCA specifically. Some studies conducted in Kenya concerning Young adults have majorly focused on social-economic challenges facing young adults such as unemployment issues, poverty, drugs, corruption, crimes, lack of empowerment, but not more on faith formation strategies. Some studies have shown how faith influences their actions and behaviour at work and in their relationship in marriage; however, these studies have not connected faith knowledge with the vocation choices of young Catholic adults. The studies have identified agents such as family, faith community, school and colleges and the pastoral agents who include the parents, bishops, priests, catechists, religious men and women and peers. Thus, the previous studies failed to highlight the need for faith formation strategies that empowers youth with decision making process. This formed the morale of the study to examine the relationship between faith formation strategies and Vocation Choices of Young Catholic Adults in Ruaraka Deanery, Nairobi Archdiocese, Kenya

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The study sought to explore which faith formation strategies can effectively enhance YCA vocation choice sustenance

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant relationship between faith formation strategies and vocation choice on young Catholic adults in the Ruaraka deanery

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was based on four stage theory. The four stage theory was developed by John Westerhoff in 1976. This theory is about the growth and development of faith. Westerhoff proposes that faith develops through four progressive stages of experience, affiliation, searching and owned faith. The theory states that faith grows like the rings of a tree, with each

ring building on that which has grown before without eliminating it, so long as a favourable environment is provided. Otherwise, the growth is arrested. Each tree grows on its own, presenting its distinctive features. Similarly, each individual progresses from one stage of faith to another through participative experiences and interactions availed by the community of faith only if a proper setting is provided. If not, faith growth can get arrested at any given stage (Westerhoff, 1976). This is the leading theory in which this study was anchored because its proponents inform Young adult faith formation and vocation choice. It provides a link between independent and dependent variables. The YCA faith formation is a transitional journey of faith characterized by new life experiences and affiliation into various realities of life-related to their purpose in life. The Westerhoff enculturation model focuses on interactive experiences and environments within which individuals participate to gain knowledge and are transformed to communicate their knowledge and understanding of faith in the community of faith (Westerhoff 1976). As a result, personal decisions and choices of one's life are made on various aspects, which are vocation choices and witness in the study.

The theory looks at the family and the community as the main transmitters of the faith; in this case, the YCA faith formation is channelled through these two institutions. Westerhoff also brings in the idea of the strategies for effectively growing faith, which he refers to as principles that guide adults in their Christian lives. This means that is the context in which they learn to apply or witness their faith. One of the principles proposes going to meet them where they make moral decisions and act on them and educate them to make decisions guided by their Christian faith. Some of the places where YCA are found are in their professions/work, marriage life, and church. The YCA are in various professions and in marriage or discerning to get married. The second principle is having a homogeneous group, people sharing the same questions, problems and needs. This is the nature of the YCA group; they share similar needs, which helps them understand each other well. The third principle is being conscious of their time by avoiding engaging them for long periods, which requires commitment, due to their busy schedules, in the church, at home, and work. The fourth is starting their engagement from where they are in their problems. And the last principle is working towards practical actions. Some of the practical actions in YCA are engagement in faith development activities, learning core teachings of faith, the social teachings of the church, development of faith through participation in faith activities, planning for their marriages, and engagement in their professions and Christian service (Westerhoff, 1967:125).

However, the theory was not developed for African context needs or culturally diverse communities but Western cultural contexts and homogeneous communities. The theory does not also cover all aspects of life like social, economic, political education. The theory is, however, adopted for this study because the majority of its proponents informs the YCA faith formation and personal decision about one's life choices after attainment of faith ownership and independence. Despite some weaknesses, the theory is relevant to the current study. Westerhoff theory has been used to develop curriculum and strategies for teaching and learning by Kreider (1996) who has critiqued that it does not cover carefully all the aspects of life. Then Niekerk and Breed (2018) also used part of the theory in their study on the role of parents in the development of faith from birth to seven years. Davis (2019) also used Westerhoff theory in a qualitative study to explore how childhood experiences influence adult spirituality. The four stage theory enculturation model recognises the value of the community's unique heritage but assumes a homogeneous community for faith education which disadvantages multi-ethnic diverse communities like YCA community, due to movements away from cultural settings and both family and community fragmentations (Bickford, 2011). Westerhoff theory also does not connect the ownership of faith with the aspect of influencing YCA vocation choice

2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The majority of the researchers have recommended various strategies that can effectively contribute to the faith formation of young adults. In South Africa, Freeks (2020) indicated that youth program aims helping the youth develop interpersonal skills and self-confidence to improve their efficiency and inspire them to accomplish their tasks. The program uses trains of the following themes, namely, prayer, Gospel values, spiritual formation, biblical knowledge growth, repentance, worship and music fellowship, Christian family life, the witness of Christ and justice, and Christian worldview. Freeks (2020), however, does not particularly deal with young Catholic adults or include vocation discernment as one of the faith formation themes that can help young adults to make decisions about their vocations. Oliver (2015), on the other hand, focuses specifically on examining the young Catholic adult's faith formation and notes a disconnect between their Catholic identity and the impact it has on their faith. The gap has sent them away from the Catholic Church to other churches in search of spiritual fulfillment. The majority have embraced Eastern meditation, yoga and some find traditional spiritual practices fulfilling their spirituality hungers more than in the Catholic Church spirituality. Others find movies, books, and natural scenes like sunset awakening their spiritual life's more than anything they knew before. Oliver proposes a well-designed curriculum to guide their training on journaling in prayer to sustain their link with the liturgical year by reading and reflecting on the scripture. He also suggests a spiritual mentorship faith centered program lasting for a year but does not. This is to help YCA fulfils their faith needs. Oliver's approach concentrates more on the spiritual formation but not strategies that can help in vocation choice and sustenance.

Similarly, Weber (2007) proposes designing YCA outline programs using approaches that effectively present the young adults faith. This includes a safe space where they can ask questions and share their concerns, more contact time, training on discernment to help them make moral decisions. Young adults are to be drawn into liturgical life whole considering their sensitivity to language, mentality and styles of approach. Omojola and Ikechukwu (2019) also examined the reason for Youths exit from the Church. He describes them as in the continuous search for purpose, experimentation and questioning about certain realities of interest. Some have been enticed by Pentecostalism time and methods of faith presentation. Omojola and Ikechukwu (2019) propose a catechetical model, elaborative enough to address contemporary youth needs of faith. They make the following recommendations, the presentation of faith be, attractive and interesting and intent to retain youth in the Catholic Church; careful selection, appointment and training of youth chaplains interested in youth formation of faith as well as their remuneration; a regular catechesis and frequent publication of materials related to their needs and other relevant areas of interest; equipping the religious education teachers through ongoing compulsory faith formation; a two-year period of preparation for the sacrament of initiation and strengthening of the Christian communities; financial commitment to the youth faith formation and interest of the local ordinary to inspire effective catechesis of the youth.

Vaclavik (2018) interest in retaining the youth in the Church, he too observes that a large percentage of the young people leave the Church before reaching adulthood. The percentage of young people who retain their faith is decreasing. The modern Catholic Church how to approach the youth ministry in a way that help retaining in the Church. Vaclavik (2018) study recommends that both adult parents and those who are not parents help youth discover and develop their religious identity. Elias (2020), on the other hand, explores the development of the spiritual disciplines in young and young people of the Peachtree City Seventh-day Adventist Church. Parents and leaders of this Church describe their youth spirituality and the church involvement as wanting. They also see the youth and young adults appointed leader's spirituality as inadequate. The findings of the study indicate that leaders also lack consistent spiritual formation to train and share faith adequately with youth and of their Church. Instead,

the youth ministry is centred on recreational fellowship and devoid of spiritual formation. Elias concern is youth and their leader's faith formation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and not specifically the YCA.

Diao (2018) focuses the methods and resources of faith formation by use of the contemporary Gospel music audiovisual recording of music and how it has improved the singing of Christians of Lisu. Information technology has been adopted as a new way of promotion of singing gospel music and meditation among the Christians of southwestern Yunnan province of China. The media technologies and recording of the most preferred mutgguat ssat music has made singing better. The combination of traditional cultural elements has encouraged religious participation and the face of Christian life among the Lisu Christians who are known for their love of music in their daily prayer lives. Diao (2018) method of the study is not clear and the study focuses on the use of information technology to improve Gospel singing and worship as a strategy to improve church music. Moreover, Dyikuk (2017) likewise note that in the digital age the Church has no option than to use information technology to sustain online Church's life. Dyikuk explains that the new media platforms are being used by the reach out to the masses of Christians who are not able to go to Church and uniting those broken by life. The ICT serves as an instrumental resource for venturing into new grounds for evangelization. Dyikuk (2017) advises contemporary church leaders to take advantage of new media of communication to reach out to their faithful not only through the creating an online church but also by sustaining it. Dyikuk also focuses on the use of ICT as a resource for evangelization in general not to a specific group or context. The method is qualitative unlike the current study which is a mixed method.

In addition, it was found that Information technology has helped Christ is the Answer Ministries (CITAM) church to reach out to a wider audience of its members (Mungai 2018). The Church in Kenya has relied on information and communication technology to reach out to its individual audience. The majority of the participants said they use WhatsApp when communicating with other church members. Most of the respondents 80.7% used soft copy Bible while 26.9% indicated that ICT attracted them to join the CITAM by Church. The use of technology has also improved the efficiency in evangelism. The study looks at the use of information technology influence on evangelization among the general congregation and not to young adults. The study is also in CITAM and not in the Catholic Church. It was recommended by Turner (2019) that mentoring the church leaders on theological foundations and practical resources of both children and young people inspire them to form the whole community in faith. Turner discourages the idea of focusing on acquisition of faith knowledge only rather than fostering holistic faith formation for all the groups. He encourages leaders to value the presence of the young people and their need for visionary faith formation. He also recommends that community leaders adopt childlike flexibility as they engage young people in communal activities of worship including prayer, service and celebration. The USCCB (2010) similarly proposes a good context of presenting the content. The bishops suggested that the faith formation to include activates such as; retreat, prayer, debate, presentations on the Church teaching, engagements on faith discussions, to be accorded a safe place and space for young adults to express their questions, fear, disagreements with the Church's teaching.

Also, Francis in *Amoris Letitia* (2016) notes that young adults also want to express their faith in their own culture, music and drama themes like vocation and faith-like questions to be able to respond to God's call. They need a setting where they can freely search for truth with openness and acceptance to answer their questions like why they must live faith and if not which way to go (*Amoris Letitia*, 2016). The Synod of Bishops on young people's faith and vocational discernment (2019) suggests similarly suggests the use of the scriptural texts to help young people to develop a habit of listening, attentiveness and the practice of taking a short

time of silence during personal prayer. Scripture can also be read and discussed in their gathering, to help them reflect on their daily experiences in their vocations. To ponder on how God wishes them to respond to their vocations just as the young Samuel did (1 Sam 3:1-20; *Christus Vivit*, n. 256). The Bishops proposal are very key strategies to faith formation though they are not empirically researched.

Roberto (2007) as well argues that, Young adults feel at home when appreciated, supported and encouraged to make their contribution through participation and belonging. Roberto believes that it is important to give young adults a priority since they do not only represent the future Church but also the present. Young adults want the Church to view the world from their own viewpoint and give consideration to their interests, their priorities, needs, talents and things that matter to them. Roberto and Hayes (2007) also note that young adults have the following needs which forms a better approach for their faith formation. They seek to establish a deeper connection with the person of Christ and to invite Jesus to inspire their plans. They are also interested in social justice engagement as a service to the community. Young adults want to know their place in the community of faith. They love good liturgical music, lively liturgy, and want to feel the presence and availability of their leaders in all areas of their engagements. They want to gather their efforts around valuable programme approaches that grow them in all aspects of their lives (Roberto & Hayes, 2007). Roberto and Hayes strategies are very key though the method of their study is not clear and not from a Kenyan context.

Pope Francis (2019) observes that cultural changes in contemporary society have affected pastoral ministering of young people and the available programs do not meet their needs effectively. He proposes a better coordination of their programs through community involvement, evangelization and their engagement in pastoral outreach. Francis also proposes new and creative approaches, a specific manual of youth ministry or a practical pastoral guide with relevant resources. The Pope says that the young find flexibility in accommodating events, opportunities for learning, celebrating, singing and listening to real stories or shared personal encounters with God very enriching for the young people (*Christus Vivit*, 202-204). The Pope urges pastoral agents to develop programs that add value to lives of the youth and consider the use of effective methods, language, and aims that speak to them about the joy of the Gospel (*Christus Vivit*, 205). The resources from the bishops address young people in the Church but not in a specific context and not specifically on the young Catholic adults group.

In relation to strategy for effective faith formation, Chartrand, (2020) studied the challenge facing the Church in developing a method that can contextualize discipleship. The American Crossroad church was looking for a way of containing the millennials in the Church. The findings point at the millennials as the most diverse and technologically progressive generation in human history. They are also the least religiously affiliated. The study also describes them as the most complex to contain and to religiously and spiritually engage them for formation. The findings propose a formation that is culturally empowering and transformative in small groups. They also require mission engagement and constant spiritual formation and a program cantered in scripture and biblical training, with the ability to challenge and spiritually engage them. Chartrand, (2020) study also lists the resources used in faith formation of young people in American crossroad churches like books, podcasts, conference and articles to engage the young people in learning faith and discipleship (Chartrand, (2020). He presents a lot of information for the study although the study does not propose the linking of faith formation to vocations of the young adults as a strategy which this study seeks to achieve.

Baker (2015) also investigated the influence of catechetical models on the faith development of early and late adolescents for seven years among students of Christian universities in the United States. The findings suggest that spirituality focus should be on developing a deep

connection with God and encountering Jesus Christ; Christians to model and Christian living to that of Jesus in relation with the cross. Baker (2015) also discovered that spirituality is best understood through personal experience and spiritual values. The findings also reveal that discernment enlightens young people to differentiate between moral and immoral, informed by Christian tradition. Baker (2015), therefore, recommends the use of spiritual theories for understanding catechetical ministry with youth ministry and to help them gain an understanding of the church life. This also empowers each to identify their gifts and talents and interact with other spiritualities for the personal growth of faith and understanding of other spiritual writings.

Horan (2017) likewise examined the spiritual formation of millennials in Christian schools. He employed a mixed method design with a sample of 504 secondary school teachers and administrators of Christian school associations to collect data. His findings reveal that one of the primary missions of Christian schools as to foster spiritual formation among millennials and to empower them with skills to encounter life and contribute to society's spiritual needs. The millennials ranked the rationally-based programs highly as more effective for nurturing spiritual formation than the emphasized spiritual formation that integrates bible study, group mentoring and community service. However, the faith programs are not implemented due to lack of professional empowerment of the teachers. The study recommended individual mentoring programs and professional empowerment of the teachers. It will contribute to social change and empower millennials with knowledge and skills to avoid risky behaviours and instead offer their talents in community service.

Mackenzie (2020) also explored family significance in the mission of the Church and argues that Missiological writings have an overemphasis on the Church and individuals as the agents of mission and rarely recognized the family or home as agents of the mission. Such weakens the family role of witnessing the transforming grace of God in the world. Mackenzie asserts that, New Testament presents the family as subordinate to the Church. The New Testament presents family themes on spirituality for the mission, holiness, hospitality and service. Mackenzie (2020) therefore recommends that the disciplines of missiology and Christian spirituality should bring out clearly the significance of life within a family and involve the family more in the faith formation and outreach. Although the Church in various documents has underscored the role of the family in faith formation and evangelization, Mackenzie observes that the missiology writings have underrated the role of the family in the mission of the Church.

The empirical studies of the strategies that enhance faith and vocation choices sustenance have made various recommendations that can help support faith formation but not how to enhance vocation choices among young Catholic adults. The common themes of strategies that emerged include holistic faith formation, spiritual formation, bible study and sharing, activities such as prayer, retreats and workshops, mentorship programs, faith formation curriculum or guide and model, training on cultural diversity, and use of resources and tools such as information technology. There is scanty literature that addresses faith strategies that can contribute to young Catholic adult's vocation choices in Africa and Kenya and particularly.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mixed method design was preferred for this study because it combines the strengths of both the quantitative and qualitative data to understand the research problem better (Creswell 2014). The study employed convergent parallel mixed method design in which both quantitative and qualitative data is collected concurrently, analysed and then the overall results are integrated in the interpretation. Mixed methods were used to help the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the YCA faith formation role in influencing the vocation choices of young

Catholic adults from quantitative and qualitative data overview. The study was conducted in 10 parishes of Ruaraka Deanery Archdiocese of Nairobi which includes. The entire target population was 364 that included 344 YCA members, 10 moderators and 10 chaplains.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Strategies that enhance YCA faith formation on vocation choice sustenance

The participants were asked to indicate the rate at which the faith formation strategies in Table 35 would effectively enhance YCA vocation choices the results are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Strategies that enhance YCA faith formation on vocation choice sustenance

strategies that enhance YCA faith formation on vocation choice sustenance	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly disagree		Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Endeavour to Link theory & practice,	45	47	50	52	0	0	1	1
Use online & physical training	37	37	64	63	0	0	0	0
Address core teaching of catholic faith	46	46	49	49	2	2	2	2
Provide forums for sharing experience stories	0	0	87	100	0	0	0	0
Provide links on personal development	0	0	61	100	0	0	0	0
Use other social media platforms, like parish webpages	40	41	51	52	7	7	0	0
Provide ongoing vocation discernment training	42	42	54	54	5	5	0	0
Provide self-awareness and communication skills discussions	42	42	51	51	7	7	0	0
Train on cultural diversity	38	38	57	57	5	5	0	0
Provide YCA training guide	0	0	87	100	0	0	0	0

The results presented in Table 1 shows the largest percentage of the participants either strongly agreed or agreed with the developed statements of strategies. Only a small percentage disagreed. 47% strongly agreed and 52% agreed that linking theory & practice could contribute to vocation choice sustenance. 37%, strongly agreed and, 63 % agreed, that the use of online & physical training would contribution to vocation choices. 64%, strongly agreed 49 % agreed on addressing the core teaching of the Catholic faith would do the same. 100% strongly agreed that providing forums for sharing experience would make inform vocation choices. 41 % strongly agreed, and 51% agreed that the use of other social media platforms, like the parish web page. 42% strongly agreed and 54% agreed that providing ongoing vocation discernment training would contribute to vocation sustenance. 42 % strongly agreed and 51% agreed that providing self-awareness and communication skills discussions would help in vocation choice and sustenance. 38 % strongly agreed and 57% agreed that training YCA concerning cultural diversity, would enhance vocation choices sustenance and finally, 100% strongly agreed that, providing YCA training guide would help enhance the vocation choice sustenance.

The interview findings shared the same views on the strategies that would enhance vocation choice sustenance of YCA in Ruaraka deanery. On the faith formation programs that inform the vocation choices, the researcher clustered the emerging recommended strategies into four interrelated themes guided by the study themes. The participants suggested the development of a YCA program guide to give direction to the training in a consistent manner. They also proposed a method of presentation of the content and timeframe for the completion of the training, as well as YCA accompaniment framework. The group also proposed relevant themes

that would help them address their search for purpose through meaningful relationships, personal identity, spiritual hunger and work. The proposed themes include; adequate training on self-awareness and communication skills, prayer and spirituality. Under prayer and spirituality, the related sub-themes proposed include ongoing catechesis on different forms and types of Catholic prayers (adoration, meditation and contemplation), ways of bible study meditation, Christian virtues and moral values, vocation types, vocational discernment. The proposed themes are similar with Freeks, (2020) suggestions on the use of missiological approach which is grounded on principles of prayer, Gospel values, spiritual formation, biblical knowledge growth, repentance, worship and music fellowship with others Christian family life, the witness of Christ and justice, and Christian worldview.

The participants proposed ongoing catechesis on sacraments especially the Eucharist, marriage and reconciliation. On the sacrament of marriage, the YCA suggested to help to understand fully the sacrament from courtship in the Catholic understanding marriage boundaries, family conflict management, parenting especially in the modern day time as well as handling the children from other relationships which is a common challenge in current marriage. One of important strategy for faith formation that was heavily discussed in the interviews in almost all the parishes is about addressing the state of children from other relationship and forgiveness.

Participants in FGD B1 shared that, “children from previous relationships have been a major issue to families and marriage than it was in traditional marriages. A child before marriage has become a thorny issue that needs to be discussed among young adults. Some men as well as women have not gotten married because for them these children though innocent have become hindrances to marriage.” Another participant in the same group explained that, “these children experience trauma from rejection and mistreatment either from, their step-mothers or step-fathers and sometimes even the larger family, thus creating tension in marriage and family.” Some members added that added that, the increased marriage homicides are as a result of such children but also marriage delays, separation or divorce. The group felt that although this appears to be a personal issue it affects faith and vocation choices and sustenance negatively thus the church out to offer guidelines on such issue since it is a reality that cannot be denied or ignored.

FGD B3 member said that, "I was in a cohabited marriage for a few years and I was always treated like a stranger with my child who was a full member of the family. I therefore left. I was never prepared by anyone about what to expect in marriage or how to make informed decisions about my marriage life. Now with my child it becomes difficult to think of marriage again since the father is not responsible.”

On the sacrament of Eucharist, they wish to understand deeply the meaning of adoration and how to connect with Jesus in the adoration of the Eucharist. In the sacrament of reconciliation, the YCA wishes to be trained on how to facilitate reconciliation, forgiveness and healing in marriage relationships and among siblings, parents and parent in-laws. An important aspect expressed by moderator A6, which was said to be mostly forgotten or ignored both in marriage and in normal relationships, is the reality of inability to forgive and the inability to say sorry.

Moderator A1 and participants in FGD B4 indicated that the world is sick and bloody because of revenge as a result of the inability to ask for forgiveness and to forgive it among young adults and the young people in marriage and in relationships especially in Kenya in the past few years. Chaplain a7 noted that, “although the call to holiness is about being human, many young people seem to have lost the presence of God in their lives. They are not patient with even those they have loved. Most of the interpreted to forgive as being weak and unjust.”

Further, moderator A3 said "stories of young adults both in legal and non-legal relationships murder behaviour are the social media top stories. Some have committed suicide and others have murdered both their loved ones and killed themselves, which is bad news for the next generations."

The FGD B4 participants insisted that, young people across the country have cried for help to be rescued from the terror of revenge. They are begging to be helped to learn patience and to, to develop the ability to forgive each other rather than destroying each other and innocent lives of children. B6 also observed, the current trend of homicides in the Kenyan society as reported on daily basis by televisions and social media platforms, is a sign of a restless generation in unconscious society.

The church especially and the government have been blamed by the group as responsible for the mess due to the little attention given to the conscience, spiritually, social, economic and moral formation given to the youth and especially young adult who seem to be assuming marriage responsibilities without proper discernment and preparation. Moderator A3 also said that "the facilitation of forgiveness and reconciliation should be the foundation of all the catechesis in the family and the church. Parents and the church must teach forgiveness and practically demonstrate its consequences using biblical examples to help young people grasp the meaning and essence of it from childhood not beginning from adulthood."

Another important strategy that was highly rated is skills on personal faith development. One of the core individual needs for this group is the search for identity according to Westerhoff four stage theory of faith development. They therefore proposed candid discussions around their family, cultural identities and backgrounds which will help them grow their personal values and virtues to assist them in identification and management of personal crisis. Another area of interest as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic was development on skills of dealing with grief of different kinds like loss of a job, significant others, work-life balance, mental health and dealing with terminal illnesses like cancer. On the faith formation resources and activities, the YCA proposed identifying resources that can enhance the faith formation and vocation choices such as simple and relevant church and secular books, journals related to young adult's needs that can provide knowledge and practical mechanisms of dealing with their faith and vocation needs.

The use of social media platforms like websites parish website pages for YCA were suggested as some of the best strategies and platform for reaching out to young adults and facilitating discussions or conferences from which the YCA can interact and learn from each other. They proposed posting of relevant inspiring talks or material related to faith and various vocations, like marriage and work on the YCA website page for them to learn. Weber (2007) notes that young adults need a safe space where they can ask questions, doubt and be helped to clear their doubts and share their deeper concerns comfortably. Another strategy is the use of sensible language, proper styles of approach. Omojola and Ikechukwu (2019) describe youth as going through a continuous search for purpose, experimentation and questioning about certain realities of interest. Some have been enticed by Pentecostalism time and methods of faith presentation and content thus have run away from the Catholic Church.

The YCA recommends a well-organized program for the YCA's active involvement and supports both in training, financial and professional support from the faith community and the church leaders in a parish set-up. They recommend the appointment of committed and available faith formators and mentors, both male and female, priests, religious men and women and lay professionals. These were considered able to positively and effectively contribute to their faith and vocational growth and development in all aspects of a human person; and for the effective implementation of the programs. In relation to the appointment of faith and vocation mentors

and accompaniment, Omojola and Ikechukwu (2019), suggest that there should be a careful selection of chaplains who are willing and interested in accompanying the young people. Again the two propose that the chaplains should be remunerated and also given regular formation themselves.

On the role of faith formation agents, the YCA proposed that the appointment of the YCA chaplains and mentors be based on their willingness to offer service to YCA and passion for the group. FGD B7 observed that if faith formators or mentors do not have any passion for the group they will not be committed to it. They also proposed the training of the mentors and faith agents of the YCA purpose of existence and to be appreciated through stipend as a way to motivate them to commit to the job. Another proposal was the sensitization of the faith community about who YCA needed for financial, professional and moral support, especially their faith formation and vocation events and activities.

They proposed the training of parents of YCA on their role and responsibility of faith formation and vocation's follow-up and of their young adults. Another group for training on their role and responsibility proposed was the baptism and marriage sponsors. Some members expressed that most of them were said to have forgotten how they can make contribute to the faith and vocation development of those they sponsor. Baptism and marriage sponsors are expected to serve as support systems of the YCA in their faith and vocation struggles as companions but from the findings they do not. Another important proposal was on gender sensitivity and inclusivity in the appointment of mentors and faith formation agents by the church. The overall findings on the strategies indicate various strategies related to faith formation that can effectively enhance YCA vocations and vocation sustenance.

4.2 Correlation Analysis on Faith Formation Strategies and Vocation Choice

The correlational analysis was undertaken to examine the association between faith formation strategies and vocation choice and the results are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Correlational on Faith Formation Strategies and Vocation Choice

Faith formation strategies	Vocation choice		
Vocation choice	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.750**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
Faith formation strategies	Pearson Correlation	.750**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that faith formation strategies are positively and significantly associated with vocation choices ($r=.750$ $p=.000$). The results signified that faith formation strategies and vocation choices move in the same direction

4.3 Linear Regression Diagnostic Tests

Before undertaking regression analysis, the data was subjected to diagnostic tests including, test for normality, multicollinearity and linearity. The study results are presented below

4. 3.1 Normality

The normality test was assessed through the Shapiro-Wilk test and the results are presented in Table 3

Table 3: Tests of Normality

Variables	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Faith formation strategies	.987	108	.400

Results in Table 3 indicate that faith formation strategies had a Shapiro-Wilk test statistic (SW-statistic) of 0.987 with a calculated p-value of $0.4 > 0.05$, implying that the data was normally distributed.

4.3.2 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity was assessed in this study using the variance inflation factors (VIF). Table 4 presents the multicollinearity result

Table 4: Multicollinearity Test

Variable	VIF
Faith formation strategies	1.9664

The results in Table 4 indicated the absence of multicollinearity since the VIF of the variable was less than 10. VIF values less than 10 indicate the absence of multicollinearity. Multicollinearity increases the standard errors and confidence intervals, leading to unstable estimates of the coefficients for individual predictors.

4.3.3 Linearity relationship between Faith formation strategies and vocation choice

The linearity test was assessed by examination of a scatter plot of faith formation strategies against the vocation choice to measure if there is a straight-line relationship and the results are presented in Figure 1

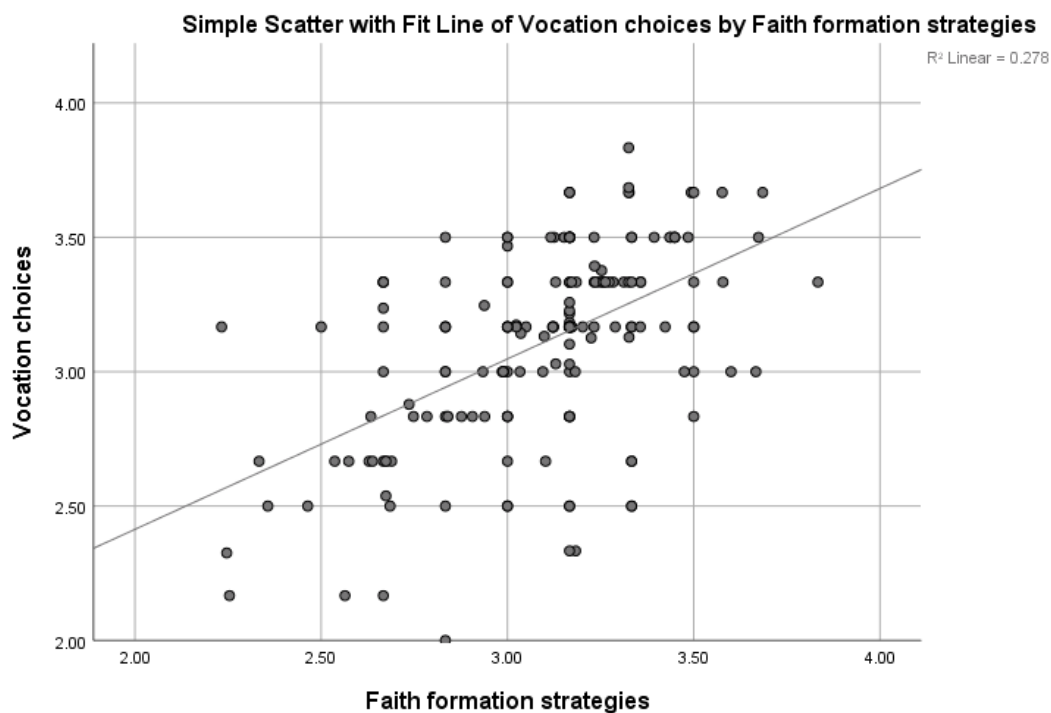


Figure 1: Scatter Plot of formation strategies against vocation choice

The results presented in Figure 1 shows that faith formation strategies depicted a straight-line relationship with vocation choices

4.4 Regression Analysis on Faith Formation Strategies and Vocation Choice

The influence of faith formation strategies on vocation choices was examined using linear regression analysis. The results of the model fitness are depicted in Table 5

Table 5: Regression Analysis on Faith Formation Strategies and Vocation Choice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.750a	0.563	0.559	0.79884

a Predictors: (Constant), Faith Formation Strategies

The results presented in Table 5 shows there is a positive association in the model ($R = .750$). The results of the study showed that the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.563. This implied that faith formation strategies accounted for 56.3% of vocation choices.

The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) is presented in Table 6

Table 6: ANOVA on Faith Formation Strategies and Vocation Choice

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	87.958	1	87.958	137.834	.000b
	Residual	68.281	107	0.638		
	Total	156.239	108			

a Dependent Variable: Vocation Choice

b Predictors: (Constant), Faith Formation Strategies

The results presented in Table 6 show that the overall model is statistically significant. The results signified that faith formation strategies are good predictors in explaining vocation choices. This is supported by an F statistic of 137.834 and the reported p-value of 0.000, which is less than the conventional probability significance level of 0.05, indicating that faith formation strategies are significant in predicting vocation choices.

The regression coefficient from the study results on faith formation strategies is presented in Table 7

Table 7: Coefficients on Faith Formation Strategies and Vocation Choice

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.872	0.229		3.809	.000
	Faith Formation Strategies	0.709	0.06	0.75	11.74	.000

a Dependent Variable: Vocation choices

The study results presented in 7 depicts that faith formation strategies is positively and significantly related to vocation choices ($\beta = .709$ $p = 0.000$). This was supported by the calculated t-statistic of 11.74 that is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96. This designated a

unitary increase in faith formation strategies leads to an increase in vocation choices by 0.709 units when other factors are held constant.

The hypothesis to be tested was;

There is no significant relationship between faith formation strategies and vocation choice on young Catholic adults in the Ruaraka deanery

The hypothesis was tested by using linear regression and determined using the p-value presented in Table 7. The acceptance/rejection criterion was that if the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0), but if it is more than 0.05, the H_0 is not rejected. The null hypothesis indicated there is no significant relationship between faith formation strategies and vocation choice on young Catholic adults in the Ruaraka deanery. Based on the results presented in Table 7, the p-values were 0.000. The null hypothesis was thus rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between faith formation strategies and vocation choice on young Catholic adults in the Ruaraka deanery.

5.1 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that vocation choices had a statistically significant association with faith formation strategies, $r=.750$, $P<0.00$. The regression coefficient demonstrated that faith formation strategies positively influence vocation choices ($R = .563$ square, $p<.05$). The findings from the interview conducted also indicated that faith formation strategies are able to influence vocation choices to a certain degree which can be improved for effective achievement of the YCA faith formation goal. Some of the strategies emerged from the discussions included a deliberate YCA faith formation program training guide to give direction to their faith formation, provide relevant themes, training timeframe and methodology. Another strategy was the appointment of chaplains who are interested and passionate about YCA. Appointment of committed mentors and religious sisters and brothers to assist in YCA formation training and mentoring. Other strategies are the use of ICT and social media platforms for training and interactions. It was found further strategies include formation of social media platforms like webpages to teach and post faith training content, guide, references, books, videos and also for sharing experiences.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that effective faith formation strategies need to be developed. Some of the strategies can include YCA faith formation program training guide to give direction to their faith formation and provide relevant themes, training timeframe and methodology. The Christian parish community should support YCA faith training and activities. It is also recommended that committed mentors and religious sisters and brothers be appointed to assist in YCA formation training and mentoring. There is a need to use ICT and social media platforms for training and interactions.

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