





# Uncovering Institutions for Youth Mentoring: A Case Study of Some Classical Pentecostal Churches in the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, Ghana

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## ABSTRACT

This study uncovers the institutions for youth mentoring among some Classical Pentecostal Churches (CPCs) in the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, including The Apostolic Church – Ghana (ACG), Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI), Assemblies of God, Ghana (A/G), and The Church of Pentecost (CoP). Using a phenomenological research design, a pragmatist philosophy, and purposive sampling, fourteen participants from each Church were interviewed to gain insights into the institutions. The study findings revealed that all the Classical Pentecostal Churches have Youth Departments, indicating their interest in developing young people. Nevertheless, most of them who do not recognize it as a suitable mentoring institution have established either a Youth Church or an Educational/Developmental Committee as a complement. Since the study revealed that not all mentoring institutions have a proper structure for mentoring young people, the following process is recommended to structure a youth mentoring program. They include defining a mentoring plan, selecting and connecting the right participants, providing adequate resources, enabling learning, training, and development, and evaluating the program's success. It is worth mentioning that by uncovering these institutions of mentoring, there will be an evolution in scholarship from a simple psychological study of friendship to a complex sociological and educational field, where structures, policies, and cultural norms are uncovered.

**Keywords:** Mentoring institution, Classical Pentecostal Churches, Youth Church, Educational or Developmental Committee, Youth Department.

## INTRODUCTION

Mentoring institutions such as the family, school, and church serve as platforms for young people to connect, learn about themselves, develop their abilities, and gain relevant knowledge from experienced mentors.<sup>1</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup> A.P. Robinson-Birchett, "Bitter to Better: Engaging American Baptist African-American Women Clergy to Mentor African-American Women on the Path to Ordination," (Drew University, 2013), 16.

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the institution, the two relationships that usually exist are single and multiple. The single relationship involves a mentor working with a mentee, while the multiple relationship involves a mentor working with two or more mentees, or several mentors working with a mentee.<sup>2</sup> Any of these mentor-mentee relationships can also be same-gender, cross-gender, or cross-cultural. Regardless of the type of relationship adopted, the ability of mentors and mentees to set goals, share experiences, become open-minded, and collaborate efforts produces the intended results.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, within the mentoring institution, mentors and mentees (players) play various functions and traverse different stages.

Although youth mentoring is mostly analyzed individually or through one-on-one relationships, uncovering the institutions within some Classical Pentecostal Churches in the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, as this study seeks to achieve, shifts the narrative to analyzing systems, evaluating professionalism, and assessing organic connections, among others. Therefore, a phenomenological research design, a pragmatist philosophy, and a purposive sampling technique are employed to interview fourteen participants from each Church to gain insights into the institutions. In subsequent sections, the study is organized into the following themes: Literature Review, which include functions of players (mentors and mentees) and stages participants traverse within the mentoring institution; Methodology, including research design, study sample and study area, data collection instrument and procedures, and data analysis method; Presentation of Findings and Discussion, which also include demographic characteristics of participants, existence of youth mentoring institution, and nonexistence of youth mentoring institution; recommendations and conclusion.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Functions of Players: Mentors

The success of every mentoring institution revolves around two key players: mentors and mentees. In describing the main difference between the players, Chin et. al. consider mentors, people with several years of experience who become beneficial to mentees just starting in their education, profession, career, or field.<sup>4</sup> Mentors and mentees have a wide range of functions. Some functions of mentors are role modelling, guiding, assisting and counselling, protecting and coaching, building and managing the mentoring relationship, sponsoring and boosting exposure and visibility, advising, encouraging, motivating and inspiring, and teaching and explaining.<sup>5</sup>

In explaining each function, mentors role-model appropriate behaviours, values, and attitudes that can be emulated by mentees, significantly impacting their personal, educational, and professional development. For instance, they must demonstrate a strong sense of morals and integrity, which sets an example for mentees.<sup>6</sup> If mentors demonstrate appropriate behaviours, values, or attitudes, mentees may learn to adjust to suit their personalities and build personal confidence.<sup>7</sup> As the mentor-mentee relationship develops over time, it is the mentor's role to model for mentees, share their burdens, and counsel them. Mentors assist mentees in understanding and exploring their conflicts and emotional responses and help them find solutions.<sup>8</sup> Ambrosetti and Dekkers add that mentors assist their mentees to find the positive in every

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<sup>2</sup> S.A. Omolawal, "Institutionalization of Mentorship in the University of Ibadan," in *Building the Next Generation of Mentors in Africa: Principles, Practices & Impacts*, ed. O.A. Odunola and O.E. Olayide (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 2021), 27.

<sup>3</sup> L.L. Bierema, *Women's Career Development across the Lifespan: Insights and Strategies for Women Organizations, and Adult Educators*, ed. L.L. Bierema (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 28.

<sup>4</sup> Ann Rolfe, "The Mentor's Role," *Korean Journal of Medical Education* 28, no. 3 (September 1, 2016): 315–16, <https://doi.org/10.3946/kjme.2016.37>.

<sup>5</sup> Rolfe, "The Mentor's Role."

<sup>6</sup> L. Phillips-Jones, *Skills for Successful Mentoring: Competencies of Outstanding Mentors and Mentees* (GA: Coalition of Counseling Centers, 2001), 5.

<sup>7</sup> K.K. Gallacher, "Supervision, Mentoring, and Coaching: Methods for Supporting Personnel Development," in *Reforming Personnel Preparation in Early Intervention: Issues, Models, and Practical Strategies*, ed. P.J. Winton, J.A. McCollum, and C. Catlett (Baltimore: Brookes, 1997), 191.

<sup>8</sup> Gallacher, "Supervision, Mentoring, and Coaching: Methods for Supporting Personnel Development," 192.

circumstance and learn from negative situations.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, mentors alert mentees to any inappropriate behaviour or attitude.

The mentors' role of assisting is helping mentees to avoid activities that may hinder their personal, educational, or professional development. According to Malen and Brown, it is up to the mentors to defend their mentees against false or misleading statements from others.<sup>10</sup> Mentors also protect by helping mentees avoid unnecessary adjustments that have dire consequences. Other functions of mentors under coaching may include imparting technical or vocational knowledge, assisting in enhancing skills, clarifying learning and performance goals, offering advice on achieving objectives, and encouraging efficient on-the-job performance.<sup>11</sup>

Mentors' role of building and managing the mentoring relationship is by making time for mentees, remaining readily available to them, showing a friendly attitude, and communicating in a clear and common language.<sup>12</sup> Mentors readily accept this role by building relationships and setting development goals for mentees to enhance the relationship. Concerning mentors' role of sponsoring and boosting exposure and visibility, they open doors and speak up for mentees to promote their educational or career development and enhance their visibility.<sup>13</sup> In this role, mentors create and pursue new possibilities for their mentees and connect them with others. The role of mentors can be summarized as providing chances for mentees to exhibit their skills and unique abilities, including speaking on their behalf to higher-ranking authorities.

Under the function of advising, encouraging, motivating, and inspiring, mentors instruct mentees to identify and achieve professional objectives, weigh available alternatives, and gain techniques for effective educational or career development.<sup>14</sup> They bring together multiple mentees who may support one another, and provide acceptance, validation, affirmation, and camaraderie.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, mentors serve as motivators and inspirers who encourage, endorse, support, and instill hope and confidence in mentees to promote their personal, educational, and professional development amid challenges.<sup>16</sup> Another role of mentors is to teach their mentees. In fulfilling this role, mentors impart knowledge, share personal experiences, and suggest homework projects to mentees.<sup>17</sup> In the role of explaining, mentors define goals and objectives, provide resources, or provide information on policies and procedures to mentees.<sup>18</sup> To become more effective in these functions, mentors must adjust interactions with mentees based on context and individual needs, be clear when discussing difficult issues with them, use appropriate body language and manners, and create safe physical and emotional environments.<sup>19</sup>

### Functions of Players: Mentees

Some functions of mentees include active participation, dedication, preparing for meetings, and sharing progress. Briefly explaining each of them, mentees function of active participation involves enthusiastically participating in the mentoring process and/or program by taking actions, including paying close attention to the instructions and advice of mentors, acting on the advice of mentors, becoming receptive to criticism and

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<sup>9</sup> Angelina Ambrosetti and John Dekkers, "The Interconnectedness of the Roles of Mentors and Mentees in Pre-Service Teacher Education Mentoring Relationships," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 35, no. 6 (January 1, 2010), 4. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2010v35n6.3>.

<sup>10</sup> Betty Malen and Tara M. Brown, "What Matters to Mentees: Centering Their Voices," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 28, no. 4 (August 7, 2020): 480–97, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2020.1793086>.

<sup>11</sup> Gallacher, "Supervision, Mentoring, and Coaching: Methods for Supporting Personnel Development," 193.

<sup>12</sup> McKenzie V. Roy, "Investigating the Impact of Mentorship in Leadership Development" (University of Southern Maine, 2024), 10.

<sup>13</sup> Omolawal, "Institutionalization of Mentorship in the University of Ibadan," 42.

<sup>14</sup> Phillips-Jones, *Skills for Successful Mentoring: Competencies of Outstanding Mentors and Mentees*, 42.

<sup>15</sup> Sorin Valcea et al., "Exploring the Developmental Potential of Leader-Follower Interactions: A Constructive-Developmental Approach," *The Leadership Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (August 2011): 604–15, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.05.003>.

<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey S. Russell and John Nelson, "Completing the Circle of Professional Development through Leadership and Mentoring," *Leadership and Management in Engineering* 9, no. 1 (January 2009): 40, [https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)1532-6748\(2009\)9:1\(40\)](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2009)9:1(40)).

<sup>17</sup> B. Warren and N. Burt, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 25.

<sup>18</sup> A. Bryman, *Leadership in Organizations* (London: Routledge, 1986), 15.

<sup>19</sup> Saranya Chandrasekaran, Raju Dhuli, and Rajakumar Guduru, "The Role of a Mentor in Students' Personal Growth, Academic Success, and Professional Development" 22 (January 13, 2023): 35–46.

asking purposeful or pertinent questions, becoming mindful of mentors' limited time, arriving for meetings and returning calls on time, and showing gratitude to their mentors.<sup>20</sup> In the function of dedication, regardless of the length of the mentoring relationship and/or program, mentees are always committed to it. They establish and agree on objectives for the relationship and/or program with their mentors. Again, with or without the help of their mentors, mentees take responsibility for planning their personal, educational, or professional development.

Regarding the function of preparation for meetings and sharing progress, mentees adequately prepare for all mentoring meetings or sessions. For instance, mentees can prepare, complete, and submit an objective form to mentors before the start of every meeting or session. They must also be regular and punctual at appointments, prepared to discuss their development, and follow through with established action plans for meetings or sessions.<sup>21</sup> Other functions of mentees may include setting individual goals, seeking advice from mentors, being forthright and honest, being proactive, and developing a plan.<sup>22</sup>

### Stages to Traverse within the Mentoring Institution

There are three main stages through which mentors and mentees (participants) traverse within the mentoring institution. They include introductory, nurturing, and separation stages.<sup>23</sup> The introductory stage is where participants first meet one another. Encounters at this stage are often brief, focusing more on pleasantries and exchanging contact information, including agreeing on a set time and respecting each other's opinions.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, mentors during this stage seek to identify the goals and skill gaps of the mentee(s), discuss and agree on where to meet, how often to meet, and how the meetings will be structured.<sup>25</sup> To ensure a successful mentoring process, mentors and mentees use materials such as handbooks, white papers, and research papers, among others, to enhance their knowledge and identify appropriate approaches for training mentees.<sup>26</sup> The mentoring handbook, according to Ragins and Kram, clarifies the mentoring process, outlines programs and relationships that must be established to optimize learning, and specifies guidelines for participants, including the functions of mentors and mentees.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, some questions mentors may ask mentees during this stage include "What are your academic or professional needs?" "How do you get along with your spiritual leader, boss, senior coworkers, or peers?" Participants at this stage seek to define their expectations by setting goals or objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART), including specifying the duration of the process.<sup>28</sup>

Within the institution, participants also negotiate through the nurturing stage. Within this second stage, mentors are seen educating, equipping, guiding, and enabling mentees through established goals and parameters. Stanley and Clinton add that they respect the time and appreciate the commitment of the mentees, including protecting privacy, ensuring confidentiality, providing feedback and evaluating the mentoring relationship or process according to the goals.<sup>29</sup> Mentors also help mentees improve their skills for current roles and assist them in acquiring new skills for current and new roles, with mentees devoting enough time

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<sup>20</sup> Phillips-Jones, *Skills for Successful Mentoring: Competencies of Outstanding Mentors and Mentees*, 10.

<sup>21</sup> Phillips-Jones, *Skills for Successful Mentoring: Competencies of Outstanding Mentors and Mentees*, 12.

<sup>22</sup> Cambridge University, "Information for Mentees," accessed on October 05, 2024, <https://help.uis.cam.ac.uk/system/files/documents/information-for-mentees.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> Kathy E Kram, "Phases of the Mentor Relationship," *Academy of Management Journal* 26, no. 4 (1983): 608–25; Kathy E Kram and Lynn A Isabella, "Mentoring Alternatives: The Role of Peer Relationships in Career Development," *Academy of Management Journal* 28, no. 1 (1985): 110–32.

<sup>24</sup> Elena-Lucia Mara and Lucia-Larissa Morar, "Mentor and Mentored Person. Relationships and Perspectives," *International Conference Knowledge-Based Organization* 30, no. 2 (June 1, 2024): 142–48, <https://doi.org/10.2478/kbo-2024-0066>.

<sup>25</sup> David Clutterbuck, "Establishing and Maintaining Mentoring Relationships: An Overview of Mentor and Mentee Competencies," *SA Journal of Human Resource Management* 3, no. 3 (2005): 3; Warren and Burt, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, 25; Clutterbuck, "Establishing and Maintaining Mentoring Relationships: An Overview of Mentor and Mentee Competencies," 3.

<sup>26</sup> David DuBois and Michael Karcher, *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320 United States : SAGE Publications, Inc., 2014), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412996907>.

<sup>27</sup> Belle Rose Ragins and Kathy E Kram, *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice* (Sage, 2007).

<sup>28</sup> George T Doran, "There's a SMART Way to Write Managements's Goals and Objectives.," *Management Review* 70, no. 11 (1981): 35-26.

<sup>29</sup> Paul D Stanley and J Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (NavPress, 2024), 121.

and commitment to the relationship or process.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, mentees during this stage equip themselves by utilizing their mentors as a resource and guide to learn and develop, especially in the formal mentoring relationship.<sup>31</sup> Mentees perform duties including seeking experiences and opportunities to improve learning, communicating regularly and respectfully with mentors, not inundating mentors with emails or phone calls, and respecting time boundaries.<sup>32</sup>

A regular, supple, respectful, and confidential communication between mentors and mentees, which can be verbal, non-verbal, written, or visual, occurs within the nurturing stage, including receptivity, adaptability, and flexibility.<sup>33</sup> However, there is always a joint responsibility between mentors and mentees at this stage, including sharing information, ideas, and experiences, and evaluating the process.<sup>34</sup> To achieve this, Clear makes the following proposes: adopting the SMART objectives they set at the introductory stage, finding solutions to confronting problems, and striking a balance between their personal, educational, professional, or career goals through a positive attitude including embracing change, resilience, optimism, and accepting constructive criticism which has cascading effects of improving success, increasing creativity and innovation, and reducing stress, among others.<sup>35</sup> During this stage, mentees and mentors may also be seen as facilitating learning opportunities, becoming more available for training, building trust through engagement, and recognizing and appreciating efforts, among others.<sup>36</sup> A possible experience is that mentors' contributions may be rewarded while mentees' progress may also be rewarded before the next stage.<sup>37</sup>

The last stage participants encounter within the institution is called separation. This stage, which usually occurs between six months and twenty-four months or even more from the introductory stage, may occur in two forms. That is, successful and abrupt separations.<sup>38</sup> Successful separation, which is bringing the mentoring relationship or process to a formal end, occurs after participants ask questions. Some of the questions are: "Is our performance good enough for now?" "Is it necessary to end the process and separate?" If so, "when?" "What positive aspects of the process would we like to keep in mind?" or "What appreciation must we render?"<sup>39</sup> The answers to some of these questions can be the basis for participants to end the process formally.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, abrupt separation, which is also mostly sudden and considered an informal end of the mentoring relationship or process, may occur without mutual agreement or warning signs from participants. Some causes of this may include participants' failure to respect themselves, adapt to change, resolve conflicts, partner together, and receive financial support.<sup>41</sup> Other specific causes may also include the following: mentees not able to submit and be honest to mentors despite guidance, mentees not satisfied due to non-endorsement from mentors, mentors not able to communicate well, mentors refusing to respond to mentees, and mentors ignoring the requests of mentees for equal treatment, including reward-related issues

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<sup>30</sup> J. Rubasree and R. Rangarajan, "Up-Skilling and Re-Skilling: A Strategic Response to Changing Skill Demands," *European Economic Letters (EEL)* 14, no. 1 (February 18, 2024): 765–74, <https://doi.org/10.52783/eel.v14i1.1097>.

<sup>31</sup> Roland Barth, "Improving Relationships Within the Schoolhouse," *Educational Leadership* 63 (March 1, 2006), 8.

<sup>32</sup> Jeffrey E Barnett, "Mentoring, Boundaries, and Multiple Relationships: Opportunities and Challenges," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 16, no. 1 (2008): 5.

<sup>33</sup> Robyn Ewing et al., "Building Community in Academic Settings: The Importance of Flexibility in a Structured Mentoring Program," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 16, no. 3 (August 19, 2008): 294–310, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611260802231690>.

<sup>34</sup> Jennerdene L. Rubbi Nunan, Aysha B. Ebrahim, and Marius W. Stander, "Mentoring in the Workplace: Exploring the Experiences of Mentor–Mentee Relations," *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology* 49 (August 1, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v49i0.2067>.

<sup>35</sup> James Clear, "How Positive Thinking Builds Your Skills, Boosts Your Health, and Improves Your Work," 2020, <https://jamesclear.com/positive-thinking>;

<sup>36</sup> Sonia D. C. Pinho, Melinda Coetzee, and Dries Schreuder, "Formal Mentoring: Mentee And Mentor Expectations And Perceived Challenges," *SA Journal of Human Resource Management* 4, no. 1 (November 5, 2005), 22. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v3i3.72>.

<sup>37</sup> Pinho, Coetzee, and Schreuder, "Formal Mentoring: Mentee And Mentor Expectations And Perceived Challenges," 22.

<sup>38</sup> Renée Spencer and Antoinette Basualdo-Delmonico, "Termination and Closure of Mentoring Relationships," in *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320 United States : SAGE Publications, Inc., 2014), 469–80, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412996907.n32>.

<sup>39</sup> Judith MacCallum et al., "Taking Care of Youth Mentoring Relationships: Red Flags, Repair, and Respectful Resolution," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 25, no. 3 (May 27, 2017): 11–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2017.1364799>; Laura Gail Lunsford, *A Handbook for Managing Mentoring Programs* (Routledge, 2016), 1. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315564760>.

<sup>40</sup> Michael J. Karcher et al., "Mentoring Programs: A Framework to Inform Program Development, Research, and Evaluation," *Journal of Community Psychology* 34, no. 6 (November 5, 2006): 710, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20125>.

<sup>41</sup> MacCallum et al., "Taking Care of Youth Mentoring Relationships: Red Flags, Repair, and Respectful Resolution," 2.

and non-acquisition of promotion.<sup>42</sup> Some possible ways to prevent abrupt separation from occurring during this stage may include mentors and mentees utilizing proficient communication and crisis management techniques, such as discussing and determining the right time to terminate the relationship, devising strategies for the mentor and mentee's dynamic, assuming intellectual ownership of research ideas and projects, and assessing abilities, among others. The following section presents the study's methodology.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted a phenomenological research design. It was selected to thoroughly investigate and explain the institutions of youth mentoring among Classical Pentecostal Churches (CPCs) through participants' experiences. Among the five major philosophies in the Sciences, including positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism, the study adopted pragmatism.<sup>43</sup> This philosophy, which underpins the study, helped explain the phenomenon emerging from the study through different ideas and considered the research outcome as provisionally accurate due to the dynamism and uncertainties of the geographical area, Kumasi.

### **Study Sample and Study Area**

Twenty-four (24) participants comprising church leaders, youth leaders, and retirees representing adults and/or mentors over twenty-four (24) years were selected as the sampling frame due to their field and life experiences. Although students, apprentices, and employed or unemployed young people representing youth and/or mentees between the formative years of fifteen (15) and twenty-four (24) were also selected due to their inexperience or immaturity.<sup>44</sup>

To provide a better representation and more accurate results, one local assembly was selected from each of the four CPCs chosen. They include The Apostolic Church – Ghana (ACG), Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI), Assemblies of God, Ghana (A/G), and The Church of Pentecost (CoP). Therefore, interviews and a focus group discussion were conducted among four assemblies.

### **Data Collection Instrument and Procedures**

The main instruments used to collect data from respondents were semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Data gathering, which commenced on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and ended on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, was on Sundays and Wednesdays to accommodate participants' availability, encouraging open dialogue and participation.

The interview sessions were conducted on a one-on-one basis and at times convenient to each interviewee. A focus group discussion, which included participants from the selected churches, was conducted via Zoom Meeting. The English language was used during each interview session. Participants were briefed about the objectives of the study. The interview question guide was asked, and participants provided answers. In some cases, probing questions were used to elicit further explanations of the interviewees' responses.

Ethical considerations also included obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and allowing participants to withdraw at any time. Despite logistical challenges such as scheduling conflicts, proactive measures like flexible scheduling and clear communication were implemented.

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<sup>42</sup>MacCallum et al., "Taking Care of Youth Mentoring Relationships: Red Flags, Repair, and Respectful Resolution," 2.

<sup>43</sup> Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill, *Research Methods for Business Students*, 7th ed. (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2016), 124.

<sup>44</sup> United Nations, "Global Issues: Youth," 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/youth>; Jutta Kray and Ulman Lindenberger, "Adult Age Differences in Task Switching.," *Psychology and Aging* 15, no. 1 (2000): 126.

## **Data Analysis Method**

Data analysis, according to LeCompte and Schensul, is the method a researcher uses to distil data into a narrative and analyze it.<sup>45</sup> The information gathered from the interviews was examined using the theme content analysis methods outlined by Bernard and Miles et al., and manifest and interpretative processes were used to provide a detailed description.<sup>46</sup> During the manifest analysis, a descriptive account of the data was presented, focusing primarily on what respondents actually said, recorded, or observed without reading into or assuming anything about it. Descriptive analysis was carried out extensively during the interpretive stage, focusing on the meaning of the responses. The opinions of the participants on the information they provided were supported by quotes that were found and used. The results of the interviews with the interviewees are shown below.

## **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

Fourteen (14) of the twenty-four (24) participants available for an interview included three (3) church leaders, two (2) youth leaders, four (4) retirees, and five (5) participants in a focus group discussion. For anonymity and ethical reasons, the respondents were assigned pseudonyms, including Church Leaders Interview (CLINT 01 – CLINT 04), Youth Leaders Interview (YLINT 01 – CLINT 04), Retirees Interview (RINT 01 – RINT 04), and Focus Group Interview (FGI 01 – FGI 12).

Background results of these participants indicated that males and females constituted (58%) and (42%), respectively. Significantly, (38%) of these respondents have been in the church between 6-10 years, while (30%) and (26%) have also been in the church between 11-15 years and 0-5 years, respectively. Moreover, respondents who have been in the church for more than 16 years are (6%). Most of the respondents (56%) play different roles in the church, while the remaining (44%) do not play any role. Of the respondents who play various roles, (48%) have served between 5-10 years, while (39%) and (13%) have also served for over 10 years and between 0-5 years, respectively. Most of the respondents, on a scale of 10, rated youth mentoring in their churches between the ranges of 1-6 and 7-9, representing (54%) and (41%), respectively. The remaining (5%) did not rate at all. Interestingly, none of the respondents rated their church's youth mentoring on a scale of 10. Regarding educational level, the study found that most of the respondents had a master's degree or a first degree, including certificates.

### **Existence of Youth Mentoring Institutions**

A minority of respondents indicated that there was an institution for youth mentoring in their church. They mentioned one of these institutions – Youth Church, Educational or Developmental Committee, and Youth Department.

#### **Youth Church**

Church leaders who mentioned the Youth Church as an institution for youth mentoring had this to say.

According to CLINT 02:

*The church has an institution for mentoring the youth called the Youth Church. This institution involves teachers or pastors (mentors) who share life experiences, model their lives, and develop the skills and talents of young people (mentees) between the ages of 14 and 25.*

One youth leader who also cited the Youth Church as an institution for youth mentoring commented as follows.

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<sup>45</sup> M.D. LeCompte and J.J. Schensul, *Ethnographer's Toolkit*. Walnut Creek (CA: Sage, 1999), 2.

<sup>46</sup> H.R. Bernard, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2000), 5.

YLINT 01 mentioned that:

*The Youth Church, which is mostly organized in English and designed to rely on more experienced people (mentors) to develop young people (mentees) at various educational levels, such as Junior and Senior High Schools and tertiary institutions, exists as the church's institution for youth mentoring.*

A retiree within one of these churches has this to say.

RINT 02 said:

*To ensure the spiritual and moral growth of the youth, the church has the Youth Church. "The Youth Church is the church's youth mentoring institution."*

Some of the students, apprentices, and employed or unemployed youth who were interviewed during the focus group discussions also cited the Youth Church. The participants had this to say.

FGI 04:

*The church has a youth mentoring institution, which has become a vehicle for older men and women (mentors) to train, educate, and motivate the young ones (mentees). It is known as the Youth Church [FGI 07, 2024].*

Because respondents understood the concept of mentoring differently, some of them recognized the Youth Church as a mentoring institution. For instance, a student and another participant stated that the Youth Church has become a vehicle for older men and women (mentors) to train, educate, and motivate the young ones (mentees). However, the current form of the Youth Church suggests otherwise. A lead pastor confirms this observation in one of the interviews. He states that *"the Youth Church is designed primarily to promote spiritual and moral growth."* According to Robinson-Birchett, a youth mentoring institution must therefore not be described as promoting spiritual or moral growth only, but also as an entity creating space for association, self-discovery, skills development, and valuable knowledge acquisition of young people through experienced people.<sup>47</sup>

The Youth Church can reflect a mentoring institution and become effective for developing young people if mentoring handbooks or other relevant resources are used. For instance, handbooks by David Dubois & Michael Karcher, Tine Reimers, and Laura Gail Lunsford will serve as a guide for youth teachers or leaders to identify what to do and how to do it.<sup>48</sup> It can also ensure the continuity of the practice and process irrespective of the leader available.

### **Educational or Developmental Committee**

Better still, some minority respondents cited the Developmental or Educational Committee as the youth mentoring institution. The responses of the church leaders are postulated as follows.

CLINT 03 mentioned that:

*The Educational Committee, which is established for committee members (mentors) to share valuable knowledge with young people (mentees) and develop their skills, is the church's institution for mentoring the youth.*

YLINT 03 said:

*The church, in partnership with more experienced or mature individuals (mentors), has established a mentoring institution known as the Developmental Committee to enhance the skills and knowledge*

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<sup>47</sup> Robinson-Birchett, "Bitter to Better: Engaging American Baptist African-American Women Clergy to Mentor African-American Women on the Path to Ordination," 16.

<sup>48</sup> DuBois and Karcher, *Handb. Youth Mentor*; T. Reimers, *Mentoring Best Practices: A Handbook* (Albany, NY: University at Albany State University of New York, 2014); Lunsford, *A Handbook for Managing Mentoring Programs*.

*of young individuals (mentees). It suffices to say that the Developmental Committee is the church's youth mentoring institution.*

A retiree also shared similar views.

RINT 03:

*The church's institution to gather young people (mentees) for development by committee members (mentors) is the Educational Committee.*

One participant interviewed during a focus group discussion also made the following comment.

According to FGI 07:

*In the church, there is an institution for youth mentoring. "The Educational Committee, which is that institution, is responsible for coaching the youth."*

Some participants' descriptions of the Educational or Developmental Committee illustrate it as a mentoring institution. For instance, a lead pastor mentions that the Educational Committee is "...purposely established for committee members (mentors) to share valuable knowledge with young ones (mentees) and develop their skills..." A church leader also states that "the church, in collaboration with the more experienced or mature individuals (mentors), has set up a mentoring institution known as the Developmental Committee to enhance the skills and knowledge of the upcoming ones (mentees)."

The Educational or Developmental Committee can, therefore, be described as a mentoring institution. This happens because a mentoring institution involves experienced people assisting future individuals to set goals and abilities over a set period, sometimes using one-on-one or collaborative types.

### **Youth Department**

Yet again, some minority respondents mentioned the Youth Department as the institution for youth mentoring. The views of some church leaders are shared as follows.

CLINT 04 mentioned that:

*The church has, over the years, relied on the Youth Department, which has a handbook to develop the spiritual and moral aspects of young people. "And so yes, the Youth Department is our institution for mentoring the youth."*

A youth leader who also mentioned the Youth Department had this to say.

YLINT 03 posited:

*Several departments exist in the church. "But the Youth Department, which sometimes engages the services of some entrepreneurs or resource personnel to train and educate the youth on a specific vocation or skill, is our youth mentoring institution."*

In response, a retiree also stated the following.

RINT 04 commented that:

*Apart from the Youth Department, the church does not have any other institution to mentor the youth. "The Youth Department is therefore cited as the institution for mentoring the young ones; what do you think?"*

The interviews during the focus group discussions also elicited responses from the participants.

FGI 10 stated that:

*Since mentoring is primarily about experienced individuals (mentors) sharing life experiences with young people (mentees) and allowing mentees to ask mentors questions, the Youth Department is illustrated as the church's youth mentoring institution.*

FGI 05 also added:

*Suppose there is any institution in the church that can be considered a formal or informal department that helps to enhance the skills or competencies of young people. In that case, it is undoubtedly the Youth Department. The Youth Department is, therefore, the church's institution for mentoring young people.*

In mentioning the Youth Department as an institution for youth mentoring, a church leader said that the church has, over the years, relied upon it for the spiritual and moral development of young people. Even though the leader also mentioned that a manual has been designed, the manual, in its current form, is centered more on the spiritual and moral formation of young people. In essence, it is not drafted to facilitate young people's self-discovery, skills development, knowledge acquisition, competence, patriotism, or hard work, as intended for youth mentoring. This reveals the need to modify the department's current handbook. Ragins and Kram show how a mentoring handbook must be designed: clarify the mentoring type for the process, indicate programs and relationships to be established to optimize learning, and specify guidelines for participants, such as the functions of mentors and mentees.<sup>49</sup>

### **Nonexistence of Youth Mentoring Institution**

However, in responding to the institution for youth mentoring, most respondents indicated that their churches do not have it. Some church leaders had this to say.

CLINT 03 commented that:

*The church does not have an institution for mentoring its youth. "The Youth Department, which may have been the right institution, is rather focused more on developing the spiritual and moral lives of the young ones."*

According to CLINT 02:

*"Lately, church leaders discussed the issue of mentoring. It was concluded that teachings and preaching in our services and other meetings are primarily tailored toward spiritual and moral growth. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an institution to improve the skills and knowledge of the youth, while promoting their competence, professionalism, and patriotism. The church, therefore, does not have the youth mentoring institution your work seeks to examine its status."*

CLINT 04 answered that:

*The church has, over the years, heavily relied on the Youth Department to develop its youth. However, the current form of the Department does not make it a mentoring institution. It would be beneficial for the church to redesign the Youth Department or, better still, establish a new institution to enhance the skills and knowledge of the youth for educational and career development. "The answer is no, we (the church) do not have a youth mentoring institution at the moment."*

Some youth leaders shared their thoughts.

YLINT 01 mentioned that:

*It would be appropriate for the church to establish an institution that will assist in enhancing the competence, patriotism, or professionalism of the youth. "As it is now, there is no such institution."*

YLINT 03 asserted that:

*We (the church) do not have an institution to mentor the youth now.*

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<sup>49</sup> B. R. Ragins, "Relational Mentoring: A Positive Approach to Mentoring at Work," in *The Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*, ed. K. Cameron and G. Spreitzer (New York: Oxford University, 2012), 519–36.

YLINT 04 also said:

*Sometimes, we (youth leadership) invite other experienced individuals within and outside the church, such as professionals, to offer educational or career training. "This does not suggest that the church has a deliberate institution for mentoring the youth; there is no such institution."*

Some of the retirees also stated the following.

RINT 01 stated that:

*Although some of us voluntarily offer career coaching and share life experiences with the young ones, the church (denomination) does not have an institution for youth mentoring.*

RINT 03 also said:

*It will be appropriate for the church to have an institution that includes some of us (retirees) to shape and sharpen the skills of the younger generation, including sharing insightful knowledge. "I guess this is what your work seeks to promote... Unfortunately, our church (denomination) does not have that institution which utilizes the processes, practices, and nature of mentoring to develop the upcoming ones."*

RINT 04 commented that:

*Although the church has a department for developing the spiritual and moral lives of its youth, it lacks a mentoring entity whose primary goal is to enhance competence and stimulate innovation and creativity among young people.*

The interviews during the focus group discussions provided opportunities for students, apprentices, and employed or unemployed youth to provide their responses. Some of them said the following.

Comments FGI 07 are summarized as follows:

*Some of us (budding employees) are privileged to work in institutions that have a mentoring unit where senior and experienced colleagues are assigned to train, supervise, or monitor young people to promote individual, organizational, and national development. Unfortunately, our churches (denominations) do not have such a unit or institution [FGI 02 & FGI 03, 2024].*

FGI 05 also commented that:

*In our higher learning schools, we have units and mentors who are interested in our educational development. On the other hand, our church leaders are regarded as interested in spiritual or moral growth; hence, there is no youth mentoring institution within the church [FGI 07 & FGI 12, 2024].*

The participants' position that the current design of the Youth Church and Youth Department, where church or youth leaders focus more on young people's spiritual and moral development through preaching, sharing life experiences, or deputizing duties for practical experience, does not characterize them as mentoring institutions may be correct. This is because a mentoring institution mostly involves experienced people developing young people's skill sets, talents, or gifts through assisting the transition from one stage of life, education, or career to another.

It is, again, accurate when a church leader mentioned that it is appropriate for the church to have a youth mentoring institution to promote competence, professionalism, and patriotism among young people. To achieve this, Hoehl says organizers of the institution must deliberately and internally mobilize senior, experienced, or knowledgeable members, specifically within the church (representing mentors), to develop young people (representing mentees), because mentoring involves mentors training mentees. Rolfe mentions some roles or functions of mentors as guiding, motivating, role modeling, sponsoring mentees, and many

more.<sup>50</sup> Active involvement in the mentoring process, dedication, preparation for meetings, and sharing of progress are also some functions of mentees.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As the study reveals that the Youth Department, which is in all the chosen Classical Pentecostal Churches, and the Youth Church and Educational or Developmental Committee, also in some selected ones, do not have a proper structure for mentoring young people, the following process to structure a youth mentoring program is recommended. First, defining a mentoring plan. Therefore, mentors identify the goals or objectives of the program, such as aiming to accelerate mentees' personal, educational, or professional development; identify the benefits of the program to participants; establish rules and guidelines for the program; establish the responsibilities of participants; and determine the timeline for the program. The right participants must be selected and connected. Some factors to consider when matching mentors and mentees include organizers considering the individual expertise and experience of participants, connecting them based on goals and objectives, verifying the availability and commitment of participants, identifying the location and time zone, and considering multiplicity and inclusion. Third, providing adequate resources. That is, organizers provide materials such as handbooks, white papers, best practice publications, research papers, case studies, and tool kits, which will offer thorough explanations of ideas and a variety of approaches for seasoned individuals (mentors) to enhance less experienced ones' (mentees') skills and knowledge for their educational or career progress while promoting a mentoring culture as well. Fourth, enabling learning, training, and development. Therefore, mentors regularly meet mentees to offer information, ideas, and experiences so that the latter can construct novel views on issues, quickly reach their educational or career goals, become more problem-solving-oriented, and become members of a community that supports development. Lastly, evaluating the program's success. That is to say that through evaluation and using the preset list of goals and objectives, organizers determine the effectiveness of the program and identify areas requiring improvement.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings from the study showed that a minority of participants recognized the existence of youth mentoring institutions among the four main streamlined Classical Pentecostal Churches in Kumasi. Although most of the participants state otherwise, the Youth Church, Educational or Developmental Committee, and Youth Department were cited as youth mentoring institutions. The study reveals that although all Churches have a Youth Department to represent their interest in developing young people, most participants do not recognize it as a suitable institution for youth mentoring; hence, the establishment of other institutions as a complement. The study further reveals that the current form of the Youth Department's handbook for youth development requires a review or redesign to serve as a guideline for establishing a mentoring program and relationships to optimize learning, providing invaluable practical tools to support mentors and mentees, including their functions, and clarifying the mentoring type to use.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Fourteen (14) of the twenty-four (24) participants availed themselves for interviews. However, the decline in this number did not damage the quality of the research. Another limitation is the exclusive use of churches within the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, which limits the generalization of the findings.

## **CONFLICTING INTERESTS**

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interest.

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<sup>50</sup> Rolfe, "The Mentor's Role," 315 – 316.

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