

**CHILDREN MINISTRY PROGRAMS AND CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH: A
CASE STUDY OF RUKONDO PARISH-KITAGATA ARCHDEACONRY, WEST
ANKOLE DIOCESE, SHEEMA DISTRICT**

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M22/BBUC/BD/039

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO BISHOP TURKER SCHOOL OF DIVINITY AND
THEOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DIVINITY OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

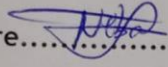
August, 2025



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**
A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

DECLARATION.

This Research is my original work and has not been presented for any Degree or Diploma Program to any university.

Signature.....

Date.....08-08-2025.....

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M22/BBUC/BD/039.

RESEARCH SUPERVISOR

APPROVAL.

This is to certify that this research has been submitted for examination with my approval.

Signature.....*J. Friday*.....

Date.....*8/8/2025*.....

REV. ROBERT FRIDAY.

RESEARCH SUPERVISOR.

DEDICATION.

I dedicate this work to my family members Mrs. Tushemerirwe Oliver (Mum), Mrs. Natuhwera Mellon (Sister), Mr. Mwongyera Happy, my Research Supervisor Rev. Friday Robert for the encouragement and support they gave me during my studies, you did a tremendous work in encouraging me during my Research endeavours.

May God bless you abundantly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

I thank the Lord for enabling me reach the accomplishment of this work,

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my Bishop (Rt. Rev. Johnson Twinomujuni),

Ven. Can. Arthur Atwiine (Archdeacon Kitagata Archdeaconry), my Research supervisor Rev. Friday Robert and Staff Bishop Barham University College Kabale for your invaluable guidance and correction during the course of this study. Shekinah Printers Kitagata for organizing and printing my Research and above all my home Diocese West Ankole for allowing me pursue this course and for your unwavering support.

LIST OF AACRONYMS.

1. Rt. Rev: Right Reverend.
2. C.O.U: Church Of Uganda.
3. C.M.P: Children Ministry Programs.

ABSTRACT.

This study explored children ministry programs and children's spiritual growth at Rukondo Parish C.O.U, West Ankole Diocese. The objectives were; to assess the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth. To identify the challenges children ministry programs face in promoting children's spiritual growth. To explore the most effective strategies in promoting children's spiritual growth in relation to children ministry programs.

A descriptive survey design but cross-sectional in nature, using sample size of 36 participants was used. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were also adopted and used to select the respondents and data was using a well-structured and designed questionnaire. The findings revealed that most respondents do not view the children ministry programs as highly effective in promoting spiritual growth with over 70% rating them as somewhat effective or not effective, there is a clear need to re-evaluate and enhance the structure, content, and delivery of these programs to better meet their intended goals. In addition, the findings highlighted those two main challenges facing children ministry programs are lack of resources and volunteer support. These two areas should be worked on to improve the effectiveness of children ministry programs. Lastly, the study reveals that respondents favor a holistic approach to children ministry, emphasizing spiritual growth (Bible study), emotional support and mentorship practice.

The study recommends that comprehensive children ministry programs should be developed which include Bible study, prayer and relationships with peers and mentors.

Also training of adults should be done in order to model spiritual behavior to provide and support and encouragement and also partnering with the church in order to solve the problems facing children ministry programs.

Evaluation of existing children ministry program should be always done to assess the effectiveness and explore areas for improvement.

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL BACKGROUND.

1:1:1. Introduction to the study.

This chapter contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose, and objectives. The research questions, scope of the study, justification and significance, definition of key words, conceptual framework are also considered.

1:1:2. Background of the study.

Just as the farmer is rest assured of His/Her continuous agricultural practices when she/he has a nursery bed, the same applies to the Church because Children ministry is the nursery bed for the Church. Therefore for the church to continue in future, it must focus on children Ministry. The farmer waters the nursery bed, builds for it to provide it shed and to protect it from distracters which may destroy the seedlings and in church context, seedlings are children, shed are church structures for children and as well as children ministry programs designed.

In case the farmer fails to give maximum attention to the nursery bed, the result will be loss of seeds to plant and also poor yields because life for seedlings begins in the nursery bed due to the care given. Therefore, the church which does not prioritize children ministry will have blurred (irresponsible Christians with no ethical values) or no future church and this will result into challenges like theft, murder, prostitution and other forms of evils because a stick is bent when it is still supple.

Children's spiritual growth is an expansive process shaped by diverse factors, including ministry programs that are designed explicitly for their age group. These

programs are designed to offer a favorable environment where children can learn matters about faith, participate in religious practices and also develop a strong foundation for their spiritual growth. For example, Rehlkepartein et al. (2016) showed the significance of positive relationships between children and adult mentors within religious settings to assist children's spiritual development. This relational aspect is useful for creating a nurturing environment where children feel aided, motivated in their spiritual journey.

Globally, children ministry programs (C.M.P) in promoting children's spiritual growth are known across numerous cultural backgrounds and religious contexts and the need to mold these programs to relate with the several needs and choices of children from different backgrounds. Scholars like Benson et al. (2012) have portrayed the role of cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in promoting children's spiritual growth.

At a local level, communities like Kitagata Archdeaconry have tried to put in use different children ministry programs which can center on promoting children's spiritual growth. For example scholars like Jones (2018) depicted the role of community engagement and partnering in sustaining local communities aimed at promoting children's spiritual development via ministry programs.

1:1:3. Statement of the Problem.

Many children ministry programs currently put a greater focus on fun activities than ensuring nuanced understanding of spiritual teachings which negatively impact their effectiveness in promoting children's spiritual growth. As a result, children may enjoy the activities but miss the opportunities for a meaningful engagement that promotes their faith. Research shows that while entertainment can attract children, it normally lacks the substance needed for the long-term spiritual growth (Floyd, 2020). This has resulted in a challenge in forming *a solid* foundation for responsible, spiritually mature children who can actively contribute to their church and community.

In addition, research conducted by Smith (2003) revealed that many Children Ministry programs focus more on entertainment, fun activities rather than meaningful spiritual involvement, leading to lack of depth in promoting Children's Spirituality. Therefore, this research will help children church Teachers, Parents and Religious Leaders to understand the effective children ministry programs that are meaningful for promoting children's spiritual growth which will promote responsible, spiritually mature children for the church and the community.

1:1:4. Purpose of the study.

To examine the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth in Rukondo Parish, Church of Uganda, West Ankole Diocese, and Sheema District.

1:1:5. Objectives of the study.

- a) To assess the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth.

- b) To identify the challenges children ministry programs face in promoting children's spiritual growth.
- c) To explore the strategies for promoting children spiritual growth in relation to children's ministry programs.

1:2. Research questions.

- a) How effective do you think the children ministry programs are in promoting children's spiritual growth?
- b) What are the biggest challenges facing children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth?
- c) What do you think could be the most effective strategies in promoting Children's spiritual growth?

1:2:1. Scope of the study.

This will include the content scope, Geographical scope and time scope.

1:2:2 .Content Scope.

This study focused on the thorough navigation of the role of the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth, the challenges facing children ministry programs and strategies that promote children's spiritual growth in relation to children ministry programs in Rukondo Parish -Kitagata Archdeaconry, West Ankole Diocese, Sheema District.

1:2:3. Geographical Scope.

The geographical scope of this study was limited to Rukondo Parish-Kitagata Archdeaconry-West Ankole Diocese, located within the Church of Uganda and

limitation ensured a targeted investigation into the effectiveness, challenges facing children ministry programs, strategies for promoting children's spiritual growth in relation to children ministry programs in the local church and families in Rukondo Parish.

1:2:4. Time Scope:

This research will span for five years for reference and studying the changes and impact. This time will allow for a deeper understanding of seasonal changes and encourage the analysis of the long-term effectiveness of Children ministry programs, the challenges facing children ministry programs and the strategies for promoting children's spiritual growth in relation to children ministry programs.

1:2:5. Significance of the study.

This study holds a greater significance as it explores not only children's spiritual growth through ministry programs but also the relationship between the parents, children church teachers, guardians and also the larger church community. It will contribute to a careful empirical understanding of children ministry programs and this will help to improve children's education within the context of faith. The findings from this research will help church leaders, children church teachers, parents, guardians in re-examining their approaches, thereby facilitating the overall effectiveness of children ministry programs aimed at promoting spiritual growth of children in Rukondo Parish-Kitagata Archdeaconry, West Ankole Diocese, Sheema District.

It will provide knowledge for religious educators and leaders on how to structure effective Children ministry initiatives.

Furthermore, the study will also sensitize parents about the greater benefits and limitations of such programs and elements within them that promote children's spiritual growth.

In addition, it will contribute to academic discourse on children development within religious context.

1:2:6. Theoretical framework.

The Social Learning Theory. This is the psychological theory which stresses that individuals learn behaviors, attitudes and norms and through observing others within their social context. This Bandura's theory portrayed that learning is present in a social context through observation and modeling, where individuals imitate the behaviors of their role models in their environment. This has core significance for understanding how children engaged in children ministry programs learn and develop their spiritual identities through interaction with leaders, peers and family members. The collaborative aspects are inherent in children ministry like group activities, shared worship activities and community service projects further stresses Bandura's theory that learning is a communal process facilitated by social interaction. (Sunardi, 2024; Blanchette&Crosby, 2016).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.

2:1:1. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the literature review in relation to the objectives of the study.

Literature review refers to what other scholars wrote on the concept related to what the researcher wants to use in his work. This information is normally got from secondary sources of data like academic libraries both online and physical and other various sources.

This literature Review aims to evaluate the effectiveness of children ministry programs in fostering the spiritual growth of children, identify the significant challenges these programs encounter, and explore strategic measures that can promote children's spiritual development in relation to ministry programs. By addressing these objectives, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the crucial role children ministry programs play in modeling the faith and character of young individuals, thus benefiting Educators, Theologians, and Community leaders involved in children's spiritual education.

Objective 1: Assessing the Effectiveness of Children Ministry Programs in Promoting Children's Spiritual Growth.

The effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth can be analyzed from different aspects, which include curriculum design, teaching methods, and the inclusion of families. Various studies show that well-structured children ministry programs normally put into use of dynamic curricula that are age-appropriate and relevant to the spiritual needs of children (Wong, 2020).

Montgomery (2017) showcased the role of age-appropriate Biblical teachings and service-learning activities in promoting Children's spiritual growth. Effective Children ministry programs emphasize experiential learning and spiritual exploration (Hay & Nye, 2006). A compound approach, which entails Biblical teachings, community engagement, and family involvement, is also paramount. (Roehlkepartain, 2005).

These curricula often contain storytelling from inspired texts, which not only allows children's imaginations but also promotes inculcation of spiritual principles. Research reveals that children who involve in programs of this nature, show an increase in knowledge of their faith and a stronger correlation to their spiritual beliefs. (Smith & Martinez, 2021).

Family involvement has been identified as a greater factor in shaping successful children ministry programs. Research shows that when parents are actively engaged in their children's spiritual education, positive results are more prevalent. (Miller, 2022).

Finally, the effectiveness of ministry programs can be assessed through qualitative outcomes like faith development, community building, and ethical behavioral variations among children. Studies utilizing longitudinal approaches have showed that children who always engage in children ministry programs portray qualitative improvements in their spiritual awareness and ethical decision-making skills as compared to those with little to no participation in children ministry programs. (Johnson & Lee, 2018).

Objective 2: Identifying the Challenges Children Ministry Programs Face in Promoting Children's Spiritual Growth.

Despite their potential, children ministry programs often face several challenges that negatively impact their effectiveness in promoting spiritual growth. One primary challenge is the lack of trained leadership and volunteers, which leads to poorly executed children ministry programs and reduced engagement. (Thompson, 2021). Many churches find it difficult to attract and retain individuals who have necessary skills to guide children in spiritual education, which results into inconsistencies in program delivery. Studies revealed that effective leadership not only energizes the quality of the children ministry programs but it also promotes the overall participant satisfaction and retention rates of children. (Ferguson, 2020).

Another significant challenge is of maintaining children's attention in this secular and media-driven society. Current research shows that many children face distractions that deter their capacity to engage meaningfully with spiritual content (Clark & Wilson, 2019). This causes children ministry programs to grapple with innovative ways of delivering engaging content that relates with today's children.

In addition to the above, other challenges include; limited resources, and difficult in engaging parents (Patel, 2006, Denton, 2005). Children Ministry Programs may struggle to adapt to changing community needs and technological advancements. (Barna, 2019).

Moreover, financial constraints often limit the resources available for children ministry programs. Many of these programs operate on tight budgets, affecting their ability to procure educational materials, training for leaders, or even simple provisions that enhance the learning environment (Stevenson, 2022).

Objective 3: Exploring the Strategies for Promoting Children’s Spiritual Growth in Relation to Children Ministry Programs.

In order to address the challenges faced by children ministry programs, it is crucial to find out the effective strategies that promote children's spiritual growth. One of the strategies is implementation of mentorship programs that amalgamate children with older mentors or leaders within the community. Studies revealed that positive role models can positively influence children's spiritual development and also promote a sense of belonging. (Graham, 2021). Such relationships create an environment where children feel encouraged to navigate their faith questions and engaging more deeply in their spiritual journey.

Another effective strategy is the use of technology to enhance learning experiences. With children being digital natives, incorporating technology into children ministry programs can promote engagement and participation. Research shows that using multimedia tools, like online resources, can effectively carry on spiritual concepts and facilitate children’s understanding. (Dawson & Robinson, 2020). Therefore, by leveraging technology, ministry programs can resonate with children in ways that related to their everyday experiences and preferences.

In addition to the above strategies, other strategies which can promote children’s spiritual growth include Bible study, prayer, and service projects. (Anthony, 2018). Programs that contain hands on activities, storytelling, and games can enable children to interact with spiritual matters in a meaningful way (Patel, 2006).

Additionally, building partnerships with parents and fostering a collaborative community experience can substantially benefit children’s spiritual growth. Programs that include workshops and family events create a supportive network where parents can share experiences and practices that enhance spiritual

development at home (Brooks, 2019). Involving families not only improves ministry effectiveness but also reinforces the interconnectedness of church and home faith activities.

Finally, ministries can use regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement of children ministry programs. By collecting feedback from children and parents, children ministry leaders can navigate what works well and what needs re-evaluation, allowing for adaptive changes (Baker & Steel, 2022).

2:1:2. Research Gaps.

Although there is considerable literature about children's ministry programs, various research gaps still remain. Firstly, there is limited qualitative research basing on the firsthand account of children's experiences in children ministry programs. Numerous studies evaluate outcomes based on parental or instructor feedback, creating a difference that may overlook children's perspectives.

Furthermore, while several studies discuss the use of technology in educational settings, specific research on its effects within the realm of children's ministry is scarce. Therefore, investigating how digital tools can be used effectively in religious education could provide deeper insights for children program developers.

Finally, while the value of family involvement in children's spiritual education is acknowledged, there is insufficient quantitative analysis of how specific family engagement strategies translate into measurable outcomes in children's spiritual growth. Future studies should focus on developing metrics for evaluating the impact of family involvement directly related with children's spirituality.

By addressing these research gaps, future studies can better discover the best practices for children ministry programs and ultimately promote more effective spiritual growth among young participants.

2:1:3. Researcher's Deduction.

In reference to the literature review, it can be deduced that children ministry programs have the latent to promote children's spiritual growth, but their effectiveness can be affected by numerous challenges. Therefore, Strategies which include bible study, prayer, mentorship and service projects can be effective in promoting children's spiritual growth.

2:1:4. Conclusion:

This literature review showed the importance of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth. While challenges transpire research suggests that effective strategies can be carried out to promote children's spiritual growth. Further research is needed to examine the long term impact of children ministry program and possible solutions to the challenges they face. By filling these gaps, children ministry programs can be more effective in promoting children spiritual growth and development.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.

3:1:1. Introduction.

This chapter covers the research design, target population, sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection and analysis, procedures and data presentation and quality assurance.

3:1:2. Research Design.

Research design is a conceptual structure within which research is conducted. Research is the plan out lining how data was collected and analyzed. As Frankel and Wallen (2016) stressed it, descriptive research design the researcher uses explores who, what, when, where and how of the situations. Research design that the researcher used is a Descriptive survey design. As Kothari (2008) put it, descriptive survey enables the researcher to describe people who take part in the study.

The aspect of survey was based on the fact that, the study was conducted at a specific point in time, and the respondents cut across various groups in rural setting and market conditions.

3:1:3. Nature and Source of Data.

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used and this meant that numeric and descriptive data was collected respectively. Ideally, a Quantitative methodology yields numeric data; while a Qualitative methodology yields Descriptive data, essentially it is compulsory to define earlier the sources and nature of the data to be collected, for other methodological elements to be determined in advance. Rukondo Parish. Moreover, this means that the study is at primary level but gained use secondary sources for conceptual improvement in

academic world and nature, as the data gathered was specifically for this study and from first-hand respondents for primary data sources. Nonetheless, once the results were analyzed, there was a comparison with secondary data sources including Libraries, reports journal and internet sources.

3:1:4. Sample Size Determination.

The study, selected a few representatives of the population, which made the process cost-effective and faster. Therefore, the sample size is a subset of the entire population that entails similar characteristics of the population from where it is depicted. Moreover, for results from a sample to be generalized to the entire population, a certain proportion was chosen about the size of the whole population. Ideally, sample size was 32 respondents. These included; children church teachers 10 parents 15, children 2 and Church leaders 5. Data collection was done using purposive sample technique. Due to limited resources available and time, but high degree of accuracy is desired, the purposive sample technique was applied. According to fowler, 2009, sample is a subset of individual from a larger group used to draw conclusions about the entire population. This is favored by the nature and the scope of the problem available and the area of study. The study based on both qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources in order to get into depth examination of the relationship between Children Ministry Programs and children spiritual growth. Qualitative data analysis allows the study to go beyond statistical results and provide detailed information about the problem being studied as noted by Amin, (2005). The study adopted Morgan and Krejcie, 1970 who came up with a table for determining sample size for a given population for easy reference

Sample size will be determined using the using Krejcie and Morgan Formulae (1970)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where N is the Target Population (35), n is the sample size and e is the level of significance at 0.05

$$n = \frac{35}{1 + 35 \times (0.05)^2} = \frac{35}{1.0875} = 32.18339 \text{ by collecting to whole number (32)}$$

Therefore, sample size n= 32 respondents. These included; Children church Teachers 10 Parents 15, children 2 and 5 Church Leaders.

3:1:5. Sampling Procedures and Strategies.

The study mainly adopted purposive and stratified sampling technique as shown in the Table below. A purposive sampling technique was adopted in which the researcher determined a sample size of 32 participants and any additional responses was not going to make any difference. The researcher made sure to obtain a sample size of around 32 potential members both involved in the study. The study used Morgan and Krejcie, 1970 who came up with a table for determining sample size for a given population for easy reference. Particularly for this study population is 35 and corresponding to sample of 32.

Table 3:2:1. Sample size description.

| SAMPLE DESCRIPTION. | NUMBER OF SAMPLE. | SAMPLING TECHNIQUE. |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Children church teachers. | 10 | Purposive sampling |
| 2. Parents. | 15 | Purposive sampling |
| 3. Children. | 2 | Stratified sampling |
| 4. Church Leaders. | 5 | Purposive sampling |
| Total | 32 | |

Source: Adopted Morgan Krejcie Table formula.

3:2:2.DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURE.

3:2:3. Collection.

Data collection for this study entailed four key methods: Questionnaires, focus groups, direct observations and also participation during various activities. Each method was carefully selected to ensure greater coverage of opinions and experiences of respondents.

3:2:4. Questionnaire.

A questionnaire was designed to gather quantitative data from participants and it composed of multiple-choice questions and likert scale focusing on attitudes and perceptions towards community engagement and children development. The sample included 32 respondents as follows;

15 parents

10 children church teachers

2 children and 5 church Leaders.

The distribution of a questionnaire was done using both online platforms and physical handouts so that respondents could easily access it.

3:2:5. Focus group.

Focus group discussions were organized to allow for the in-depth of themes arising from the questionnaires and each focus group entailed respondents from the same group in order to encourage an open dialogue.

There were two sessions held, one for parents and another one for teachers and church leaders.

3:2:6. Observation participation.

The observation method involved attending various community meetings and children church activities and this allowed for an understanding of interactions between teachers, parents, children and church leaders.

3:3:1. Data Collection Procedures.

The research process began by writing of a proposal and this proposal outlined the objectives of the study, the methods used during the study and expected outcomes of the study. Once the proposal was completed, it was submitted to the supervisor for approval and following the approval of the proposal, the researcher sought a letter of introduction from the Head of Research studies at Bishop Barham University College Kabale and that letter introduced the researcher to the target population and then the researcher headed for data collection.

After self-introduction, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the respondents and clear instructions were provided on how to fill the questionnaire and the researcher will collect the completed questionnaires and conduct interviews as necessary and care were taken to ensure ethical collection of data from respondents.

3:3:2. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON CHILDREN MINISTRY PROGRAMS AND CHILDREN'S GROWTH.

Children Ministry is a crucial aspect of the Christian faith, emphasizing the importance of nurturing young hearts and minds in their spiritual journeys.

Throughout

Scripture, we see the call to raise children in the light of God's truth and love.

In the Old Testament, God commands parents to instill His teachings within their children.

(Deuteronomy 6:6-7) states, "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

This passage highlights the need for continuous engagement in spiritual discussions, illustrating that children's growth in faith is a daily responsibility and a communal effort.

Furthermore, (Proverbs 22:6) assures us of the importance of early instruction: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." This scripture assures us that foundational teachings and values established

during childhood significantly influence a person's life choices and spiritual alignment.

In the New Testament, Jesus emphasizes the value and dignity of children. In (Matthew 19:14), He says, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." This invites us to recognize the unique spiritual potential of children and our role in facilitating their access to Jesus and His teachings.

Additionally, (Ephesians 6:4) instructs parents to nurture their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord." This verse underlines the responsibility of caregivers and the church community in shaping children's spiritual development, encouraging a collaborative approach to ministry.

In summary, the biblical narrative reflects the importance of children in God's plan and portraying the imperative of dedicated ministry to them. Through both Old and New Testament teachings, we understand that guiding children in faith not only influences their individual growth but also promotes the broader community of believers. Engaging children in ministry is a sacred privilege that calls for our commitment and creativity, ensuring they grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.

3:3.3. Data Analysis Techniques.

According to Allan J. B . Clarke, data analysis is the process of extracting meaningful patterns and insights from raw data.

The data collected was coded and tested for finalizing and then analyzed using descriptive and related statistics using statistical package of social scientist (SPSS) and presented using tables, charts and graphs for easy interpretation. A descriptive statistical technique was employed to analyze field data from questionnaires to assist in the interpretation of data. Qualitatively their responses were organized, to aid the process of generating themes for presentation. The outcomes were presented as numbered and descriptive supported by actual responses in addition to analysis.

3.3.4. DATA QUALITY CONTROL, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.

3.3:5. Validity.

Supervisor validation of research instruments was worked on together with researcher's pre-test of the research instruments more especially the questionnaire.

3:3:6. Reliability.

The researcher measured reliability of the questionnaire to determine its consistence in testing what was intended to be measured.

3:4:1. Ethical Considerations.

The researcher considered the research values of voluntary participation, anonymity and protection of respondents from any possible challenge that can arise from involving in the study, ensure confidentiality by making privacy treatment of all information availed, maintain individual's privacy, conducting himself honest, fair

and respectful of others, or misrepresentation, Time management and patience was observed, above all objectivity was considered to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, proper review, personal decisions and other aspects expected.

3:4:2. Limitations.

3:4:3. Anticipated Limitation to the study and how they will be handled

3:4:4 Inadequate response; Respondents who was not available and not cooperative and bringing a challenge to the researcher, the researcher became patient with them and went back to collect data from them when time allowed.

3:5:1. Financial constraint; is the possible expected challenge including high costs of transport and other financial expenses while visiting various libraries and other sources to review the related literature.

3:5:2. Time constraint; the researcher anticipates to face a difficulty of respondents who will be unavailable, thus slowing down the exercise.

3:5:3. PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE RESEARCH.

The researcher will use an approximate cost to assist and meet all expense will be in limits of estimated total of 500,000/= five hundred thousand shillings only) that will cater for all expenses and the breakdown is as follows.

| No. | Item. | Amount (Ug.Shs). |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | Transport and communication | 70,000= |
| 2 | Refreshments | 80,000= |
| 3 | Stationery | 40,000= |
| 4 | Data collection | 160,000= |

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 5 | Data analysis | 80,000= |
| 6 | Typesetting, printing and binding | 70,000= |
| | Total | 500,000= |

Primary data, 2025.

3:5:4. TIME FRAME FOR DATA COLLECTON.

| Time/period. | Item. | Activity. |
|-----------------|--|--|
| January 2025 | Writing research proposal, hand in and wait for approval | Writing and reviewing research proposal by my supervisor to see the validity of the research topic |
| March 2025 | Data collection | Writing the rough copy of the research |
| March -May 2025 | Writing final research report, | Research approval by the supervisor and submission of research book to the department. |

Primary data 2025 (11:54 am).

5:6.Sample Size: The sample size

While representative, may not capture the entire population, raising concerns about the comprehensiveness of the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1: Introduction

This chapter discusses the Analysis, Interpretation, Background information of respondents, Presentation of findings and conclusion.

4:1:1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS.

| INFORMATION. | CATEGORY. | FREQUENCY. | PERCENTAGE. |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Age | Total 32 | | |
| Sex | Male | 16 | 50 |
| | Female | 16 | 50 |
| | Total | | |
| Educ. level | Primary | 6 | 18.75 |
| | Secondary | 13 | 40.625 |
| | Tertiary | 13 | 40.625 |
| | Total 50 | | |
| Occupation/position | Children | 2 | 6.25 |
| In church | Teachers | 10 | 31.25 |
| | Religious Leaders. | 5 | 15.625 |
| | Parents. | 15 | 46.875 |

The study consisted of 32 respondents. The respondents were split between males (50%) and females (50%).

The education levels of the respondents were distributed as follows;

18.75% had a primary education, 40.625% had a secondary education and 40.625% had a tertiary education in terms of occupation position in church, 6.25% were

children, and 31.25 were teachers, 15.625 were Religious Leaders and 46.875 were Parents.

4:1:2. OBJECTIVE ONE: TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CHILDREN MINISTRY PROGRAMS IN PROMOTING CHILDREN SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

| CATEGORY. | FREQUENCY. | PERCENTAGE. |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Very effective | 3 | 9.4 |
| Effective | 6 | 18.8 |
| Somewhat effective | 10 | 31.3 |
| Not effective | 13 | 40.6 |

The first objective of the study was to explore the effectiveness of children ministry programs and the findings were;

Very Effective. Three respondents (9.4%) rated children ministry programs as very effective in promoting children spiritual growth. Meaning that a small number of respondents hold that children ministry programs are highly effective in promoting Children's spiritual growth.

Effective. Six respondents (18.8 %) rated children ministry programs as effective in promoting children spiritual growth. Suggesting a modest confidence in promoting children's spiritual growth.

Somewhat effective .Ten respondents (31.3 %) rated children ministry programs as somewhat effective in promoting children's spiritual growth. These findings resonate with Miller's work (2021) with the idea that children ministry programs normally struggle to meet their goals. This indicated that a significant number of

respondents recognized partial success, even though with evident room for improvement.

Not effective. 13 respondents (40.6%) rated children ministry programs as not effective in promoting children’s spiritual growth. This shows that a larger number of respondents said that children ministry programs are falling a short of fulfilling their intended objectives.

In summary, the findings revealed that most respondents do not view the children ministry programs as highly effective in promoting spiritual growth with over 70% rating them as somewhat effective or not effective, there’s a clear need to re-evaluate and enhance the structure, content, and delivery of these programs to better meet their intended goals.

4:1:3. OBJECTIVE TWO: TO IDENTIFY THE CHALLENGES CHILDREN MINISTRY PROGRAMS FACE IN PROMOTING CHILDREN’S SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

| Challenges. | Frequency. | Percentage. |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Lack of resources. | 15 | 46.9 |
| Limited volunteer support. | 7 | 21.9 |
| Difficulty in engaging parents. | 5 | 15.6 |
| Lack of role models. | 1 | 3.1 |
| Use of age-inappropriate curriculum. | 1 | 3.1 |
| Others (please specify). | 3 | 9.4 |

The second objective of this study was to identify the challenges children ministry programs face. The findings are presented below;

Fifteen respondents (46.9%) stressed that lack of resources was a challenge. These findings resonate with Brown's work (2023) who portrayed that funding instability directly relates with program sustainability and this ties back to the current respondents concern about insufficient resource affecting programs longevity. This portrays that a significant number of respondents believe that children ministry programs face significant challenge related to resources such as funding, personnel or equipment.

Seven respondents (21.9 %) stressed that lack of volunteer support was a challenge. This shows that moderate number of respondents believes that children ministry programs struggle with recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Five respondents (15.6 %) stressed that difficulty in engaging parents was a challenge. These findings resonate with Johnson's work (2019) who stressed that parents are a crucial for sustainability of children ministry programs, reinforcing the concerns regarding parental engagement. This suggests that some respondents hold that children ministry programs face challenges in involving parents in their spiritual growth.

One respondent (3.1%) showed that lack of role models was a challenge. These findings resonate with Peterson's work (2023) who stressed that effective role modeling can impact children's outlook on programs, supporting the need for quality role models for children ministry. This indicates that a small number of respondents hold that children ministry programs struggle with providing positive role models for children.

One respondent (3.1%) stressed that use of inappropriate curriculum was a challenge. These findings resonate with Clark’s work (2022) who found that inappropriate curriculum can lead to disengagement among both volunteers and children supporting the issue raised about curriculum. This suggests that some respondents hold that children ministry programs may be using a curriculum that is not suitable for children’s spiritual growth like not using age appropriate curriculum.

Other challenges.

Three respondents (9.4%) stressed that lack of funding was a challenge. This indicates that some respondents believe that children ministry programs face challenges in providing training for staff and volunteers due to limited funding.

In summary, the findings highlighted that two challenges are lack of resources and volunteer support. These two areas should be worked on to improve the effectiveness of children ministry programs.

4:1:4. OBJECTIVE THREE: TO EXPLORE THE MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN PROMOTING CHILDRE’S SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN RELATION TO CHILDREN MINISTRY PROGRAMS.

| Strategy. | Frequency. | Percentage. |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Bible study. | 12 | 37.5 |
| Providing support and encouragement. | 9 | 28.1 |
| Service projects and mentor ship. | 7 | 21.9 |
| Others (please specify). | 4 | 12.5 |

The third objective was to identify strategies for promoting children's ministry programs. The findings are presented below;

Twelve respondents (37.5 %) recommended bible study as strategy for children ministry program. Also Johnson (2019) pointed out the effectiveness of bible study in fostering spiritual growth among children. This articulates that as significant proportion of respondents believes that bible study is an effective way to promote children's spiritual growth.

Nine respondents (28.1%) recommended providing support and encouragement as a strategy for promoting children ministry programs. This reveals that a moderate proportion of respondents believe that providing emotional support and encouragement is crucial for children's spiritual growth.

Seven respondents (21.9 %) recommended service projects and mentorship a strategy for promoting children's spiritual growth. These findings align with Smiths work (2020) who emphasized that participation in spiritual activities, community service and educational programs can positively impact children's spirituality. This suggests that some respondents hold that engaging children in service projects and providing mentorship can help to promote their spiritual growth.

Others.

Four respondents (12.5%) recommended prayer and worship as a strategy for promotion of children ministry programs. This indicates that some respondents believe that prayer and worship can help promote children's spiritual growth.

In summary, the study reveals that respondents favor a holistic approach to children ministry, emphasizing spiritual growth (Bible study), emotional support and mentorship practice.

4:1:5. Conclusion of chapter four.

This chapter discussed analysis interpretation and presentation of research findings. The chapter presented background information of the respondents, followed by presentation of study objectives.

This chapter also discussed the findings in relation to literature review. This sets ground for chapter five which looked at a summary of the major findings, conclusion and recommendations as well as areas for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5:1:1. Introduction.

This chapter presents summaries of study findings as per the study objectives, conclusions based on those findings and recommendations based on the study findings and other relevant literature considered necessary and vital to be used in future to improve the study situation.

5:1:2. Summary of major findings.

This section shows the summary of the major findings in accordance with research objectives and questions.

The findings revealed that most respondents do not view the children ministry programs as highly effective in promoting spiritual growth with over 70% rating them as somewhat effective or not effective, there is a clear need to re-evaluate and enhance the structure, content, and delivery of these programs to better meet their intended goals.

In addition, the findings portrayed that two main challenges facing children ministry programs are lack of resources and volunteer support. Therefore, these two areas should be worked on to improve and promote the effectiveness of children ministry programs.

Lastly, the study showed that respondents favor a holistic approach to children ministry, emphasizing spiritual growth (Bible study), emotional support and mentorship practice.

5:1:3. RECOMMENDATIONS.

The study recommends that comprehensive children ministry programs should be developed which include Bible study, prayer and relationships with peers and mentors.

Also training of adults should be done in order to model spiritual behavior to provide and support and encouragement and also partnering with the church in order to solve the problems facing children ministry programs. This recommendation resonates with the importance of integrating community involvement to support children's spiritual growth. Johnson (2020).

Evaluation of existing children ministry program should be always done to assess the effectiveness and explore areas for improvement.

5:1:4. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

The study only focused on one geographical area thus limiting its ability to be applied to other areas. Therefore, it is crucial that other future studies extend to other geographical areas for a thorough understanding of the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth, challenges that children ministry programs face in promoting children's spiritual growth and the most effective strategies for promoting children's spiritual growth.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE.

Dear Parent/Children Church Teacher/Church Leader.

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for taking your time to answer this questionnaire. This study seeks to explore the pastoral response to CHILDREN MINISTRY PROGRAMMES AND CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH: A CASE STUDY OF RUKONDO PARISH KITAGATA ARCHDEACONRY-WEST ANKOLE DIOCESE.

KAMUKAMA NEBART M22/BBUC/BD/039. Kindly answer all the questions in this questionnaire. Thank you

Fill all the fields by ticking the appropriate and answering where necessary.

Respondents title

Address.....
.....
.....

Sex/Gender

Male Female

Religious Affiliation;

Roman Catholic

Protestant/ Anglican

Others specify.....

I am between the age of
35 above 36

12-17

18-25

26-

Level of Education.

Primary

Secondary

Post-Secondary

Diploma

Degree

Certificate

Marital Status

Single

Married

Divorced

Others specify.....

Your occupation.....

Thank you for your cooperation.

Objective1: How effective do you think the children ministry programs are in promoting children’s spiritual growth? (from the scale of 1-5 where 1 is not effective at all, 2 is somewhat effective (the program has a minimal impact on spiritual growth),3 is neutral (meaning the program has a moderate impact on spiritual growth),5 very effective (meaning the program has a substantial and meaningful impact on spiritual growth).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

NOTE: Please select one option that best reflects your opinion on the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting Children’s spiritual growth.

Objective 2: What are the biggest challenges facing children ministry programs in promoting Children’s Spiritual growth?

- a) Lack of resources.
- b) Limited volunteer support.
- c) Difficulty in engaging parents.
- d) Others. (Specify).

Objective 3: What do you think could be the most effective strategies for promoting children’s spiritual growth?

- a) Bible study.
- b) Prayer.
- c) Service projects.
- d) Others (Please specify).

Prepared by **KAMUKAMA NEBART.**

M22/BBUC/BD/039.

Interview Guide:

1. Introduction:

- Greet the respondent and provide a brief overview of the purpose of the interview.
- Establish rapport and ensure confidentiality.

2. Background:

- Ask about the interviewee's involvement or affiliation with Children Ministry.
- Inquire about their observations or experiences related to the activities and children ministry programs.

3. Perceived Impact:

- Explore the respondent's perceptions regarding the effectiveness of children ministry programs on promoting Children's Spiritual growth within Rukondo Parish.
- Encourage the respondent to share any specific instances or anecdotes that illustrate this effectiveness.

4. Challenges:

- Discuss the challenges that Children ministry programs faces in fulfilling its role in promoting Children's Spiritual growth.
- Propose for any underlying factors contributing to these challenges.

5. Recommendations:

6. Seek the interviewee's input on potential recommendations or strategies to enhance the effectiveness of children ministry programs in promoting children's spiritual growth within Rukondo Parish.

Encourage creativity and practicality in suggestions.

7. Any question / what is your opinion about this study?

Thank you.

CONSENT FORM.

I agree to participate in this research project titled’ **‘Children Ministry programs and Children’s Spiritual Growth at Rukondo Parish -Kitagata Archdeaconry-West Ankole Diocese’’**, conducted by **Nebart Kamukama** who has discussed the research project with me.

I have had the opportunity to ask the questions about this study and I have received satisfactory answers. I understand the general purposes, risks and methods of this research.

I consent to participate in the research project and the following has been explained to me;

- A). The research may not be of direct benefit to me.
- B). My participation is completely voluntary.
- C). My right to withdraw from the study at any time without any implications to me.
- D). I am able to request a copy of research findings and reports.
- E) . Security and confidentiality of my personal information.

In addition, I consent to;

- A). Audio-visual record any part of all re research activities if applicable.
- B). Publication of this study results from the study on the condition that my identity will not be revealed.

Participant Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Researcher's Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....