

Efficiency of Methodist Church of Kenya Pastoral Programs in Addressing Orphans' Spiritual Needs in Day Secondary Schools in Imenti North Sub-County

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Abstract

Pastoral care program is used in schools to offer learners spiritual assistance while ensuring their overall well-being is catered for by designated pastors. There are various responsibilities bestowed upon licensed pastors in MCK church fraternity which are derived from the authority given in ordination. The roles of these pastors are categorized into four capacities, namely, word, sacrament, order and service as witnesses, service of Christ's love and justice in mission as pastors, or superintendents. However, the delivery of these roles to orphans in day secondary schools has not been fully realized. Hence, concerns about the pastoral programmers' effectiveness in the wake of increased suffering and misconduct among orphans has arisen. This study, therefore, aimed at assessing effectiveness of Methodist Church in Kenya sponsorship programs on material and spiritual needs of orphans in day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County. The study was guided by Erickson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation. Mixed research methodology was applied. The target population was 285 respondents from 17 secondary schools sponsored by MCK. A sample size of 207 respondents who comprised of church education committee leaders, superintendent ministers, guidance and counseling teachers, principals, and orphaned students was obtained. Stratified sampling method was utilized in choosing orphan respondents for this study. The study concluded that spiritual nourishment and counseling were the major services offered by MCK pastoral programs. However, the frequency of these services was low leading to high school dropout rates. Therefore, the study recommends increased and regular counseling and spiritual nourishment services.

Keywords: *Methodist Churches of Kenya, pastoral programs, orphans, spiritual needs, sponsorship programmes, day secondary schools, Imenti North Sub- County*

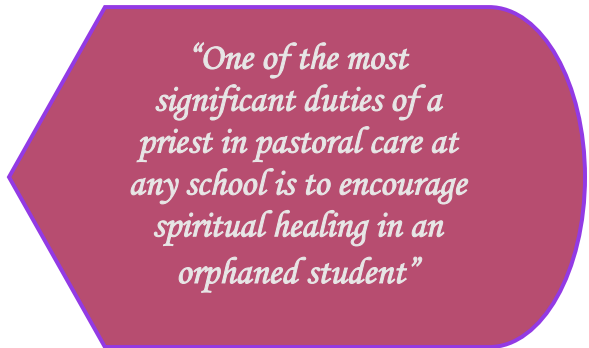
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1.0 Introduction

The British Methodist Church first arrived in Kenya in 1862, thanks to the efforts of the then-United Methodist Free Church. The vision of the Methodist Church in Kenya, according to Stokes (1971) and Davies et al. (2017) was to know and recognize Jesus Christ. These two objectives are stressed in the theological principles drawn from the ancient Methodist tradition. According to Abraham et al. (2009), the purpose of the church and its pastoral programmes in secondary schools is to respond to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ's divine love via the influence of God's Holy Ghost. This profound revelation is also gotten in the book of James 1:27, where James reiterated to what the Old Testament prophets taught in Psalms 68–5, Zachariah 7:6–10, and Micah 6:6–8, indicating that God is the parent of the fatherless, and provides for the needs of orphans. While Athenians took care of orphans as a patriotic obligation, in Rome, orphans were employed as slaves, prostitutes, or sold to wealthy individuals who used them for begging. However, Williams (2018) and Thomas et al. (2020) says that orphans were slaughtered by The Carthaginians and Mayans as a form of worship.

Notwithstanding these atrocities against orphans, there were great men who did care for them. For example, Charles Spurgeon 1884–1892 established the Stock Well Orphanage which cared for a large number of orphans; John Calvin 1509–1564 adopted and cared for orphaned children after his own children died; while George Whitefield, a well-known awakening evangelist, rescued forty orphaned children from slavery. Further, Martin Luther and his wife Kate adopted four children whose mother had died as a result of

an epidemic in the United States (Thomas et al., 2020; Ayaya, et al., 2021). Incidences of orphan-hood has been recorded in many publications. Natural disasters, war, felonious acts, Gender-Based Domestic Violence (GBDV), accidents, and HIV/AIDS are among the causes of orphan-hood. Clark et al. (2020) observe that by 2018, there were 75 million orphans in Asia-Pacific, while the United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF] (2019) records that Sub-Saharan Africa has over 70 million orphans.

A quote is presented inside a purple hexagonal box with rounded corners. The text is in a white, italicized serif font.

“One of the most significant duties of a priest in pastoral care at any school is to encourage spiritual healing in an orphaned student.”

According to Sitienei and Pillay (2019) and Toska et al. (2019), economic demands have destroyed values and moral support for orphans. In Kenya, Agonga and Muhingi, (2020) says that the government organized many commissions; namely, the Ominde Commission of 1964, the Gachathi Report of 1976, and the Mackay Report of 1988, to make recommendations on how the finest education system may generate holistic learners.

These reports were further followed by the promulgation of a new constitution in Kenya which guaranteed every child in Kenya the right to free and compulsory basic education (Pande, et al., 2015). In Meru County, pastoral programs by the MCK church has been taking

place in accordance with the gospel of James 1:27, which stresses the need to help vulnerable members of society. According to Lairang'i (2021), orphans have been disregarded and MCK's engagement in assisting them to overcome challenges is a good idea. Murrira (2019) found out that MCK has been taking care of around 65 orphans in Athiru Rujine, Meru County, via the supply of basic requirements. Raymond (2018) asks fundamental questions such as why the orphaned children under pastoral care exhibit unbecoming behaviours like rudeness, aggression, and none concerned about authority, which are not consistent to the intended goals of pastoral programmes in schools like. He also seeks to know why learners under pastoral programs seems to lack respect to teachers and principals of the schools they attend. These concerns indicated the gap that the current study seeks to fill.

Statement of the Problem

The emergence of new beliefs as a result of technology and social media platforms, has influenced the moral and ethical decision-making processes of the youth. This has resulted to a contextual societal crisis that necessitates assistance of the young people (McCuaig, et al., 2020). Within the aforementioned situations, most orphans in secondary schools are presented with a variety of decisions to make, which are directed by modern philosophies of life, value systems, and diverse ideologies. Various studies have documented the suffering of orphans across the. Pavolini et al. (2021), posits that the orphan's situation has been twisted into a merchandisable commodity as a result of redirecting resources intended for orphans to other uses.

Raymond (2018) directs that true worship is devoid of opulent clothes, magnificent structures, and fashioned rites, but rather service to mankind. Murrira (2019) agrees that deviation from true calling, which lacks true care for people's concerns, particularly orphans, as envisaged in the book of James 1:27, is rampant in church. The spiritual growth of orphans is a fundamental since it enables them to grow into desired human beings (McCuaig et al., 2020). In cognizant of this fact, MCK's sponsorship is centred on fee payment, but falls short of providing spiritual needs, parental care, guidance, and security. As a result, majority of sponsored orphans experience stress, rejection, and stigma, leading to delinquency behaviours (Murrira, 2019; Ikuwa and Muna, 2021). These challenges are attributable to ineffective pastoral programmes by the MCK.

Past studies like Kageema et al. (2019) have focused on orphans' educational performance and psychosocial development of children in secondary schools. However, none has examined the effectiveness of MCK's pastoral programs in addressing the orphans' spiritual needs in day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County, yet MCK has embraced recommendations of the OVC national plan. The present study seeks to fill this gap.

Purpose of the study

The goal of this study was to evaluate MCK's responsiveness to orphans' material and spiritual needs in church-sponsored day time ancillary schools in the Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County.

Objective of the Study

- i. To assess the effectiveness of M.C.K pastoral programs in meeting spiritual needs of orphans in day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County.

Research question of the study

How effective are the MCK pastoral programs in meeting the spiritual needs of orphans in day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County?

The empirical literature on Pastoral Programmes in addressing Orphans' Spiritual Needs

Religious organizations have historically provided individuals with a sense of belonging and significance in times of suffering. Zust et al. (2021) analyzed a random sample of 300 Christian clergy in New York's Upper County. Their study sought to determine the level of awareness and activities provided by churches to orphans caretakers. They observed that the clergy were not always aware of orphan homes' concerns. In this connection therefore, it is crucial to realize that spiritual growth may be a specific type of pastoral care delivered in response to an individual's needs.

Churches, according to Pelham III et al. (2020) emphasize financial needs for orphans while spending little effort on emotional needs. Consequently, it is not enough to just quote from the Bible to encourage individuals who have had their hearts shattered. Rather, a new trend is emerging elsewhere; for example, in churches in Tanzania's Mbeya area where narratives, metaphors, and plays to bring spiritual nutrition to orphans have been used. Rosebush et al. (2021) avers that spiritual growth of orphans is achieved, by developing

these children's faith through pastoral programmes in schools. They cited an example of Lutheran partners that engage parents and adult caregivers in programs aimed at developing children's Christian faith. The Bible directs that the church assists orphans as a (Genesis 1:28 [KJV]). Psalms 127:3, Exodus 22:22 and Isaiah 10:1-2, urge that society treat orphans with the care, love, empathy, and correction that a parent would provide to their children.

According to Malla et al. (2019) orphans require acceptance, love and affection. Maslow (1963), theory of Human Motivation has been applied in this study. The theory classifies needs into 5 different phases; namely, physiological, safety, belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization. The relevancy of this theory derives from the fact that a child who has gained physiological needs believes that the parent loves her, hence they feel a sense of belonging to that parent which creates self-confidence and pushes them to achieve more. Maslow says that failure to fulfil particular needs can be damaging to a person's psychological and physical growth.

Unknown to churches is that sponsored orphans in schools experience trauma, denial, anxiety, and stigma which cause feelings of fear, anger, and grief to manifest. According Malla et al. (2019) stress is one factor that leads orphaned adolescent females to engage in hazardous behavior, which can lead to contraction of HIV/Aids. Safarova and Urayeva (2020) argues that the death of parents begins the orphan(s) journey to suffering. Ofreneo et al. (2020) adds that the orphaned children are enrolled in day secondary schools and they become domestic

workers. However, if luck is on their side are taken in again by the church.

Ayaya et al. (2021) adds that teachers are sometimes complicit in contracting these orphans in their schools for their own selfish gain. Foster homes have been alternative places for orphans to reside. However, studies done by Goldberg et al. (2020) decry these homes as dismal settings where children suffer from reduced access to health services, malnourishment, and underdevelopment; and at worst, they don't enjoy the services provided by men of God in form of spiritual growth.

According to Kagema et al. (2019) the healing role of the pastoral function becomes crucial since a pastoral caregiver should assist the injured person in being restored back to a form of totality. One of the most significant duties of a priest in pastoral care at any school is to encourage spiritual healing in an orphaned student (Raymond, 2018).

Theoretical review of the study

This current study was anchored on Erickson's psychosocial development theory of 1963. Erikson was a concert philosopher who adapted Freud's contentious idea of psychological stages into a social constructivism. He observes that the self contributes to growth in a good way by responding to therapy, ideas, and abilities at each level of growth. The self, therefore, assists youngsters to develop into productive members of the society. However, he notes that there is a mental struggle that must be effectively addressed at each of the 8 stages of development.

Erickson's 8 stages of development in all human beings include: trust vs. mistrust, where

the child depends on the parent for everything; autonomy vs. shame and doubt where the child develops control of herself and makes small decisions like potty use; initiative vs. guilt, where the child begins to assert control leading to a sense of purpose; industry vs. inferiority, where child begins to have a sense of pride on their abilities through socializing; identity vs. role confusion; intimacy vs. isolation, where formation of relationships and intimacy develops; generativity vs. stagnation, where the need to create things that will outlast them begin to form; and integrity vs. despair. Therefore, the MCK pastoral programs need to be cognizant of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development.

According to Goldberg et al. (2020), these development stages in a child should be the first thing the foster care giver, like MCK, need to understand. The church, therefore needs to refer to factors that arise at every stage as it develops a pastoral program for the orphans. Unfortunately, lack of proper guidelines and understanding of the orphans' spiritual needs have in away contributed to the failure of the pastoral programmes in day secondary school in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya.

2.0 Materials and Methods

The study employed a mixed research design. Mixed research design refers to an emerging research approach that promotes systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative data within a single study (Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017; Cazeaux, 2017). The target population was 285 from 17 secondary schools sponsored by MCK in Imenti North Sub-County. The target population yielded 207 sample size. Data was collected using

questionnaire, and interview schedule on 17 principals, 17 guidance and counselling teachers, 15 superintendents’ ministers, 15 church education committee leaders, 142 orphaned students, and 1 Synod bishop. Yamane formula was used to calculate the sample size.

Stratification of the study population was used to obtain the sample size of orphans, whose population was higher than other categories. These respondents were first stratified according to the class they belonged; namely, Form 1, Form 2, Form 3 and Form 4. This yielded 36 orphaned students per class. These 36 students per a class were then census sampled and given questionnaires. Synod Bishop and others were purposively sampled. The instruments were retested to confirm content, face, and construct validity, while Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha was applied to determine their reliability. Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical program for social sciences, SPSS software, while descriptive statistics were used in analysis of qualitative data. Findings were presented in tables, and figures.

MCK Kinoru Circuit and Kinoru Mixed Secondary school were used in pilot study. Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) suggested that a 10-50 Percent (%) of the targeted population is a good representation in pilot study. The target population was 210 and therefore for this study, 10% of the targeted population yielded 21 respondents. The reason for a pilot study was to measure the questions used and eradicate any anomalies. Hence both questionnaires and interviews were carried out on 1 principals, 1 guidance and counseling teacher, 1 superintendent minister, 1 church education committee leader, and 17 orphaned students,

3.0 Results and Discussion

Response Rate

The respondents were categorized on the basis of their nature and responsibilities. This helped the researcher to get the required information and helped to present it better. The categories of respondents are shown in Table 1 below;

Table 1

Response Rate

Respondents	Population	Returned questionnaires	Response rate
Church Education Committee	16	14	88.0%
Superintendent Minister	15	14	93.3%
Principal	17	15	88.2%
Guidance and Counselling Teachers	17	16	88.2%
Orphaned Students	142	120	84.5%

The above table 1 shows the response rate of various categories. Out of 16 Church Education Committee Leaders targeted, 14 returned the questionnaires, giving 88% response rate. On the other hand, Superintendent Minister’s respondents’ rate was 93.3%, 88.2% for both the principals and guidance and counselling teachers, while orphaned students had a response rate of 84.5%.

Kumar (2018) observes that if the survey receives a lower response rate, the data

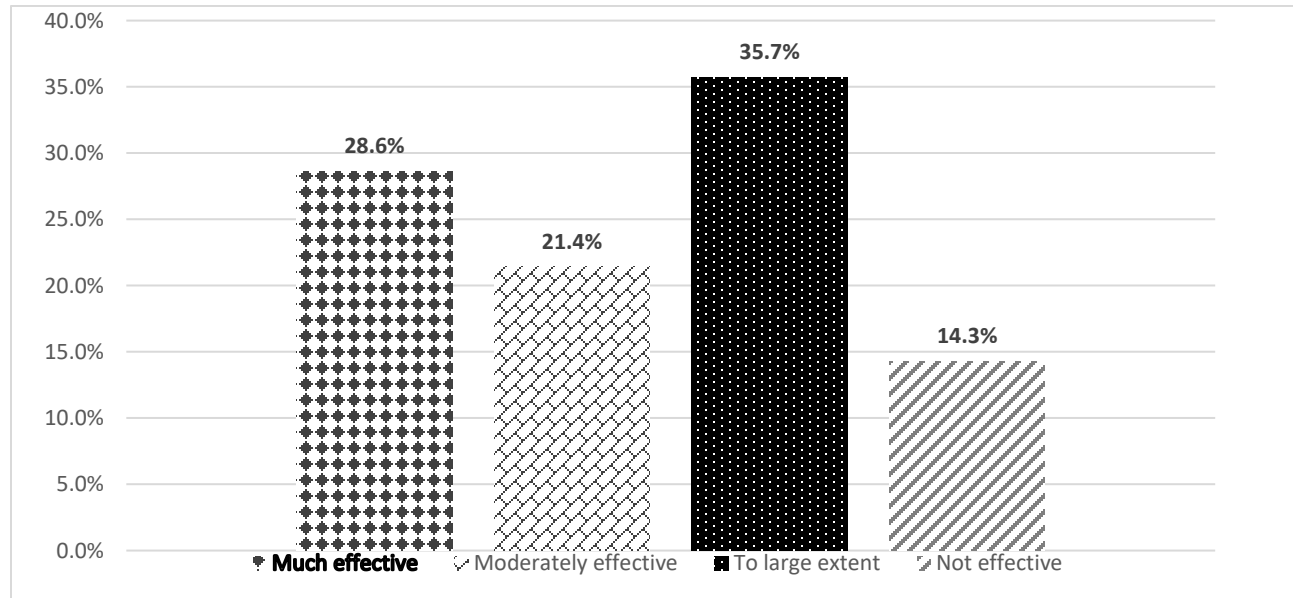
gathered and processed cannot be deemed representative of the broader community. Generally, a survey response rate of 50% or more is regarded appropriate for any study.

Church Education Committee Leaders

This study undertook to discuss the effects of pastoral programs on orphans, and one of the respondents were church education committee leaders. Their responses were recorded in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1

Church Education Committee Leaders’ Response on Effects of Pastoral Programs on Orphans



In response to how satisfactory the material and spiritual needs of orphans in daya secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County are met by MCK pastoral programs, 35% of respondents believed the pastoral program were effective. The study therefore established that MCK pastoral programs have some positive effect on material and spiritual needs of orphans. Mundia (2017) acknowledges the importance of the church as a giver of

assistance to disadvantaged children through established feeding programs, giving them hope in their circumstances.

Reliability Statics

Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient was applied to check the reliability of questions used on church committee leaders. The questions used were 10 and the result are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's-Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized-Items	N-of-Items
0.744	0.784	10

These questions in the questionnaire were analysed based on Cronbach’s Alpha test and result displayed in Table 6 above. The rule of thumbs up in Cronbach’s Alpha test is that when the score is $\alpha \geq 0.9$ or higher or equal to 0.8, ($0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$), the indication is that the test is good and can be relied upon.

Factor loading analysis

This research based its analysis on factor loading, mean and standard deviation.

However, principal component analysis was used.

Table 7 illustrates the factor loading analysis using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to illustrate church education committee leaders’ responses to the effects of pastoral programs on orphan students in day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics on effects of pastoral programs on orphan students in day secondary school.

N= 14	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. How often does the church organize guidance and counseling, for orphans only	2.21	1.122
2. The pastoral programs are meant for bringing sense of belonging to orphans alone	3.21	1.251
3. There is no time for having social or emotional support because of class work	3.36	1.151
4. The church intervention as far as pastoral is not achievable	3.21	1.251
5. Any spiritual programs are mostly hampered by the nature of school programs	3.21	1.122
6. Food support is provided by the school through school fees payment alone.	3.29	1.139

From Table 7 above statement no.3 has the highest mean of 3.36, and standard deviation of 1.251 while statement 1 has the lowest mean of 2.21 and standard deviation of 1.122. The closeness of mean scores indicate that many of the respondents agreed that there was no time

for social or emotional support of orphan students due to class work.

Superintend Ministers’ and Factor Analysis

The table below indicates communalities of the questions asked with an aim of checking the sum of squared factor loadings for the variables

Table 8

Communalities

Factors/Items	Raw		Rescaled	
	Initial	Extraction	Initial	Extraction
F1. Government to support all orphans	1.143	.951	1.000	.832
F2. Officer trained to handle orphans.	1.632	1.548	1.000	.948
F3. Take time to understand orphan hood and needs.	1.648	1.619	1.000	.982
F4. Involve ministry of home affairs to support orphans	1.648	1.619	1.000	.982
F5. Request 100% financial support from CDF, County government and National government bursaries.	1.170	.920	1.000	.786
F6. Church to support churches to play parental role.	1.648	1.619	1.000	.982

The results displayed in the Communalities table is based on the fact that the extraction scores are the square (R^2) of components matrix score of every item. This kind of scores $R^2 = .832$ equivalent to 83% on the Item F1. The rule of thumbs up is that when all the extraction is done and the score is below 0.3, that item could be a red flag, and may not load on any of other factors. In the table 8 above, all extracted components had values higher than

0.3 with the lowest being 0.786 (F5), and the highest being 0.982 (F3, F4, and F6). This means that all the components are loading well on the subject at hand.

Guidance and Counseling Teachers and Factor analysis

The table below shows how mean and standard deviation were closely related in various components.

Table 9
Descriptive Statistics on various statements

N = 15	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. The pastoral programs are meant to bring sense of belonging to orphans alone	2.27	1.280
2. There is no time for having social or emotional support because of class work	2.60	1.352
3. The church intervention as far as pastoral is not achieving its intended purposes currently	2.33	1.291
4. Any spiritual programs are mostly hampered by the nature of school programs	2.47	1.457
5. Food support is provided by the school through school fees payment alone.	2.27	1.280

Statement no.2 has the highest mean score of 2.60 and standard deviation of 1.352, while statement no.1 and 5 have the lowest mean score of 2.27 and standard deviation of 1.28. This shows that the mean and standard

deviation are closely related. When such closeness is realized, the components are related and have a correlation in terms of the question asked, which emphasizes the viability of components measured in the study

Table 10

Total Variance Explained

	Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues ^a	
			% of Variance	Cumulative %
Raw	1	8.636	97.085	97.085
	2	.178	2.002	99.088
	3	.053	.593	99.681
	4	.028	.319	100.000
	5	-4.782E-16	-5.376E-15	100.000
Rescaled	1	8.636	97.085	97.085
	2	.178	2.002	99.088
	3	.053	.593	99.681
	4	.028	.319	100.000
	5	-4.782E-16	-5.376E-15	100.000

Table 10 above indicates the total variance explained when dealing with factor loading and extractions. The component chosen is “The pastoral programs are meant to bring sense of belonging to orphans alone”. This can be seen as creating a sense of belonging. Therefore, Table 10 above was used to extract the most valuable variables in the study being.

Principals

The following are sampled responses given by the principals on questions asked on pastoral programmes offered to orphan students by MCK in their schools. Table 11 illustrates KMO and Bartlett’s Test

Table 11

KMO and Bartlett's Test^a

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.662
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	125.813
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 11 shows the score of Sig. 000 which is significantly related at zero with KMO score of .662.

Table 12

Total Variance Explained

	Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues ^a	
			% of Variance	Cumulative %
Raw	1	4.567	73.963	73.963
	2	.915	14.826	88.789
	3	.431	6.980	95.768
	4	.191	3.095	98.864
	5	.070	1.136	100.000
Rescaled	1	4.567	73.963	73.963
	2	.915	14.826	88.789
	3	.431	6.980	95.768
	4	.191	3.095	98.864
	5	.070	1.136	100.000

Component 1 in this table 12 has a total value of 4.567 under Initial Eigenvalues the rest of the components of factors understudy are less than 1. This table therefor is used to extract the most valuable component that can be in turn referred to as the subject of the whole question

asked in the variable provided. The component chosen is “The pastoral programs are meant for bringing sense of belonging to orphans alone” this therefore can be named as sense of belonging.

Figure 2

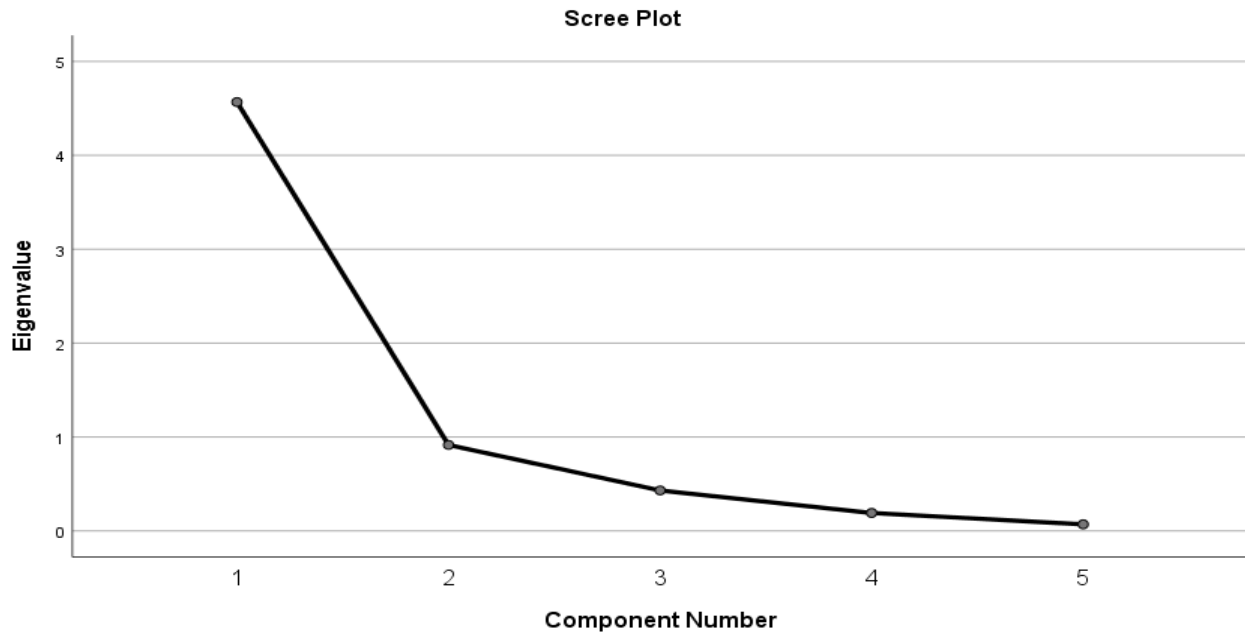


Figure 2 above is a Scree Plot used to plot components against Eigenvalue set at 1. Those values with a score of over 1 as shown in table 12 above are indicated in this figure 2 at 4.567, which is higher than the Eigenvalue 1; hence, gradually landing to .070 as at the last value of the components in the Total Variance Explained (table 12). These findings indicate that the chosen component was the one with

the highest score, hence used to name the subject matter; viz, a sense of belonging among orphan students.

Orphan Students

The following was analysis of the respondents given by the orphan students based on the pastoral programs they received from the MCK.

Table 13
Pastoral Programmes in Meeting Materials and Spiritual Needs

	Freq.	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Valid Be prompt in provision	36	30.0	30.0	30.0
Valid Act Religiously	30	25.0	25.0	55.0
Valid Be there when need be	30	25.0	25.0	80.0
Valid Nothing	24	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The orphan students’ responses to the question on what the church can do to address all their material and spiritual needs, are shown in Table 13 above. 30% of the respondents identified timely in provision of material and spiritual needs, while 20% did not know. The

findings indicate the need for prompt provisions of needs. In order for students to be competent, they must feel secure, comfortable, and happy; hence, fostering an atmosphere conducive for development of identity (O'Connor 2018).

Table 14
Experiences in School and Home Environment as an Orphan

	Freq.	Percent(%)	Valid Percent(%)	Cumulative Percent(%)
Lack of basic needs	42	35.0	35.0	35.0
People misunderstanding me	30	25.0	25.0	60.0
Valid Traumatized/loneliness	24	20.0	20.0	80.0
Lack of belonging	24	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 14 above shows that 35% of orphan students experience lack of basic needs, while 20% undergo trauma and lack of belonging. Majority of respondents viewed lack of basic needs as their major cause of hopelessness, and lack of belonging. Archard (2018) argues that living through refinement is concomitant with advanced trauma and feelings of inferiority.

4.0 Conclusion

This research confirms that the main objective of MCK pastoral ministry was spiritual sustenance and counseling. However, the frequency of the counseling sessions was well below the suggested sessions; thereby, calling into doubt the efficacy of the same. Further, the study concluded that the student dropout rate has increased as a result of failure by

designated counselors to address core concerns. The loss of parents has resulted in lack of parental guidance. The findings of the study indicated that absence of parental guidance has resulted in orphans engaging in dangerous.

5.0 Recommendation

This study recommends regular counseling for sponsored orphans so that basic concerns presented by orphan students can be addressed. The study also suggests that the church's focus shift from church-centeredness to orphans-centeredness. As such, the church should redirect its energy to orphan material and spiritual welfare, as opposed to current focus on church buildings and salary payments for the clergy.

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