

Effect of Covid-19 Crisis on Spiritual Formation in Uganda; A Case of Born-Again Churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division, Kampala City

Joseph Patrick Munyaneza¹ Prof. Caleb Tamwesigire², Prof. Arthur Sunday³, Twesigye Nduhura⁴

Correspondence:

¹ Joseph Patrick Munyaneza-Senior Pastor- Goshen International Ministries,Uganda [Tel:+256787507659](tel:+256787507659),
Email :munyanezajoe@gmail.com

² Prof. Caleb Tamwesigire - Dean, Faculty of Economics and Management- Kabale University

³ Prof. Arthur Sunday – Head of Department, Business and Management- Kabale University

⁴ Twesigye Nduhura- Ntuula ‘A’.Katovu Town Council, Lwengo District,
E-Mial : twesigyenduhura@gmail.com, Tel: +256786388199

Abstract: *The study examined the effect of COVID-19 on Spiritual formation in born again churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division, Uganda. The study was guided by research question; what are the effects of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches? The hypothesis tested that there is a positive and negative correlation between the effect of COVID-19 crisis and spiritual formation in born again churches of Uganda. The study covered some selected born again churches and ministries of Kanyanya Parish, Kawempe Division Kampala capital city of Uganda. Literature was reviewed to give a general overview of the effect of COVID -19 crisis on spiritual formation. This study used a cross sectional research design to assess the effect of COVID-19 crisis on spiritual formation. The researcher adopted a mixed approach research methods, where quantitative and qualitative methods, of data collection and analysis was employed. The study found out that the closure of churches during the coronavirus pandemic forced churches to devise new ways of remaining functional and being church. The spiritual formation was much more affected as such church practices are diminishing. Soul winning, discipleships and home visit was curtailed and this has lead to backsliding of some Christians. The study recommends ; Pastors over work, they have low pay and desperation takes terrible toll as Pastors struggle to make sense of crammed preaching, calendar, hectic homes, splintered dreams, strived intimacy and shriveled purpose. Some quit in utter hopelessness to sell their used car, Machines, church land to mention a few. In that respect the government should consider pastors and other religious leaders who are contributing much to the well being of society, and include them on government payrolls so as to be stable at work and in the calling.*

Keywords : Covid-19 Crisis ; Spiritual Formation ; Uganda; Born-Again Churches ; Kanyanya Parish ; Kawempe Division ; Kampala City

1.0 Introduction

This study presents the effect of COVID-19 crisis on spiritual formation, a case of born-again churches in Kawempe Division Kampala City. The study examined the effect of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches, the effect of curfew on spiritual formation and the divergent reasons for dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation.

1.1 Background of the Study

Spiritual formation is the process of growing into Christ likeness; characterized by knowing and loving God, knowing and loving ourselves, knowing and loving other people and experiencing the Presence of God in our everyday lives (1 John 4.7-8). The basis of spiritual formation is the call of God the Father, the finished work of Jesus Christ the Son and is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Christian spiritual formation is the process of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ for the glory of God and for the sake of others (II Corinthians 3:17-18). The focus of spiritual formation is the Holy Spirit, who guides the ongoing journey towards union with God.

Again spiritual formation is defined as “The dynamics of shaping the human spirit towards maturity and consonance’ (The Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation (2003, 107). Thus, Spiritual formation is important because closeness with God brings us real freedom and completeness. Due to COVID-19 Crisis this has been curtailed and a challenge in kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division as it was shown in the study.

Spiritual growth is a process of shedding our wrong and unreal concepts, thoughts, beliefs and ideas and becoming more conscious and aware of our inner being. This process uncovers the inner spirit that is always present, but hidden beyond the ego-personality. Spiritual growth is the process of inner awakening, rising of the consciousness beyond the ordinary, everyday existence, and

awakening to some Universal truths. It means going beyond the mind and the ego and realizing who you really are; Spiritual growth is of great importance for everyone, in all walks of life.

Many Christians are no longer congregating as they are, no longer seeing value in it. Pastors have changed from their vision, mission and statement of faith to arrest the status quo, society is not happy and in the house of God there is no peace. Contemporary churches with their Pastors are caught in frightening spiritual, social and economic tornadoes, which are now raging through home, church and community. No one knows where the next twister might touchdown or what value the storm will destroy. As the result, church leaders including pastors are asking themselves, does pastoral ministry and spiritual formation make difference in COVID-19 pandemic and in morally tabulate times? Ministering is harder now than ever before, electronic technology shapes the preferences; top-notch television, Radios, audio, YouTube, capable churches airbrushed churches, are now operating in peoples living room and auto mobiles.

The COVID-19 crisis (epidemic) strikes a country (Uganda), already severely burdened by economic difficulties and excess population growth. For instance, for centuries Uganda has been with HIV/AIDS, recurring droughts (in some parts), famine, and poverty recently by wars. Uganda is now faced with yet another perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to health, spiritual formation and Christian well-being: COVID-19 Crisis. The COVID-19 Crisis had the potential to create severe spiritual, social and economic impacts in many African countries. It is different from most other diseases because it strikes people in the most productive age groups and is essentially 100 percent fatal. The effects vary according to the severity of the COVID-19, epidemic in given area and country. Globally, the corona pandemic had infected 281,808,207 million people, 5,411,759 million people have died and 252,735,264 million people have recovered. In some of the countries, In Uganda, after almost the two years of battle with corona, the total number of the infected is 139,079; those that have recovered, the number is 98,379; and those that have died, the number is 3,291, the 3,291 lost, were very useful people. They included the prominent persons such as Mzee Kivejinja, Mzee Paul Etyang, Manzi Tumubweine, Bishop Kaggwa, etc.(President Museveni's 1st January 2022 New Year speech).

The COVID-19 Crisis pandemic has an extremely significant impact on the functioning of societies, churches, as well as many sectors of economic life. It is very difficult to forecast the directions and depth of necessary changes during the development of the pandemic. This is due to the fact that different scenarios and the pace of development of COVID-19 Crisis are considered in different countries. Thus, public policies used in the fight against pandemics are also different in individual countries. Assessments of social, economic, religious and cultural effects of the pandemic must be multidimensional, and thus, subject to significant uncertainty (Ragheb 2020; Sułkowski 2020).

The coronavirus pandemic was developing very rapidly on a global scale. It was understandable that it has a very significant impact on the whole social life, including religious life. Religious practices, which have, by their very nature, a community dimension in almost all religions, in Christian denominations as well, are also changing under the influence of the pandemic. The purpose of the research was to examine the impact of COVID-19 Crisis (pandemic) on religious behavior and spiritual formation in different Christian denominations in Uganda Kampala City and Kawempe division in particular. Three research questions were posed regarding differences in the approach of different Christian denominations in Kawempe to the COVID-19 Crisis (pandemic).

The first confirmed cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19 crisis) in Uganda were in February 2020. In the following months, the numbers escalated in the whole country. The continuous rise in the number of cases and the swift escalation of the pandemic prompted the Uganda government to enact sweeping measures to curtail the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. By March 2020, community trans-mission was already evident, and the government announced community quarantine, or the lockdown of the whole country.

The community quarantine restrictions resulted in the prohibition of many social activities, including religious gatherings. With the Uganda being a largely Protestant/Born again country comprising 79.5 percent of its religious and Christian affiliation, restrictions on religious gatherings dealt a heavy blow to a large aspect of Ugandan life. Therefore, it is imperative to review the policies instituted by the government during the pandemic and examine the response of the Ugandans devout regarding their practice of religion amidst this global health crisis. Come up with crisis risk management decision that won't affect the people and Born again churches.

Religion was central to the lives of Ugandan mostly in Kawempe Division-Kanyanya Parish, as Uganda ranks first among the most religious countries of East Africa with over 79.5 percent of its population baptized as in the name of the father, the son and Holy Spirit, it is the largest religious nation in East Africa. A comparison of cross-national trends in religious service attendance among various countries indicated that Ugandan has a high and stable religious service attendance, with attendance rates of Born again, Catholic and Protestant church members reaching 80 percent and 20 Non-Christian believers. This community needs the services of spiritual leaders doing spiritual formation.

Worthy to note, Faith plays a pivotal role in the life of most Ugandan, existing not only as an abstract belief system but also as a host of ceremonies, rituals, and experiences. Religion provides continuity in life, cohesion in the community, ethics and integrity and moral purpose for existence (Dolan R. Philippines 2020). It renders spiritual solace, transformation and guidance in times of crisis, more so in the midst of a global pandemic. The churches function as a means of social control, a center of collective identity, and a source of soul winning and empowerment (Fresnoza-Flot A. 2010). With the advent of the COVID-19 crisis (pandemic) in Uganda, both the state and the church responded through the near-simultaneous implementation of IATF and CBCP guidelines on religious gatherings.

In addition, both sectors appeared to be cooperative with each other, evidenced by their coordinated mitigation efforts during high-volume events. At face value, guidelines on religious gatherings were adequately complied with by Ugandans. However, the Uganda government's general COVID-19 crisis response was met with the disapproval, prompting questions on its effectiveness and in consistently mitigating the spread of COVID-19 crisis.

All pastors, ministers and evangelists responded to the government guidelines by conducting online streaming of their religious services, Radio services, TV services and requiring the observation of minimum public health standards. This alone put the church at many risks which this study intends to explore. Spiritual formation was much more need to arrest the situation. Spiritual formation is derived from Galatians 4:19: "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you." The word "formed" comes from *morphe*, which means "to shape". When combined with Greek prepositions, it is rendered as "conformed" in Romans 8:29 and "transformed" in 12:2. The word spiritual formation most accurately describes the sanctification or transformation.

Some people try to turn discipleship into a production plan based on multiplication for reaching the world, Spiritual formation encounters the practical problems of real life that ruin the most attractive scenarios. The truth is that only disciples who are passionate for Christ will be able to sustain any effort to reach others around them.

In real life God doesn't have a production plan; he uses us, to reach others in a wide variety of ways hence, His glorious method is unpredictable, not smooth or symmetrical. Only God orchestrates the call to be and make disciples, and disciple-making can be accomplished only through the events and conditions that make up life. Disciples should be encouraged to train others and to reproduce in others but discipleship is much more about the depth of character and spiritual passion of each disciple than it is a plan for church growth. Spiritual formation will be much more looked at this study and how it was affected due to COVID -19 crisis pandemic.

Owing to limited discipleship and spiritual formation many churches now have closed. Churches which were on rented premises were turned into other business, clergy, have retired into doing other businesses rather than their real calling, the COVID-19 crisis pandemic has affected the church severally. This call for comprehensive study, examining the COVID-19 crisis effect, on spiritual formation with born-again churches in Kawempe – Kampala.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was guarded by grounded theory; grounded theory was a systematic methodology that has been largely applied to qualitative research conducted by social scientists. The methodology involves the construction of hypotheses and theories through the collecting and analysis of data (Faggiolani, C. 2011), grounded theory involves the application of inductive reasoning. The methodology contrasts with the hypothetico-deductive model used in traditional scientific research.

Glaser and Strauss are recognized as the founders of grounded theory. (1967). Strauss was conversant in symbolic interactionism and Glaser in descriptive statistics (Creswell JW 2013). Glaser and Strauss originally worked together in a study examining the experience of terminally ill patients who had differing knowledge of their health status. Some of these suspected they were dying and tried to confirm or disconfirm their suspicions. Others tried to understand by interpreting treatment by care providers and family members. Glaser and Strauss examined how the patients dealt with the knowledge they were dying and the reactions of healthcare staff caring for these patients. Throughout this collaboration, Glaser and Strauss questioned the appropriateness of using a scientific method of verification for the study. During this investigation, they developed the constant comparative method, a key element of grounded theory, while generating a theory of dying first described in *Awareness of Dying* (1965). The constant comparative method is deemed an original way of organising and analysing qualitative data. A study based on grounded theory is likely to begin with a question, or even just with the collection of qualitative data.

2.2 The Effect of Lockdown on Spiritual Formation in Born Again Churches

The period between February and November 2020 witnessed a number of confirmed cases as well as the death toll spiking and spiraling out of control, especially in Europe and North America, while South Africa had the highest toll of confirmed cases in Africa. As of November 2020, the virus had directly and indirectly affected millions with the infected, death and recovery numbers

at over 58.2 million, over 1.3 million and over 40 million, respectively (World Health Organization, 2020). The physical impact of the pandemic ran parallel to the fear and panic experienced across the globe, and this stirred unforgettable experiences. Gostin (2020) postulates that the spread of infectious diseases knows no boundaries and has been part of globalization for a while, cutting across borders, regions and continents. Coming to the immediate challenge of the Coronavirus, Malik and Naeem (2020) say that the pandemic might have mostly affected Christians, though with little research on the magnitude of such an effect.

The crisis experienced by most communities owing to COVID-19 has had a severe impact on their normal life of worship across the globe. Global leaders in big and small chapels, mosques, sanctuaries, shrines, and temples are scratching for answers as to why this unprecedented period caught them by surprise. COVID-19 is so serious that the churches are empty because God is looking for a personal relationship with His people (City Press, 2020).

However, Folarin and Adelokun (2016) predicted that a Church, like any other institution in society, is likely to encounter a major interruption or a crisis. The only shocking revelation about the coronavirus is its ability to spread faster than any other known family virus, and it is deadly and contagious.

In times of desperation and hopelessness, congregants put their trust in God all the time above their respective Churches for spiritual, emotional, physical, and psychological support. This dilemma has never been seen before in the history of the churches so those who strive in large gatherings to conduct their business are now identified as the most vulnerable places (Pharos Journal of Theology ISSN 2414-3324 online Volume 104 Issue 1 -2023).

While the magnitude of this crisis scares both congregants and Church leadership, most are optimistic about the future post-COVID-19, although an estimated 4 million people are infected, and 150 000 have perished in what the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared a pandemic, up to 20 May 2020 (WHO, 2020). Some commentators see religion in general, and Christianity in particular, as contributing to a crisis like COVID-19. Love, care and sharing are some of the important values a Church promotes, and these traditions have heightened the spread of COVID-19 in a manner never anticipated before because most churches worship in crowds. One of the charismatic churches in South Africa defied social distancing regulations by holding a mass congregation of 865 churchgoers who attended a prayer gathering in Bloemfontein, but five overseas visitors turned out to be infected with COVID-19 and unwittingly infected 67 more people (News24 2020, 3 April). The culture of maintaining close contact through hugging, kissing and handshakes is a sign of love, compassion and Ubuntu; but they are the main contributors to the high increase in the infection rate and deaths (CNN 2020, 1 May).

More recently, Dharmshaktu (2020) has revealed that the high number of cases could be linked to countries where Roman Catholics are in the majority or form a large minority countries such as Italy, Vatican City, France, Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, and the USA (Washington Post 2020, 23 March) – most of whom go to church for Sunday mass. Under such circumstances, it may have caused multiple secondary/tertiary cases in those countries owing to the initially infected person administering the sacraments of Holy Communion. In other instances, the virus might be spread by contaminated concentrated bread and the wine served at Sunday mass, or by person-to-person contact in the church. Faith communities are among those most affected by this virus simply because they frequently gather in person (Siddiqi, Graves-Fitzsimmons & Gonzalez, 2020).

The biggest challenge for churches Most researchers have acknowledged the online church for decades from the early 1980s to the early 2000s (Malley, 2020). Many religious organisations have found new and creative ways to gather for worship, prayer, and continuing community social service work (Siddiqi et al. 2020). “But for the majority of Christians around the world, the online church began in March 2020” (Malley, 2020). Before then, argues Malley, the so-called “high tech” churches may have had a website, been active on social media, or even had a live stream of their services, but very few had tried to connect with their people entirely through online technology. Collective efforts to flatten the curve of COVID-19 through social distancing are critical to spreading the rate of infection over time. Chau (2020) states that one of the prominent pastors from the US, Howard-Browne, openly challenged public health guidance: “We are not stopping anything.” He also said, “I’ve got news for you: this church will never close” (Deguma, Deguma, Tandag & Acebes, 2020).

COVID-19, according to Deguma et al. (2020), has tested the ability of the Church to put its social distancing into practice. Carr (2020) writes about the need for a moral test that requires valuing human life and dignity when the scale of suffering, death, tension, division, and isolation examines who we are, what we believe, and what kind of society we are becoming. Thus, the 3.1.1 novel COVID-19 pandemic becomes an opportunity for the Church to renew its vocation to serve. In a book entitled *The Church Isn’t Empty*, Campbell (2020), writes that in 2010 a congregation in Iceland was advised to join online, and offered comments, prayers and thanks. It was amazing to recall that by 9 February Chau (2020) noted that a few churches had cancelled Sunday services, more joined them on 16 February, and still more on 23 February.

The Coronavirus caused political, social and economic constraints in developed, developing and underdeveloped countries, though with different consequences. In the attempt to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, self-isolation witnessed quarantine measures,

including the closure of organizations and institutions (East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences (EAJESS) 2(2)108-119). Those affected included churches and companies, most of them having to improvise ways of working from homes. The SDA church in Zimbabwe introduced and improvised ways of collecting tithes and offerings as well as having prayer and preaching services via alternative media, such as the television, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, amongst others (Rodgers Manungo 2021). Financially, those in the informal sector suffered the most, compared to those in the formal sector. Employees from key organizations that remained open for business were better financially compared to those that were forced to close. Some desperate families ended up expending their financial reserves. Those businesses that depended on the national borders were greatly affected during the period (EAJESS) 2(2)108-119).

The situation was worse for those with relatives across national borders which were closed during the time. However, some members benefited from having more time with their children (Rodgers Manungo 2021). Some couples also showed that they had benefited from the period through family reunions. Online programs, such as family life, were critical for the members, since they continued to be shared during the lockdown.

2.3 The Effect of Curfew on Spiritual Formation in Born Again Churches

Spiritual formation is the process of becoming like Christ. It is the journey towards life with Christ at the center of every decision, emotion, and perspective. It describes the process of intentionally structuring one's life around those disciplines that cause the character of Christ to be formed in and reflected through their lives. In the lives of Christ followers, spiritual formation is "the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ Himself" (Willard, *Renovation* 22).

According to a recent McLean's Magazine survey, over 80 percent of Canadians claim to believe in a personal God, and 47 percent claim to pray weekly (Correlli 28). What is most troubling about statistics like these is the apparent disconnect between belief and behavior in people's lives today. Michael Lightstone, a Canadian writer, reflects the predominant position of most Canadians in regard to faith when he shares about his own children's spiritual upbringing.

Spiritual formation is not just external conformity to the teachings of Jesus. It is not being really faithful in church attendance and never missing a meeting or a study. It is not the profession of perfect doctrine alone or the expression of unique, distinct spiritual experiences. Those are all elements that become evident in lives when inner souls are transformed by Christ, but they do not, in and of themselves, create such a transformation. Authentic discipleship is really all about Christ-followers coming to the point "where they dearly love and constantly delight in that 'Heavenly Father' made real to earth in Jesus and are quite certain that there is no 'catch,' no limit, to the goodness of his intentions or to his power to carry them out" (Willard, *Divine Conspiracy* 321). Christ-followers need to come to the place where they can say with John, "I'm just the guy that Jesus loves" (John 13:23). This personal understanding is the heart and soul of God's plan for spiritual development.

The time of curfews and COVID-19 threatens our sense of hope, purpose and identity. We understand hope is diminished because of all the feelings, the restrictions, and unwanted changes to life. But in Christ we find hope restored. Christ is our hope. He is our hope in this season and our hope in eternity to come. This hope doesn't come from some positive feeling, nor even a positive action or thought. It comes from Christ and the cross. Ironically, through death comes hope (Jons coombs 2020).

The Philippine government responded by calling together the Inter-agency Task Force on Emerging Diseases (IATF), headed by the Secretary of the Philippine Department of Health. Upon its recommendation, NCR was placed under "stringent social distancing measures" on March 12, 2020. On March 16, 2020, a state of calamity was declared throughout the Philippines, and Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was imposed in Luzon with only essential services allowed to operate (e.g., groceries, utilities, etc.). As far as religious activities were concerned, religious ministers were only allowed to conduct funeral rites.

Quarantine guidelines were modified and further consolidated with subsequent meetings of the IATF. On April 29, 2020, the first version of the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines was released to "harmonize and codify the existing policies." Mass gatherings, with explicit mention of religious gatherings, were prohibited for areas under ECQ and the less stringent General Community Quarantine (GCQ). On May 15, 2020, the conduct of GCQ was modified further, and additional guidelines were issued for two more quarantine classifications-the Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) and Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ). For MECQ, religious gatherings would be allowed but were limited to not more than five persons, and only 50 percent of the seating capacity of the church was permitted for MGCQ. Meanwhile, GCQ restrictions were loosened to not more than 10 persons allowed at religious gatherings.

2.4 Guidelines of the Religious Leadership on Religious Gatherings

The Catholic Church largely responded by following the guidelines of the IATF, such as shifting worship to online platforms and limiting church capacity. Individual dioceses were the first to take initiatives in suspending masses at the start of the pandemic before

guidelines were instituted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). The CBCP subsequently released their own guidelines in response to government and health regulations. The primary modification of live activities was through televising and online streaming of most church services. The CBCP further elaborated on guidelines upon the easing of community quarantine, such as the use of thermal scanners, foot baths, and hand sanitizers. It gave instructions on proper entrance and exit areas and social distancing with markers on pews and standing areas. Attendees were required to use face masks during church services. Mass practices were also modified, such as the omission of the offertory procession and the strict implementation of receiving the host by the hand and not directly to the mouth. Some parishes offered drive-in masses to avoid public crowding in their church and developed mobile phone applications for use by its parishioners.

Certain Catholic traditions and practices in the Philippines were also modified. At the start of community quarantine in March 2020, the CBCP published instructions for Holy Week celebrations to be held in the same month. The blessing of palms on Palm Sunday was suspended and replaced by verbal blessings around the streets of the parish. Similarly, *Simbang Gabi* or Night Mass, a nine-day series of masses culminating in Christmas Eve, usually held between 3 a.m. to 5 a.m., were permitted to be held as early as 6:00 p.m. in response to curfew hours mandated by LGUs. In addition, church officials encouraged holding masses more frequently in order to properly distribute the number of attendees.

Along with traditional practices in the Philippines, various Catholic religious festivals are held in different parts of the country. Numerous modifications were also instituted to conduct these festivities. For one, the Philippines is celebrating 500 years of Christianity in 2021, initially planned to be a large affair. However, with the pandemic stretching into 2021, the quinquennial anniversary will now be a year-long celebration, beginning April 2021, and with grand culminating activities postponed for April 2022. Some festival events were initially allowed, but because of local spikes in active COVID-19 cases, all of the festival's physical activities, with the exception of masses, were cancelled.

Perhaps one of the most significant changes to religious festivities is the modification of the Feast of the Black Nazarene held every January. *Traslacion*, the yearly 6-kilometer procession of the image of the Black Nazarene around Manila, was cancelled. Instead, consecutive masses were held within Quiapo Church, limiting each mass to only 400 participants, or 30 percent of the church's capacity, in line with the guidelines. In addition, simultaneous novena masses were held in numerous parishes within Metro Manila to accommodate more distant devotees. The tradition of kissing the Black Nazarene image by devotees, or *pahalik*, was also prohibited. In lieu of this practice, the Black Nazarene was placed in front of the church for viewing by the public. Sanitation efforts were also performed by church volunteers before every new batch of devotees could occupy the viewing areas.

2.5. The Effect of Dysfunctional Pastors on Spiritual Formation in Born Again Churches

One of the courses of dysfunctional pastors is bad leadership, as observed by Vanco April 20, 2022 on the signs of bad church leadership. He noted, a church is a place where you give and receive love and care, grow in your faith and know God it's like any family, when there's abuse from the one providing protection and guidance, it leaves people feeling broken. Bad experiences from church and ministry leaders can lead people to walk away from church for a season (ibid). When abuse or neglect happens, it can be devastating, leaving lasting wounds on hearts, souls and minds. Not to mention, bad church leadership ultimately will lead to a dying church.

Noted by Vanco April 20, 2022 there's a very good chance that the members of congregation are dealing with burnout right now. But because many church activities are planned and arranged by a select group of core members, overburdened congregation members are one of the most common signs of bad church leadership and these has lead to dysfunctional Pastors as well as churches. As believers in Christ, we all understand that spiritual growth is a journey. Many people have been able to change their lives simply by walking with God. But between work, school, family life, and life in general, it's far too easy for people to become complacent over time (Vanco April 20, 2022).

Most people aren't necessarily born knowing how to lead church members and organize worship teams. Many of the spiritual advisors you look up to now had mentors who helped them grow in the things of God. As a church, it's your job to give people fresh growth opportunities. But far too often, in churches, people forget about the importance of discipleship (snow ball fundraising 2023).

For church to grow and pastors to survive they need expert communication techniques to grow their church (GJLTEN T 2020 May 20). Many churches fall short with this necessary communication. They tend to rely too heavily on one type of communication than others. For instance, new contemporary churches tend to focus too heavily on social media communications, while older more traditional churches rely too heavily on word-of-mouth. Combine your efforts and don't allow any information to slip through the cracks, this has made Pastors not to meet the demands of the church thus running away, as they see ministry work very expensive. Combine as many of the communication methods as you can to ensure people are seeing your messages about upcoming church growth strategies is important.

2.9 Gaps in literature

This study intended to investigate the effect of COVID-19 crisis on spiritual formation; a case of born-again churches in Kanyanya Parish, Kawempe Division Kampala City; look at the effect of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches, the effect of

curfew on spiritual formation and the effect of dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation. The COVID 19 era contains the changes in Service delivery, worship, soul winning, discipleship, spiritual formation and communication during pre and post COVID 19 which information is lacking. The interaction of faith and community with social media and social distancing and other guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic would surely be an important part information but lacked more of the literature. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), which emerged in 2019, has had a negative impact on all institutions and spheres of life, including churches, This information is limited and this calls for Scholars and religious practitioners to do more of the research. The pandemic has negatively affected the church in various ways such as in church worship, fellowship, finance, interrelationships and various other ministries and programmes of which there is little information recorded.

Despite a reference to challenges posed by COVID-19 on the churches 'and ministries, there are very few academic articles based on literature scoping on the subject, particularly its impact on churches in Africa with a particular focus on born again churches. A study of that nature is important as it provides an insight into practical church ministries during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research on effect of COVID-19 on born again churches presents the findings of a scoping study conducted to inform a broader empirical study on churches and COVID-19 in Uganda and Africa. There is a need for an empirical qualitative study to explore in-depth issues on COVID-19 and the church to generate academic researchers in order to overcome the prevailing gap, whereby the bulk of the information on the subject is popular in sources such as blogs. Contribution: This research is a study that scopes literature published on the impact of COVID-19 on churches and provides a detailed understanding of the phenomenon. It contributes to understanding how COVID-19 particularly affected born again church on spiritual formation in Kanyanya Parish, Kawempe Division Kampala City and proposes areas requiring empirical studies on COVID-19 and born again churches.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The researcher adopted a mixed approach where a quantitative and qualitative method of data collection and analysis was employed. Mbabazi [2000] argues that qualitative methods are crucial in determining relationships between variables. In this case, the researcher would like to ascertain the relationship between the effect of COVID-19 Crisis on spiritual formations, discipleship and general performance of born churches. "Amin [2005] also argues that qualitative methods are necessary during hypothesis testing where the researcher tested the hypotheses. There is positive significant relationship between the effect of COVID-19 crisis on spiritual formation, discipleship and general performance of born churches." The qualitative method was employed basically to analyse interview data, focus group discussions and documentary analysis. This required employing content analysis and grounded theory [Mohapi, 2007]. Specifically, the researcher adopted a descriptive survey research design where a particular phenomenon such as the effect of COVID-19 crisis on spiritual formation, discipleship and general performance of born again churches were examined [Creswell, 2003, Babbie, 2007]

3.2 Study Population

The study population consisted of 10 born-again faith churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe division targeting Pastors, Evangelist, teachers of the word and administrators that directly provide the services to the congregation in born again faith and opinion leaders in the area. One Pastor from 5 selected churches. This is because all these categories of respondents are believed to be knowledgeable about the effects the effect of COVID-19 Crisis on spiritual formation, discipleship and general performance of born churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe division.

3.3 Sample Size and Selection

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defined a sample as a subset of a particular population. Sekaran (2003) asserts that a sample is a subgroup or subset of population from which researchers should be able to draw conclusions that are generalisable to the population of interest. Robson Collin (1999) observed that it is not feasible to gather detailed information about all the persons involved for all the time they are involved. Therefore, it requires sampling with some principled decisions about who, where and when to be studied. By use of simple random sampling and purposive techniques, the sample size was composed of 30 respondents categorised as; 5 Pastors, 15 Evangelist and other administrators and 10 church leader/administrators; all from the selected born churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe division.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

According to Sekaran (2003), there are several data collection methods each with its own advantages and disadvantages. For purposes of this research study, in the process of collecting data, the researcher used Interviews, self-administered Questionnaires and Documentary analysis.

3.5 Pre-testing of Data Collection Instruments.

Validity

Amin (2005) defined validity as the appropriateness of the instruments. To ensure that data collection instruments are valid, they were pre-tested in one of the selected church using a reasonable number of respondents. Experts in the field consulted about the

content of the instruments, ambiguity of question items and their relevancy. Therefore, the instruments were given to raters who rate the relevancy of each item and a content validity index (CVI) was computed using the following formula.

$$CVI = \frac{K}{N}$$

Where

- CVI = Content Validity Index
- K = Total number of items rated as relevant
- N = Total number of items in the questionnaire.

Reliability

Amin (2005) defined reliability as the consistency of the instrument in measuring whatever it is intended to measure. Therefore, data collection instruments were pre-tested in some of the selected churches such as: born-again churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division Kampala City using a reasonable number of respondents who were part of the sample to ensure reliability. The reliability of the instruments is established by computing the Cronbach correlation coefficient using a computer programme SPSS. The formula for Cronbach correlation coefficient reliability is given below:

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_k^2}{\sigma^2} \right)$$

Where

- $\sum \sigma_k^2$ = the sum of the Variances of the k parts (usually items) of the test.
- σ = Standard Deviation of the test (items in the instrument).
- α = Reliability Coefficient.

In pre-testing, the designed instruments were tried out on selected respondents (Pastors, Evangelist, church administrators, teachers of the ward and few selected Christians) in some of the five selected churches who took part in the study. All the respondents filled and return their copies. The questionnaires were amended for mistakes

Pre -test

No. of Questionnaires	Total tested	Total answered	No. of Questions	Total relevant	Not relevant
31	10	7	31	29	2

The constructed instruments were given to experts: supervisor and colleagues. The supervisor and the colleagues on a master’s program ticked the items of the instruments that were relevant to the study objectives.

No. of items rated	Total No. of items in questionnaire	Validity
10	31	9

This is what is called face validity. Thereafter, the results will be computed using the Content Validity Index, where relevant items (k -9) and total items (N-10) were sought and one item was irrelevant.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process concerned with data editing and error correction (Amin 2005). Enon (2002) also asserts that Data analysis is a process of organising data so that readers can get meaning out of it. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) maintain that data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret. Therefore such data must be cleaned, coded, keypunched into a computer and analysed. And it is from the results of the analysis that researchers are able to make sense of the data. In the study both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in analysing data. This is supported by Amin (2005) in his observations that a choice of only one of these approaches (qualitative and quantitative) often presents only a myopic view of things.

The study used qualitative and quantitative data analysis as the best method to bring out what is known and not known in the study.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Considerable caution was taken during data collection to ensure smooth gathering of the information. Efforts were made to secure the permission and the consent of all the respondents and assuring them of confidentiality. The selected respondents found with

problems were dealt with accordingly on a case-by-case basis, for example, those who needed to be referred were advised on what to do and where to get the services that benefited their churches. Those that were not in position to respond at the time due to other commitments or ailments, additional visits were made to get them.

4.0 Data Presentation, Discussion and Analysis of the Research Findings

4.1 Presentation of the study Findings

The study was to establish and disseminate the relationship between the effect of COVID-19 crisis to the spiritual formation and transformation. The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of COVID -19 crisis on spiritual formation; a case of born-again churches in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division Kampala City. Specific Objectives of the study was to examine the effect of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches, analyze the effect of curfew on spiritual formation and assess the effect of dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation. The results are analyzed according to objective by objective as show below

The Effect of Lockdown on Spiritual Formation in Born-Again Churches.

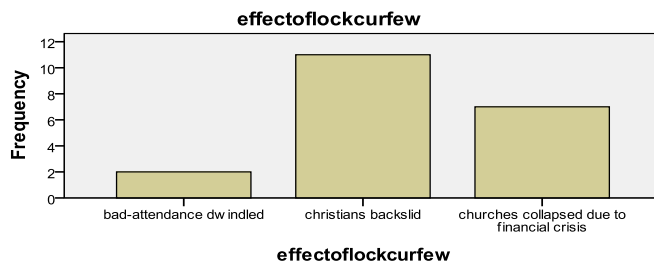
The study thought to know the effect of lock down on spiritual formation of born again churches, majority agree that Spiritual formation is the process of growing into Christ likeness; characterized by knowing and loving God, knowing and loving ourselves, knowing and loving other people and experiencing the Presence of God in our everyday lives .The basis of spiritual formation is the call of God the Father, the finished work of Jesus Christ the Son and is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Christian spiritual formation is the process of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ for the glory of God and for the sake of others (II Corinthians 3:17-18). The church and mostly Born again churches plays a key role is spiritual formation. The focus of spiritual formation is the Holy Spirit, who guides the ongoing journey towards union with God.

Again spiritual formation is defined as “The dynamics of shaping the human spirit towards maturity and consonance’ (The Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation (2003, 107). Thus, Spiritual formation is important because closeness with God brings us real freedom and completeness. Owing to COVID-19 Crisis there is limited space for spiritual formation. The study went deeper to discover what is not know on the effect of Covid-19 On spiritual formation in born again church in kanyanya Parish, Kawempe Division Kampala City.

Noted in some interviews “*Pastoring is harder after COVID-19 than ever before, there are, unprecedented shift in moral, spiritually, social and economic conditions and bringing into question the way the ministry is done*”. These changing circumstances’ and values directly affect born again churches and the way of their life. A change seems to be the driver’s seat in today’s business and culture of born again churches.

The findings indicated that majority are conducting normal services, the truth is that many churches Mostly born again have experienced many changes. Noted by “*One respondent from House of Glory church “ before the Covid-19 programme of the church were moving on smoothly now there many changes, evening glory changed, Morning glory, Pastors are struggling to put everything in order but people are not responding*”.

Effect of lock down & curfew



The findings shows that bad attendance dwindled the churches as supported by 2(10%), whereas others had view that the effect of curfew and lockdown lead to Christian backsliding as supported by 11(55%) and churches collapsed due to financial crisis had 7(35%). The findings indicates that the effect of lockdown and curfew lead to Christian backsliding.

it was observed that Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020 (World Health Organization,2020). In response, governments across the world enacted public health measures with the aim of controlling death and infection rates. One of the measures introduced to reduce transmission was the banning of mass gatherings (Ahmed & Memish, 2020; Ebrahim & Memish, 2020). As mass gatherings, religious gatherings was cited as hot

spots for the transmission of COVID-19 (Mat et al., 2020; Singh, 2020). For religious leaders, the ban introduced restrictions on their vocation and religious practices since many of their duties require in-person contact. Notable among those include disruptions of their duties such as visiting sick congregants and face-to-face religious worship and changes in rituals such as Holy Communion, mass public prayers, and wedding and funeral ceremonies (Asamoah-Gyadu et al., 2020; Greene et al., 2020). This led to backsliding as Pastors could not offer services that the Public expected from them.

Research in psychology suggests that the unanticipated disruptions pose a risk to religious leaders (Greene et al., 2020; Milstein, 2019). Greene et al. (2020) suggest that religious leaders may be at unique risk of experiencing moral injury and psychological trauma. They may feel morally guilty for failing at a time when the congregants needed them the most. Religious leaders also experience role depletion as restrictions on their work prevented them from fulfilling their pastoral obligations and duties. This led to backsliding of many born again Christians including Pastors

Trauma literature also suggests possible ways that religious leaders may be impacted. On the one hand, the restrictions may expose and exacerbate the vulnerabilities of religious leaders (Harris et al., 2010; Milstein, 2019). Potentially traumatic events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, can trigger vulnerabilities including physiological changes, biological disruptions, and relational disconnections and, for religious people, faith struggles (Greene et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2010).

On the other hand, the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the ban on religious gatherings facilitated personal and spiritual growth (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1998, 1999; Harris et al., 2010). Religious leaders viewed the pandemic and the related ban on religious gatherings as an opportunity to improve their relationship and faith in the divine (O'Rourke et al., 2008). Limited empirical studies have examined how religious leaders have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study investigated the experiences of a sample of Christian church leaders in Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division to showcase how the religious restriction occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the well-being of religious leaders leading to dysfunction of Pastor and born again churches and backsliding of all both Christians and Pastors. It was proved that Pastors play a critical role in spiritual, physical, and mental health support to many researches. Born again Pastors are main custodians of religion and liturgical practices. Additionally, they provide emotional and psychological support in diverse forms to people during times of crisis (Asamoah et al., 2014; Benyah, 2020; Osei-Tutu et al., 2019, 2020).

In Uganda, the Health Service commission (2020) announced the first two cases of COVID-19 on March 12, 2020. Since then, the government continued to announce measures to control the further spread of the virus (e.g., Communications Bureau, 2020, 2021). Beginning in March (16 March 2020), the government announced a lockdown that had recorded infections and were prone to spreading the virus in Uganda. People could go out only to access essential services this alone affected the church of Christ. It was noted that *“Public and private organizations decided to work from home, and to date some are still working from home. In addition, all schools and educational institutions in the country were closed. Some universities and basic schools, continued their academic work online. The government also placed a ban on public gatherings, including religious gatherings. Churches with critical masses of computer-literate congregants moved their weekly services online, while those who did not have this information and communications technology advantage closed their places of worship completely”*. This led to backsliding of Pastors and all Christians as well as collapse of some churches

Research suggests that mental health challenges such as high levels of stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion are on the rise among religious leaders and the clergy (Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011; Ruffing et al., 2020). The causes of these mental health problems are often multifaceted and diverse in scope. For instance, Ruffing et al. (2020) have identified that issues related to conflicts in relationships and providing care for people in crisis within the context of limited resources could trigger and/or exacerbate stress levels among religious leaders.

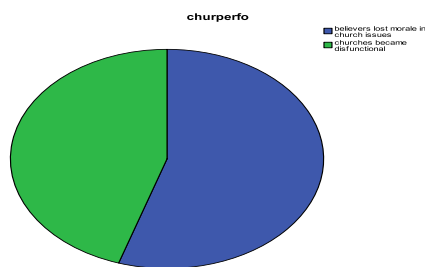
By the nature of their work, religious leaders are constantly faced with tasks in existentially charged situations that often require their attention and resources. This may pose a significant challenge to their mental health and well-being (Hendron et al., 2012). The well-being of religious leaders is still a challenge due to covid 19 crisis and this has affected born again churches immensely. It is researchers considered view that these are courses of Backsliding in many born again churches due to lockdown and curfew policies and guidelines.

It was noted by Folarin and Adedokun (2016) that a Church, like any other institution in society, is likely to encounter a major interruption or a crisis. The lock down and curfew had diverse effect on churches a major interruption crisis as noted by Pastor in faith gospel church, that *“when he came to the place where the church was the pastor had failed, because after COVID-19, he could not meet the rent and the sheep had scattered”*. The COVID-19 made seven out of seventeen prominent church of born again churches to close in Kanyanya Parish alone, mostly those who had no infrastructure like permanent structures and land had to close. Others struggling to survive. It was noted that *“Pastor Joseph Lusagala left the ministry to other jobs Pastor Juliuas and Pastor Katende respectively”*. The effect of lockdown and curfew led to backsliding of many Christians and pastors fail out, thus impacting negatively on born again churches.

4.2 The Effect of Curfew on Spiritual Formation;

As far as the effect of covid-19 is concerned the Ministers and Leaders in born again churches are scrambling for answers as to why this unprecedented period conflict them by surprise and what to do next. Covid-19 was so serious that many born again churches employ and getting challenges. However, Folarin and adelakum (2016), predict that a church like any institution in society is likely to encounter a major interruption or crisis. Owing to covid-19 the work of the church has ground to halt and as human being the church is only coping, the survival mechanism.

The novel Coronavirus, also known as 2019-nCoV or COVID-19, and pneumonia of unknown origin, broke out in Wuhan City, China, in late 2019 before it spread to all the corners of the universe with terrible consequences. The period between February and November 2020 witnessed a number of confirmed cases as well as the death toll spiking and spiraling out of control, especially in Europe and North America, while South Africa had the highest toll of confirmed cases in Africa. As of November 2020, the virus had directly and indirectly affected millions with the infected, death and recovery numbers at over 58.2 million, over 1.3 million and over 40 million, respectively (World Health Organization, 2020). The study observed the attendance and how the lock down policies like curfew affected attendance in born again churches. The findings are shown below

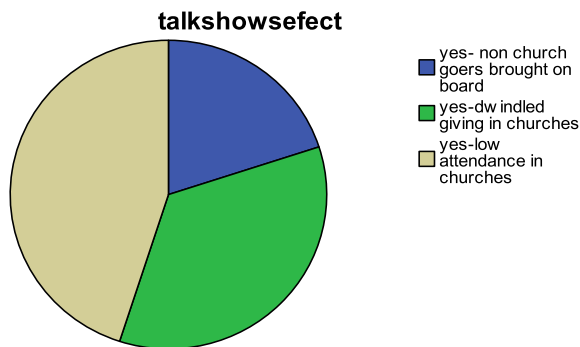


The findings from above figure indicates that 55% of respondents argue that the curfew affected church performance as the curfew policies affected believers morale in church attendance, and 45% agree that many churches become dysfunctional due to lock down and curfew policies.

It was noted that curfew policies affected Spiritual leadership together with church members. The congregants suffered a great deal. The fact is the pandemic has successfully disorganized societies and religious communities mostly born again churches. Its spiritual impact has been felt by church leaders and congregants up to date.

While probing further on the influence of TV/Radio talk show on stage of most churches

The findings indicate that

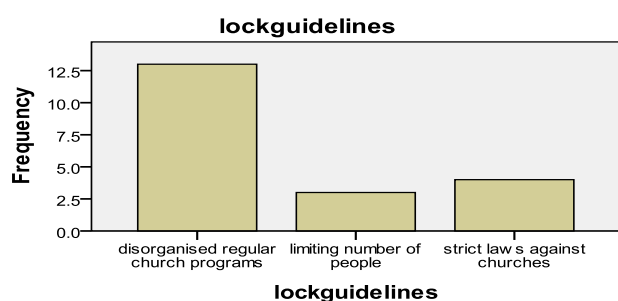


Study shows, that Radio talk shows and television viewing affect born again churches as 9 out of 20 (45%) say that they have lead to low attendance in churches, whereas 7 out of 20 (35%) content that Radio talk show and television viewing had dwindled giving in churches and 4 out 20 (20%) argue that Radio talk shows and television viewing non church goers brought on board.

Study show that television viewing, with other factors held constant, supplants or perhaps satisfies some religious needs and aspirations. Others suggest that religious television, presumably in contrast with general television, extends the religious involvement of its viewers. Still other studies pose questions of differential relationships of different groups of viewers with different types of formats of religious programs. Television added a visual element that introduced foreign cultures and ideas to communities that had been closed.

The study found out how the lock down policies and guidelines effects on churches services of has born again churches, the findings indicates that ;

Lock down guidelines



The guidelines effects on churches services of born again churches as 13 out 20 (65%) argues that it disorganized regular church programs ,4 out of 20 (20%) contentment that it brought strict laws against churches and 3 out of 20 (15%) said that it brought limited number of people. The finding indicates that the guidelines effects on churches services of born again churches by disorganized regular church programs.

The effect of Covid -19 Crisis on Spiritual Formation

The study found out that the closure of churches during the coronavirus pandemic forced churches to devise new ways of remaining functional and being church. There were many changes in the church during the COVID-19 crisis era like learning how to live-streaming sermons, worship songs, religious rites and requests for tithes. COVID-19 crisis has reaffirmed that the church does not live within walls but rather the people of God who live and long for God’s reign in the world. Born again churches and their leaders were challenged to improvise alternative worship forms to sustain their congregations while providing them with pastoral support. The covid 19 crisis brought in a change of live-streaming sermons, worship songs, religious rites and requests for tithes, as way of keeping church existing and open. This has impacted heavy as it has increased expenditure on church funds; on the other hand it has opened a room for many to learn how to use the current technology to meet the audiences.

Homes were transformed into recording studios; live-streaming facilitated lay participation, not just observation. The shifting nature of the relationship between religions and digital media presents a solution to the problems of the pandemic. The Christian church has relied upon social networks and the intersections of real and imagined communities, to provide a location for faith. However, while there is observed and audible presence of the online virtual worshipping community, Christians feel an absence of the tangible and a physical togetherness and fellowship. The challenge that faces born again churches in its complex relationship with social media is precisely the absence of physical presence in collective worship. This affected spiritual formation on the born again churches as discussed below according to objective by objective.

The effect curfew and lockdown policies on spiritual formation in born again churches,

The study was set to investigate the effect of lockdown policies and curfew on spiritual formation in born again churches, the study proved that, as the crisis around Covid-19 evolves, it was clear that there are numerous negative side-effects and some few positive effects of the curfew and lockdown strategies implemented by Government of Uganda and these affected greatly born again churches.

Currently, more evidence becomes available that the lockdowns have more negative effects than positive effects on born again churches, in study by Folarin and Adelokun (2016) predicted that a Church, like any other institution in society, is likely to encounter a major interruption or a crisis. It was discovered that owing to COVID-19 Crisis there is limited space for spiritual formation, the study observed that the ministry is so tough today, that no one gives their church first priority, apart from the Pastor himself and it is sometimes hard for him.

The study observed that they are numerous changes brought by use of technology, which has led to low turn up compared to before the covid-19 crisis, before covid-19 crisis there was brotherly love, people were free to move, visit, do evangelism and out reaches, but even now after covid-19 there is psychological torture and fear of getting diseases, so few people attend church services and functions and even others do not want visitors in their home. This alone has affected spiritual formation, discipleship, soul winning and spiritual transformation supported by (Dumisani Wilfred Mncube et al 2023). Argued that the pandemic has successfully disorganized societies and religious communities.

The study proved that there is a lot of backsliding of many born again Christians including Pastors as well as collapse of some born again churches due to covid-19 crisis. The study showed that the resource fund was very good and activities before the covid 19 crises. Resource flows were going on well before the lockdown policies and curfew guidelines and now the resource fund is low. Pastors were expecting and getting all the support from congregation, but the change brought by COVID-19 crisis, the people now are expecting to get from Pastors, they expect food, money, cloths to mention a few from Pastors, which is the big effect to spiritual formation discipleship, soul winning and spiritual transformation. It was noted by Coronavirus, Malik and Naeem (2020) Coming to the immediate challenge of the covid-19 said that the pandemic might have mostly affected Christians, though with little research on the magnitude of such an effect.

The study looked at effect of Curfew on Spiritual Formation; the study showed that the time of curfews and COVID 19 crisis threatened Christians and all people sense of hope, purpose and identity, people used to have the desire to go to church but this has changed. Owing to covid-19 lock down and curfew, the work of the church has ground to halt and as human being the church is only coping, the survival mechanism this alone affected spiritual formation discipleship, soul winning and spiritual transformation. This view was supported by Coronavirus, Malik and Naeem (2020) who said that the pandemic might have mostly affected Christians, becomes relevant

The curfew policies affected believers morale in church attendance, and many churches become dysfunctional due to lock down and curfew policies the pandemic has successfully disorganized societies and religious communities mostly born again churches. Its spiritual impact has been felt by church leaders and congregants up to date it was noted by (Muthai, Bururia & Kagema, 2018), that any Church is characterised by both human and spiritual attributes Like HIV/AIDS, the coronavirus has brought an enormous burden upon the lives of many people throughout the world, Fretheim (2017) paints a grim picture of how Churches, Christian theology, clergy and Christians have long been part of the crisis, both through complicity and passivity. During curfews and lockdown Electronic technology sharpens the preference. Videos have joined topnotch television and religious radios to bring most accomplished preachers, capable musicians and airbrushed churches into our living rooms and automobiles”.

The pandemic disorganized the 'cell ministry' and 'fellowship groups' common with Pentecostal churches in Uganda Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division. In particular, 'Cell ministry' involves Christians within close proximity, holding informal prayer meetings at regular intervals in each member's home curfew curtailed these services. 'Fellowship groups' are small Christian groups usually based on the unique social, economic, ethnic, and religious standing of members. 'Fellowships' and 'cell groups' fill the void when members are unable to congregate in church buildings. These groups help to preserve religious identity and fellowship with each other.

Discussion of the study findings

The effect of Covid -19 Crisis on Spiritual Formation

The practical application of spiritual formation in born again churches is discussed in connection with spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines are described in Foster's (1988) book titled *The Celebration of Discipline* which effectively describes the practices applied to faith development. Various disciplines are expanded upon in this work to extol their value in the process of spiritual formation. These disciplines are categorized by the report as inward, outward, or corporate disciplines (Foster, 1988). Spiritual disciplines have application to spiritual formation programs in born again churches due to their implementation within these programs as a part of the their program. The study revealed that Covid-19 and the associated containment measures had both a positive and negative impact on the religiosity of born again churches mostly Kanyanya Parish, Kawempe division Kampala City. Religiously staunch christians prior to the outbreak of the pandemic got more devoted albeit with constraints to practice it fully. Those with loose commitments prior to the pandemic abandoned their religious practices. Evidence and an analysis of the above is presented under the following four thematic areas: the effect of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches, the effect of curfew on spiritual formation, the effect of dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation, and challenges experienced by born again churches during and after covid-19 crisis. The study answered well the research questions:

The effect curfew and lockdown policies on spiritual formation in born again churches

The effects of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches; was that, the church and mostly Born again churches plays a key role is spiritual formation. The focus of spiritual formation is the Holy Spirit, who guides the ongoing journey towards union with God, however the covid-19 crisis dwindled the churches, the study therefore proved the effects of curfew on spiritual formation to be The effect of curfew and lockdown policies on spiritual formation in born again churches, affected the soul winning and discipleship, churches of born again get difficulty to reach out to people, the curfew and policy guidelines affected spiritual formation by putting regulations on time of worship, Electronic technology sharps the preference, there is limited space for spiritual formation, the study observed that the ministry is so tough today, that no one gives their church first priority, apart from the Pastor himself and it is sometimes hard for him, the resource fund is low compared before the covid-19 crisis the work of the church has ground to halt and as human being the church is only coping, the survival mechanism

The effect of dysfunctional Pastors/ Churches on spiritual formation

The effects of dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation was proved to be the effect of dysfunctional Pastors/ Churches on spiritual formation, were proved to be the Feelings of being overwhelmed by work, family, finances and competing with societal expectations can all contribute to a fracturing of the spirit from the self, where physical gains become more important spiritual expansion, The feeling of missing something can cause further stress, creating a perpetuating cycle of feeling leading to dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation and competition for fame and popularity is the major one Competition for fame and popularity nature of pastors bring in range of problems in the Ministry, the completion for fame is growing.

The most challenge observed that affect born again church was The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a lot of negative and also positive spiritual experiences in the church. To the vulnerable churches, it caused them to become even more desperate in their day-to-day situations. To the richer churches with radio station and Tv it has attracted more audiences and they are the one shaping the doctrine. The findings revealed that ministers and pastors who generally served as pillars of strength, and as sources of guidance and shepherds to God's people, suddenly became helpless and powerless during the covid -19 crisis as they were barred from encouraging and comforting their members as those with big radios and TV stations do. Referring to the mentioned statements, it can be concluded that the COVID-19 crisis disruption has had an intense negative effect on spiritual formation on the born again churches.

On the negative spiritual impact, youth, (young men and women) were hard hit when church houses were closed. Most of them got so distracted that they withdrew from Christian living and this in ongoing. Lack of consistent prayer lives, Bible studies and the whole church activity caused them to be attracted to circular TV programmes. Some got addicted to pornography movies with nothing to prick the conscience. One thing led to another. Some became more sexually active, more girls got pregnant.

The study revealed that Covid-19 and the associated containment measures had both a positive and negative impact on the spiritual formation of born again churches mostly Kanyanya Parish, Kawempe division Kampala City to the large extent negative impact. The study revealed that Covid-19 and the associated containment measures had both a positive and negative impact on the spiritual formation of born again churches mostly Kanyanya Parish, Kawempe division Kampala City to the large extent negative impact

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

In conclusion the study proved the effects of covid-19 on spiritual formation in born again churches. It was made clear that the closure of churches during the coronavirus pandemic has forced churches to function in new ways of staying open and being church. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a lot of negative and also positive spiritual experiences in the church. To the vulnerable churches, it caused them to become even more desperate in their day-to-day situations. To the richer churches with radio station and Tv it has attracted more audiences and they are the one shaping the doctrine. The findings revealed that ministers and pastors who generally served as pillars of strength, and as sources of guidance and shepherds to God's people, suddenly became helpless and powerless during the covid -19 crisis as they were barred from encouraging and comforting their members as those with big radios and TV stations do.

The study concluded that the COVID-19 crisis disruption has had an intense negative effect on spiritual formation on the born again churches. The born again church has learnt during the time of COVID-19 crisis how to live-stream sermons, worship songs, religious rites and requests for tithes. The moment of truth to know what exactly the mission of the church and how the born again church can embrace theologies that are life-affirming and transforming to reflect and mirror the reign of God, become mythical. COVID-19 has reaffirmed that the church does not live within walls it is the people of God who, in the power of the Holy Spirit, live and long for God's reign in the world. The kingdom or reign of God is the primary mission perspective of the born again church as we continue to pray for, and work towards, God's justice, peace, righteousness and love on earth. The church is a sign, symbol and pointer to that kingdom as it is called out of the world and sent into the world to be the presence of God. But this church of God is on attack.

5.1.1 On the effect of lockdown on spiritual formation in born again churches

Homes were transformed into recording studios; live-streaming facilitated lay participation, not just observation. The shifting nature of the relationship between religions and digital media presents a solution to the problems of the pandemic. The Christian church has relied upon social networks and the intersections of real and imagined communities, to provide a location for faith. However, while there is observed and audible presence of the online virtual worshipping community, Christians feel an absence of the tangible and a physical togetherness and fellowship. The challenge that faces born again churches in its complex relationship with social media is precisely the absence of physical presence in collective worship. The born again churches as an institutions for people and by the people has to change its policies and principles for handling information rather than the current norm of electric technology.

5.1.2 Effect curfew and lockdown policies on spiritual formation in born again churches

The study conclude by agreeing that the curfew policies affected believers morale in church attendance, and many churches become dysfunctional due to lock down and curfew policies the pandemic has successfully disorganized societies and religious communities mostly born again churches. Its spiritual impact has been felt by church leaders and congregants up to date it was noted by (Muthai, Bururia & Kagema, 2018), that any Church is characterised by both human and spiritual attributes Like. Most churches are victim of technology, more Pastors who have no platform on social media, they have no way to come up to standard created by technology in worshipers minds, some Pastors have already given up. Curfew and lockdown policies and guidelines affected the soul winning and discipleship, churches of born again get difficulty to reach out to people, the curfew and policy guidelines affected spiritual formation by putting regulations on time of worship.

Some Christians congregated in rented places and on announcing the lockdown and curfew, many of the sheep scattered living the pastors in helpless state where they were unable to maintain the rented premises because of lack of money for rent and some pastors abandoned the church /ministry completely. Pastors and church leaders are suffering from psychological costs. In addition to psychological costs, other negative consequences stem from the fact that many born again church procedures have been postponed, and people staying away from church out of fear from Covid-19 crisis. Curfew and lockdown policies curtailed the process of spiritual formation on born again churches. The pandemic disorganized the 'cell ministry' and 'fellowship groups' common with Pentecostal churches in Uganda Kanyanya Parish Kawempe Division In particular. 'Cell ministry' involves Christians within close proximity, holding informal prayer meetings at regular intervals in each member's home curfew curtailed this services.

Spiritual leadership together with church members or congregants has also suffered a great deal. The pandemic has successfully disorganized societies and religious communities. Its spiritual impact has been felt by church leaders and congregants even today Spiritual formation is the process of becoming like Christ. It is the journey towards life with Christ at the center of every decision, emotion, and perspective. It describes the process of intentionally structuring one's life around those disciplines that cause the character of Christ to be formed in and reflected through their lives. The effect of curfew and lockdown policies on spiritual formation in born again churches, affected the soul winning and discipleship, churches of born again get difficulty to reach out to people, the curfew and policy guidelines affected spiritual formation by putting regulations on time of worship, Electronic technology sharps the preference, there is limited space for spiritual formation, the study observed that the ministry is so tough today, that no one gives their church first priority, apart from the Pastor himself and it is sometimes hard for him, the resource fund is low compared before the covid-19 crisis the work of the church has ground to halt and as human being the church is only coping, the survival mechanism.

5.1.3 The effect of dysfunctional Pastors/ Churches on spiritual formation

The study conclude in agreement that the feelings of being overwhelmed by work, family, finances and competing with societal expectations can all contribute to a fracturing of the spirit from the self, where physical gains become more important spiritual expansion. The feeling of missing something can cause further stress, creating a perpetuating cycle of feeling leading to dysfunctional Pastors on spiritual formation. The study conclude that limited turn up of believers, and if the pastor is deprived and see no opportunity of growth through ministry he she is likely to quite, bad church leadership in churches was seen as major course of dysfunctional of pastors, Bad experiences from church and ministry leaders can lead people to walk away from church for a season. Pastors or church dysfunctional is as results of failing to dealing with criticism. Everybody can be a critic, but criticism in the church is especially disconcerting. Others noted that dysfunctional of Pastors or church were as results of the financial struggles. While finances, relationships, and time can cause significant stress for pastors (and their members), Pastors forget that it's a privilege to serve God's people as Pastor. It might not make you rich by worldly standards. Some people may drive you batty, and you'll almost always be crunched

5.1.4 The Challenges experienced by Born Again Churches during and after Covid-19 crisis Lockdown and Mitigating factors to the Problem

The study conclude that the crisis experienced by most born again churches owing to covid-19 crisis had several challenges on the normal life of church of Christ, Some church leaders have not got the answers as per now. The covid-19 crisis affected normal life of worship as many people, Pastors have turned to electronic worship which is very expensive compared before covid-19 crisis, every church leader is struggling to have church camera airtime of several channels which is so much stressing and demanding.

5.2 Recommendations

The study intended to investigate the effect of covid-19 on born again churches on spiritual formation; it's basically on effect of spiritual formation. This study therefore has not been able to explore other religious practices and changes in Protestants, catholic, seventh day and moslems, since the study is entire focusing on born again churches, this was because of limited time given to do research. I would recommend that studies put in attention the other religious sector

Based on the findings, the following are recommendations of the study. The COVID-19 lockdown affected all churches , including born again and others. The financial, spiritual and social effects were negative

The study recommends that something has to be done, Pastors over work, they have low pay and desperation takes terrible toll as Pastors struggle to make sense of crammed preaching, calendar, hectic homes, splintered dreams, strived intimacy and shriveled purpose. Some quite in utter hopelessness to sell their used car, Machines, church land to mention a few. In that respect the government should consider pastors and other religious leaders who are contributing much to the well being of society, and include them on government payrolls so as to be stable at work and in the calling.

Born again Church' must be understood as referring to a people rather than to a place, and a congregation represents not just a weekly gathering that people are a part of, but a community in which each person actively belongs, receive support, and is encouraged to make their own distinctive contribution. Therefore born again churches should thrive to engage in income generating project. Born again churches consists not of passive consumers, but of creative participants. It is structured not just for attracting a congregation, but also for sending and dispersing people on mission. It is comprised of an extensive network of clusters of believers providing mutual support, as well as engaging the broader networks of relationships of which they are a part. In recovery from COVID-19, I find it difficult for Pastors to get motivation to do Pastoral calling or Pastoral evangelism. Many Pastors have many doubt regarding their calling and about faith as well. It was discovered in the study that affect the COVID-19 there too much tensions, pressure and anxieties. The solution is to seek Gods guidance, its true God guides the surrendered will and Christ centered thinking, by close association with him, with your peers and spiritually aware Pastors, you can find your way through the thicket of overloads. Most Pastors cannot get by with doing a whole lot less, but they can ask the Father to help them balance their lives.

Born again churches should not bite off more than they can chew! Only open up methods of communication affordable to manage for a long time. Consider allocating the upkeep of these platforms to a single communications director for your church. They will help you lead the congregation through the growth process.

REFERENCES

- Tyler Edwards is a pastor, author, and husband. He currently works as the Discipleship Pastor of Carolina Forest Community Church in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. He is passionate about introducing people to and helping them grow in the Gospel. He is the author of [Zombie Church: breathing life back into the body of Christ](#). You can find more of his work on [Facebook](#) or you can follow him on Twitter @tedwardscce.
- Amin (2005) Amin M.E (2005). Social Science research: conception, methodology and analysis. Makerere University Printery, Uganda.
- ZEYAD S, AL-DABBAGH.2020; The role of decision-marking in crisis management; a qualitative study using Grounded theory (COVID-19 crisis Pandemic crisis as Model). College of Political Science University of mousi Iraq.
- Patricia Yancey Martin & Barry A. Turner, "Grounded Theory and Organizational Research," *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1986), 141.
- Faggiolani, C. (2011). "[Perceived Identity: Applying Grounded Theory in Libraries](#)". *JLIS.it. University of Florence*. 2 (1). doi:10.4403/jlis.it-4592. Retrieved 29 June 2013.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded Theory Methodology: An Overview. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 1st ed. (pp. 273–284).
- G. Allan, "A Critique of Using Grounded Theory as a Research Method," *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2003) pp. 1-10.
- Cauhapé, E. (1983). *Fresh starts: Men and women after divorce*. New York: Basic Books.
- Broadhead, R.S. (1983). *The private lives and professional identity of medical students*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967) *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Polit DF, Beck CT. *Nursing research: generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice*. 9th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2012. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Creswell JW. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2013. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Birks M. Practical philosophy. In: Mills J, Birks M. (eds) *Qualitative methodology: a practical guide*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2014, pp. 17–29. [[Google Scholar](#)]
-

- Crotty M. *The foundation of social research: meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1998. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Glaser BG, Strauss AL. *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1967. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Birks M, Mills J. *Grounded theory: a practical guide*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE, 2015. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Bryant A, Charmaz K. Grounded theory research: methods and practices. In: Bryant A, Charmaz K. (eds) *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2007, pp. 1–28. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Chamberlain-Salaun J, Mills J, Usher K. Linking symbolic interactionism and grounded theory methods in a research design: from Corbin and Strauss' assumptions to action. *SAGE Open*. Epub ahead of print 29 September 2013. DOI: 10.1177/2158244013505757 [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Mills J, Birks M, Hoare KJ. Grounded theory. In: Mills J, Birks M. (eds) *Qualitative methodology: a practical guide*. London: SAGE, 2014, pp. 107–121. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Charmaz K. The power and potential of grounded theory. *Med Sociol* 2012; 6: 2–15. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Bryant A, Charmaz K. Grounded theory in historical perspective: an epistemological account. In: Bryant A, Charmaz K. (eds) *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2007, pp. 31–57. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Strauss AL, Corbin JM. *The basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 1990. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Glaser BG. *Basics of grounded theory analysis*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 1992. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Charmaz K. A constructivist grounded theory analysis of losing and regaining a valued self. In: Wertz FJ, Charmaz K, McMullen LJ, et al. (eds) *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. 1st ed. New York: Guilford, 2011, pp. 165–204. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Ralph N, Birks M, Chapman Y. The methodological dynamism of grounded theory. *Int J Qual Methods* 2015; 14: 1–6. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Charmaz K. *Constructing grounded theory: a practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2006. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Bryant A, Charmaz K. *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2007. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Glaser BG. *Theoretical sensitivity: advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 1978. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Griffin E. *A first look at communication theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Clarke A. *Situational analysis: grounded theory after the postmodern turn*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Charmaz K, Bryant A. Grounded theory and credibility. In: Silverman D. (ed.) *Qualitative research*. 3rd ed. London: SAGE, 2011, pp. 291–309. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Charmaz K. Grounded theory in the 21st century: application for advancing social justice studies. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS. (eds) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005, pp. 207–236. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Glaser BG, Holton J. Remodeling grounded theory. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 2004; 5: 1–22. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Strauss AL, Corbin JM. *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1998. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Mackenzie N, Knipe S. Research dilemmas: paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues Educ Res* 2006; 16: 193–205. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Ward K, Gott M, Hoare K. Analysis in grounded theory: how is it done? Examples from a study that explored living with treatment for sleep apnea. *SAGE Res Methods Cases Part 2*. 2016. DOI: 10.4135/9781473989245 [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Stern PN. On solid ground: essential properties for growing grounded theory. In: Bryant A, Charmaz K. (eds) *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2007, pp. 114–126. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Corbin JM, Strauss AL. *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Lempert LB. Asking questions of the data: memo writing in the grounded theory tradition. In: Bryant A, Charmaz K. (eds) *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2007, pp. 245–264. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Glaser BG. *Doing grounded theory: issues and discussions*. Mills Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 1998. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Ralph N, Birks M, Chapman Y. Contextual positioning: using documents as extant data in grounded theory research. *SAGE Open* 2014; 4: 1–7. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Kelle U. The development of categories: different approaches in grounded theory. In: Bryant A, Charmaz K. (eds) *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2007, pp. 191–213. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Saldaña J. Coding and analysis strategies. In: Leavy P, Saldaña J. (eds) *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 581–685. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Birks M, Chapman Y, Francis K. Memoing in qualitative research: probing data and processes. *J Res Nurs* 2008; 13: 68–75. [[Google Scholar](#)]
-

35. Chamberlain-Salaun J. *Consumers and the social world of health care: outsiders in the expert's world: a grounded theory study*. PhD Thesis, College of Health Care Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville, QLD, Australia, 2015, p. 198. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Edwards LS. Bringing together the 'threads of care' in possible miscarriage for women, their partners and nurses in non-metropolitan emergency departments. College of Healthcare Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville, QLD, Australia, 2016, p. 225. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Moghaddam A. Coding issues in grounded theory. *Issues Educ Res* 2006; 16: 53–61. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Birks M, Mills J, Francis K, et al. A thousand words paint a picture: the use of storyline in grounded theory research. *J Res Nurs* 2009; 14: 405–417. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Evans LE. A novice researcher's first walk through the maze of grounded theory: rationalization for classical grounded theory. *Ground Theory Rev* 2013; 14: 37–55. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Saldaña J. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2013. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Glaser BG. *The grounded theory perspective III: theoretical coding*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 2005. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Pharos Journal of Theology ISSN 2414-3324 online Volume 104 Issue 1 - (2023)
Copyright: ©2023 Open Access/Author/s - Online @ <http://www.pharosjot.com> 12
- Branson, M.L. (2015). *Memories, hopes, and conversations: Appreciative inquiry, missional engagement, and congregational change* (2nd ed.), Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Campbell, H.A. (2005). *Exploring religious community online*, New York: Peter Lang Digital Formation Series.
- Campbell, H.A. (2020). *The distanced church: Reflections on doing church Online*, Digital Religion Publications.
- RR, J. Our response to the coronavirus pandemic reveals who we truly are. In: America Magazine, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/03/26/ourresponse-coronavirus-pandemic-reveals-who-we-truly-are>. Accessed on: 07/10/2020
- Chau, L. (2020, 8 April). Hong Kong: Keeping hope alive [Blog post]. [Retrieved from <https://www.lutheranworld.org/blog/hong-kong-keeping-hopealive>].
- City Press (2020 CNN). (2020). Trump puts Pence in charge of US coronavirus response. [Retrieved March 13 2020 from https://lite.cnn.com/en/article/h_def3ee04c8731454045ca5b61678dd2d]
- Daily Maverick. (2020, 6 March). As the first Coronavirus case was confirmed, South Africa was told to keep calm.
- Deguma, J.J., Deguma, M.C., Tandag, J.N. & Acebes, H.M.B. (2020). Where is the Church in the time of COVID-19 pandemic: Preferring the poor via G. Gutierrez's "Liberation" and the Catholic Church's social teaching in the Philippine setting, *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 3(2), 363-374.
- Dharmshaktu, N.S. (2020). The lessons learned from the current ongoing pandemic public health crisis of COVID-19 and its management in India from various angles, perspectives and ways forward. *Epidemiology International*, 5(1) 1-4.
- Dreyer, W. (2015). The real crisis of the church. *HTS Theologies Studies/ Theological Studies*, 71, 3: 1-5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v71i3.2822>.
- Malley, T. (2020). The Church's Response Is Saying "No" to Death's Dominion, *Church Life Journal*. [Retrieved from <http://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/the-churchs-response-is-saying-no-to-deaths-dominion/>].
- Elbert, A. (2020). God equips the called. St Thomas Episcopal Church, TX, USA. In H.A. Campbell (Ed.), *The distanced church: Reflections on doing church online*, [Retrieved from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1969.1/187891>] *Pharos Journal of Theology* ISSN 2414-3324 online Volume 104 Issue 1 - (2023) Copyright: ©2023 Open Access/Author/s - Online @ <http://www.pharosjot.com>
- Evoy, S. (2020). The unspectacular pastor: Live and in person, Pastor of Wolverine Free Methodist Church, MI, USA. In H.A. Campbell (Ed.), *The distanced church: Reflections on doing church online*. [Retrieved from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1969.1/187891>]
- Folarin, G.O. & A.J. Adelakun (2016). A multi-dimensional approach to crisis management in the church, *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies*, 6(2) 19-42.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th-anniversary ed.), New York: Bloomsbury.
- Fretheim. (2017). *Interruption and imagination: Public theology in times of crisis*, Eugene, OR: Pickwick.
- Gorrell, A. (2019). *Always on: Practicing faith in a new media landscape*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Helland, C. (2000). Online Religion/Religion Online and Virtual Communitas, In *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, ed. Jeffery Hadden and Douglas Cowan, 205–224. New York: JAI Press.
- Hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*, New York: Routledge
- Lewinson, T., Hurt, K. & A.K. Hughes (2015). 'I overcame that with God's hand on me': Religion and spirituality among older adults to cope with stressful life situations, *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 34, 285-303.
-

- McDougle, L., Konrath, S., Walk, M. & F. Handy (2016). Religious and secular coping strategies and mortality risk among older adults, *Social Indicators Research*, 125, DOI: [Available online at <https://www.doi.org/10.1007/s11205-014-0852-677-694>].
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Muthai, L.M., Bururia, D. & D.N. Kagema (2018). Assessment of religious initiated programmes as intervention mechanisms in curbing HIV/AIDS pandemic in Kenya: Some Selected programmes in Meru South Sub-county, *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, 7, 3: 113-124.
- Neuman, W.L. (2011). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (7th ed.), Boston, MA: Pearson,
- News24, (2020, 3 April). Bloemfontein 'epicentre': Free State intensifies COVID-19 testing, 3 April 202, <http://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/coronavirus-360-people-tested-in-the-free-state-2020324/>
- Palmer, P.J. (1983/1993). *To know as we are known: Education as a spiritual journey*, New York: HarperCollins.
- Siddiqi, M., Graves-Fitzsimmons, G. & E. Gonzalez (2020, 27 March). Religious exemptions during the coronavirus pandemic will only worsen the crisis. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
- Stalman, T. (Host). (2020, 25 March). Episode 79: Time for everyone to learn how to stream, with Alex Lindsay [Audio Podcast]. Retrieved from <https://www.stalmanpodcast.com/79>.
- Taylor, B. (2016). *Sharing faith using social media*, New York: Grove Books. The Washington Post. (2020), 14 March. For millions of Americans, no church on Sunday is Coronavirus's cruellest closure so far. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2020/03/13/millions-americans-no-church-sunday-is-coronavirus-cruellest-closure-so-fa/>
- Volf, M. & Croasmun, M. (2019). *For the life of the world: Theology that makes a difference*, Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos.
- White, D.S. & A. Le Cornu (2011). 5 September. Visitors and residents: A new typology for online engagement. *First Monday*, 16(9). doi: 10.5210/fm.v16i9.3171 · Retrieved from <https://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/download/3171/3049>.
- World Health Organization. (2020). 11 March. WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19, 11 March 2020. Geneva: World Health Organization. Retrieved 23 March 2020 from <https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-COVID-19-11-march-2020>
- Yazan, B. (2015). Three approaches to case study methods in education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake, *Qualitative Report*, 20, 1: 134-152.
- Yin, R.K. (2002). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.), Newbury Park, CA: Edrada EM, Lopez EB, Villarama JB, Salva Villarama EP, Dagoc BF, Smith C, et al. First COVID-19 infections in the Philippines: a case report. *Trop Med Health*. 2020; 48(1):21. <http://doi.org/10.1186/s41182-020-00203-0>
- Department of Health. Beat COVID-19 today: a COVID-19 Philippine situationer. Report No.: Issue 265. [Internet]. Philippines: Department of Health. 2021 [updated 2021 Apr 27] [cited 2021 Apr 28]. Available from: <https://doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV>
- 2019 Philippine statistical yearbook [Internet]. 2019 Oct [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: https://psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/2019-PSY_1003.pdf
- Social weather stations | Fourth quarter 2019 Social Weather Survey: record-high 83% of adult Filipinos say religion is "very important." [cited 2021 Feb 2] Available from: <http://www.sws.org.ph/swsmain/artcldisplay/?artcsyscode=ART-20200412155426>
- Patinio F. More Pinoys want masses resumed amid quarantine: church survey [Internet]. Philippine News Agency. 2020 May 19 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1103300>
- Merez A. PH among world's most religious countries: study [Internet]. ABS-CBN News. 2018 May 9 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/09/18/ph-among-worlds-most-religious-countries-study>
- Brenner P. Cross-national trends in religious service attendance. *Publ Opin Q*. 2016; 80(2):563-83. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfw016>
- Dolan R. Philippines: a country study [Internet]. Country studies. 1991 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <http://countrystudies.us/philippines/>
- Yee V. In a pandemic, religion can be a balm and a risk. *New York Times*. 2020 Mar 22 [cited 2021 Apr 23]. Available from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/22/world/middleeast/coronavirus-religion.html>
- Fresnoza-Flot A. The Catholic Church in the lives of irregular migrant Filipinas in France: identity formation, empowerment and social control. *Asia Pac J Anthropol*. 2010; 11(3-4):345-61. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2010.511628>
- Resolutions relative to the management of the coronavirus diseases 2019 (COVID-19) situation [Internet]. [Resolution no. 11; Series of 2020]. 2020 March 12 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/health-update/IATF-RESO-11.pdf>
- Omnibus guidelines on the implementation of community quarantine in the Philippines [Internet]. Presidential Communications Operations Office. 2020 Apr 29 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://pcoo.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Omnibus-Guidelines-on-the-Implementation-of-Community-Quarantine-in-the-Philippines.pdf>
-

- Omnibus guidelines on the implementation of community quarantine in the Philippines [Internet]. 2020 May 15 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: https://pcoo.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Omnibus_guidelines.pdf
- Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease Resolution [Internet]. 2020 July 2 [cited 2020 Dec 19]; 51. Available from: https://pcoo.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IATF_Res.No_51.pdf
- Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease Resolution [Internet]. 2020 Oct 22 [cited 2020 Dec 29]; 80. Available from: <https://pcoo.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IATF-Resolution-No.-80.pdf>
- Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease Resolution [Internet]. 2020 Dec 14 [cited 2020 Dec 29]; 88. Available from: <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/12dec/20201214-IATF-Resolution-88-RRD.pdf>
- Religious gatherings under GCQ relaxed, allowed up to 50% seating capacity starting February 15 – Presidential Communications Operations Office [Internet]. [cited 2021 May 15]. Available from: https://pcoo.gov.ph/news_releases/religious-gatherings-under-gcq-relaxed-allowed-up-to-50-seating-capacity-starting-february-15/
- Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease Resolution [Internet]. 2021 Oct 20 [cited 2021 May 10]; 104. Available from: <http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/MANILA/es/Consulado/Documents/IATF%20Resolution%20104.%20M arch%2020%202021.pdf>
- Talabong R. PH restricts cross-border travel, mass gatherings in NCR, 4 provinces. Rappler [Internet]. 2021 Mar 21 [cited 2021 Apr 27]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/duterte-gcq-metro-manila-bulacan-cavite-laguna-rizal-march-2021>
- Ranada P, Tomacruz S. Stricter GCQ, ‘NCR Plus’ bubble explained. Rappler [Internet]. 2021 Mar 22 [cited 2021 Apr 27]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/manila-archdiocese-defy-government-ban-holy-week-gatherings-2021>
- Esmaque ER. Archdiocese of Manila to defy government ban on Holy Week gatherings. Rappler [Internet]. Published March 23, 2021. Accessed April 27, 2021. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/manila-archdiocese-defy-government-ban-holy-week-gatherings-2021>
- Dagle RM. ‘Unjust, inconsistent’: Protestant churches hit ‘NCR Plus’ religious gathering ban. Rappler [Internet]. 2021 Mar 25 [cited Apr 27]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/protestant-churches-hit-ncr-plus-religious-gathering-ban>
- Ranada P. Gov’t allows ‘once a day’ religious gatherings from April 1 to 4. Rappler [Internet]. 2021 Mar 26 [Cited 2021 Apr 27]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/govt-allows-once-a-day-religious-gatherings-from-april-1-to-4>
- CNN Philippines Staff. Metro Manila, four provinces shift to stricter ECQ for one week. CNN Philippines [Internet]. 2021 Mar 27 [cited 2021 Apr 27]. Available from: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/3/27/ECQ-2021-NCR-Plus-bubble.html>
- Filipinos flock to churches for ‘Simbang Gabi’ to pray for COVID-19 deliverance. INQUIRER.net. 2020 Dec 16 [cited 2021 Jan 29]. Available from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1372409/filipinos-flock-to-churches-for-simbang-gabi-to-pray-for-COVID-19-deliverance>
- Rita J. Simbang Gabi attendees fail to keep distancing rule in some Cebu parishes. GMA News Online. 2020 Dec 16 [cited 2021 Jan 29]. Available from: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/768185/simbang-gabi-attendees-fail-to-keep-distancing-rule-in-some-cebu-churches/story/>
- Joint statement on preventing a post-holiday surge [Internet]. Department of Health. 2020 Dec 17 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://doh.gov.ph/press-release/joint-statement-on-preventing-a-post-holiday-surge>
- Lagarde R. Several dioceses suspend masses due to coronavirus [Internet]. CBCP Monitor. 2020 [cited 2021 Feb 1]. 24(6). Available from: <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/vol24-no06.pdf>
- Valles R. Recommendations and guidelines for the liturgical celebration in ‘new normal’ condition [Internet]. CBCPNews. 2020 May 16 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/liturgical-guidelines-in-new-normal-condition/>
- Del Castillo FA, Biana HT, Joaquin JJB. Church In Action: the role of religious interventions in times of COVID-19. J Public Health. 2020; 42(3):633-4. <http://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdaa086>
- Sorote RC. Leyte church offers ‘drive-in’ mass amid pandemic [Internet]. CBCPNews. 2020 Sept 15 [cited 2021 Feb 1]. Available from: <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/leyte-church-offers-drive-in-mass-amid-pandemic/>
- Quiapo Church goes mobile to reach out devotees [Internet]. CBCPNews. 2020 Oct 20 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/quiapo-church-go-mobile-to-reach-out-devotees/>
- Valles R. Circular No. 20-15, re: Recommendations for the celebrations of the Holy Week during the quarantine period [Internet]. 2020 Mar 20 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/recommendations-for-the-celebrations-of-the-holy-week-during-the-quarantine-period-2020/>
- Valles R. Instructions on the celebration of Aguinaldo Masses, Misa de Gallo or Simbang Gabi [Internet]. CBCPNews. 2020 Nov 27. Available from: <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/instructions-on-the-celebration-of-aguinaldo-masses-misa-de-gallo-or-simbang-gabi/>
-

- Leslie A. COVID-19 forces bishops to postpone quinquennial celebration of Christianity in PH. Manila Bulletin. 2020 Sept 24 [cited 2021 Feb 1]. Available from: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/24/COVID-19-forces-bishops-to-postpone-quinquennial-celebration-of-christianity-in-ph/>
- Major Sinulog activities in Cebu cancelled over coronavirus [Internet]. CBCPNews. 2020 Nov 10 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://cbcpnews.net/cbcpnews/major-sinulog-activities-in-cebu-cancelled-over-coronavirus/>
- Macasero R. After cancellation of physical events, virtual Sinulog postponed too [Internet]. Rappler. 2021 Jan 9 [cited 2021 Jan 29]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/visayas/virtual-sinulog-2021-postponed>
- National Youth Day postponed to 2022 [Internet]. CBCPNews. 2020 Dec 18 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://cbcpnews.net/cbcpnews/national-youth-day-postponed-to-2022/>
- Only 400 persons per mass allowed in Quiapo Church on Nazarene feast. CBCPNews [Internet]. 2021 Jan 6 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://cbcpnews.net/cbcpnews/only-400-persons-per-mass-allowed-in-quiapo-church-on-nazarene-feast/>
- Ongcal A. How COVID affected one of the largest Catholic processions in the world [Internet]. 2021 Jan 11 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/88avwz/black-nazarene-traslacion-2021-procession-religion-catholic-philippines-pandemic-COVID-coronavirus>
- Manlupig K. Sara Duterte warns Iglesia ni Cristo: violate quarantine, face suit [Internet]. INQUIRER.net. 2020 Mar [cited 2021 Apr 22]. Available from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1243063/sara-duterte-warns-inc-violate-quarantine-face-suit>
- Iglesia ni Cristo overcomes pandemic threat to distance people of faith from God [Internet]. Accesswire. 2021 Jan 5 [cited 2021 Apr 22]. Available from: <https://www.accesswire.com/624487/Iglesia-Ni-Cristo-Overcomes-Pandemic-Threat-to-Distance-People-of-Faith-from-God>
- Gavilan J. LIST: Online masses, services by religious groups amid coronavirus [Internet]. Rappler. 2020 Apr 1 [cited 2021 Apr 22]. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/list-online-masses-services-religious-groups-amid-coronavirus>
- We are resuming our onsite worship services in Metro Manila! [Internet]. Victory - Honor God. Make Disciples. 2020 [cited 2021 May 15]. Available from: <https://victory.org.ph/we-are-resuming-our-onsite-worship-services-in-metro-manila/>
- Intercede [Internet]. Christ's Commission Fellowship. [cited 2021 May 15]. Available from: <https://www.ccf.org.ph/intercede/>
- Awesome God prayer & fasting [Internet]. Victory - Honor God. Make Disciples. [cited 2021 May 15]. Available from: <https://victory.org.ph/fasting2021/>
- Cornelio J. [ANALYSIS] Are Filipinos more religious because of COVID-19 [Internet]? Rappler. 2020 Oct 23 [cited 2021 Apr 23]. Available from: www.rappler.com/voices/thought-leaders/analysis-are-filipinos-more-religious-because-COVID-19.
- Calleja JP. Filipino faith perseveres despite pandemic restrictions [Internet]. UCAnews. 2020 Sept 30 [cited 2021 Apr 23]. Available from: www.ucanews.com/news/filipino-faith-perseveres-despite-pandemic-restrictions/89718#.
- Quadri S. COVID-19 and religious congregations: implications for spread of novel pathogens [Internet]. Int J Infec Dis. 2020 May 7 [cited 2021 Apr 23]. Available from: www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1201971220303131.
- Haw NJL, Uy J, Sy KTL, Abrigo MRM. Epidemiological profile and transmission dynamics of COVID-19 in the Philippines. Epidemiol Infect. 2020; 148. <http://doi.org/10.1017/S0950268820002137>
- Tomacruz S. PH coronavirus cases surge past 106,000, as DOH monitors 887 clusters [Internet]. Rappler. 2020 Aug 3 [cited 2020 Dec 29]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/coronavirus-cases-philippines-august-3-2020>
- Esmaguel PI. Catholics in quarantine mark first online Holy Week [Internet]. Rappler. 2020 Apr 5 [cited 2021 Jan 29]. Available from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/catholics-quarantine-online-holy-week-2020>
- Kravchuk M. COVID-19 empties churches, but Holy Week rites continue online. OneNews.ph. [cited 2021 Feb 2]. <https://www.onenews.ph/COVID-19-empties-churches-but-holy-week-rites-continue-online>
- Nepomuceno P. Unshaken faith: observing holy week amid COVID-19. 2020 Apr 8 [cited 2020 Jan 29]. Available from: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1099225>
- Mongaya C. Christmas in the Philippines in the time of Duterte and COVID-19 [Internet]. Global Voices. 2020 Dec 31 [cited 2020 Jan 29]. Available from: <https://globalvoices.org/2020/12/31/christmas-in-the-philippines-in-the-time-of-duterte-and-COVID-19/>
- DOH reiterates reminder to devotees and calls on IGUS to monitor constituents who attend Traslacion [Internet]. Department of Health. 2021 Jan 9 [cited 2021 Feb 1]. Available from: <https://doh.gov.ph/press-release/DOH-REITERATES-REMINDER-TO-DEVOTEES-AND-CALLS-ON-LGUs-TO-MONITOR-CONSTITUENTS-WHO-ATTEND-TRASLACION>
- Gregorio X. WHO says rise in COVID-19 cases “inevitable” after holidays [Internet]. Traslacion. Philstar.com. 2021 Jan 12 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/01/12/2069921/who-says-rise-COVID-19-cases-inevitable-after-holidays-traslacion>
- Portugal A, Lopez E. Philippines' Catholics show devotion to statue amid super-spreader worries [Internet]. Reuters. 2021 Jan 9 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-religion-philippin-idUSKBN29E03B>
-

- Seah S, Ha HT, Martinus M, Thao PT. The state of Southeast Asia: 2021 [Internet]. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. 2021 Feb 2 [cited 2021 Apr 27]. Available from: <https://iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-State-of-SEA-2021-v2.pdf>
- Metro Manila COVID-19 surge begins ahead of Christmas: OCTA Research [Internet]. ABS-CBN. 2020 Dec 22 [cited 2021 Feb 1]. Available from: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/22/20/metro-manila-COVID-19-surge-begins-ahead-of-christmas-octa-research>
- Galvez D. Research team marks ‘clear upward trend’ of COVID-19 cases in NCR [Internet]. INQUIRER.net. 2021 Jan 12 [cited 2021 Feb 2]. Available from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1382791/research-team-marks-clear-upward-trend-of-COVID-19-cases-in-ncr>
- Hallare K. OCTA Research: COVID-19 cases ‘unlikely’ to go down in 2 weeks [Internet]. Inquirer. Net. 2021 Mar 23 [cited 2021 May 2]. Available from: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/3/27/ECQ-2021-NCR-Plus-bubble.html>
- Berkmann BJ. The COVID-19 crisis and religious freedom. J Law, Relig, State. 2020; 8(2-3):179-200. <http://doi.org/10.1163/22124810-2020013>
- Phuong, NT. Religion, law, state, and COVID-19 in Vietnam. J Law, Religion, State. 2020; 8(2-3):284-97.