



Emotional Integrity: Implications for the Ghanaian Youth from a Pastoral Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This research, conducted from a pastoral perspective, explored the concept of emotional integrity and its implications for the Ghanaian youth. While the study of emotions has been extensively examined from psychological, philosophical, and biological perspectives, there is a need to explore the subject from a pastoral standpoint. Given the increasing prevalence of emotional challenges among young people in Ghana, and the religious nature of the country, it is essential to examine this topic within an African context. This study employed qualitative research methods within a theological framework and utilized both primary and secondary data sources to illustrate various aspects of emotional development within Ghanaian society. Primary data principally comprised “media materials data,” also referred to as “qualitative audio and visual materials.” Secondary data was obtained from published academic materials. The research emphasized the heightened emotional instabilities within the country. It also emphasized the significant role of the Church in providing guidance, support, and healing to address these challenges. The study highlighted the importance of examining emotional integrity within the Church's preaching and service, emphasizing the need to prioritize love over fear-based manipulation. By adopting a holistic approach that combines religious and relevant non-religious approaches, the Church can effectively address emotional issues, facilitate healing, and promote the overall well-being of the Ghanaian youth. This research sets the stage for a deeper exploration of emotional integrity and its implications for the Ghanaian youth within a pastoral view. It contributes to the understanding of emotional integrity from a pastoral perspective and provides insights into how the Church can play a vital role in empowering young individuals to navigate emotional challenges and foster their personal and spiritual growth.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper examines emotional integrity from a pastoral perspective and addresses some of the rising emotional challenges among Ghanaian youth. Emotional well-being is a critical aspect of the holistic development of individuals, particularly during the formative years of youth.¹ In Ghana, the Church plays a prominent role in society and the lives of many and holds the potential to significantly impact the emotional integrity of Ghanaian youth. This research, conducted from a pastoral perspective, aims to explore the implications of emotional integrity for the Ghanaian youth and the role of the Church in addressing some of their emotional challenges.

¹ Mark S. Aidoo, *Emotional Integrity: A Pastoral Approach* by Jacob Kwame Opata (Accra: PhosAfriq, 2021), xiv-xxiii. Foreward.

With approximately 70% of the Ghanaian population identifying as Christians, the Church possesses a unique platform to guide and support the youth through their emotional struggles.² Understanding the increasing prevalence of emotional challenges among young people in today's world, it becomes imperative for the Church to play a proactive role in fostering emotional well-being. Recognizing the rising prevalence of emotional challenges among young people, the study highlights the significant role of the Church in providing support, guidance, and healing. It emphasizes the significance of preparing youth for leadership roles and their potential for positive change. The focus is on helping the youth develop healthy emotional patterns and the ability to navigate challenges effectively.

The paper aims to provide valuable insights and support for the growth and development of the youth in managing their emotions. The first part of this paper examines the concept of emotions from a historical and theological perspective. Emotional integrity is also examined and its implications for the Ghanaian youth are provided. This research sets the stage for a deeper exploration of emotional integrity and its implications for the Ghanaian youth within a pastoral view. By examining the role of the Church in addressing emotional challenges and promoting emotional well-being, it seeks to contribute valuable insights that can inform and enhance pastoral care practices, ultimately benefiting the holistic development and thriving of the Ghanaian youth. Though there are slight variations in the meaning of the three words “emotion,” “feeling,” and “affection,” such variations are not applied in this work.³ The three words are used interchangeably in this study.

METHODOLOGY

This study applied qualitative research methods within a theological framework to explore perspectives, actions, and encounters that show emotional development within the Ghanaian society.⁴ The study employed both primary and secondary data. The primary data encompassed information and data sourced from textual materials, including field notes, transcripts, and documents, as well as visual materials like artifacts, photographs, video and audio recordings, and internet resources.⁵ Specifically, “media materials data,” which refers to innovative data sources available in diverse digital formats, including Internet sites, emails, instant/text messages, chat room conversations, tweets, blogs, vlogs, and other forms of media communication were employed.⁶ “Media materials data” is also referred to as “qualitative audio and visual materials.”⁷

These sources were accessed and used to collect electronic trails, traces, and artifacts that mirror the evolving digital culture.⁸ Hence, this research examined textual, auditory, or video content accessible on the internet that revolves around emotional issues. Furthermore, this study made use of secondary data obtained from published academic sources, encompassing books and articles.

THE CONCEPT OF EMOTIONS

The word “emotions” is used to describe a host of strong feelings such as love, anger, joy, hate or fear.⁹ Any or all of these feelings listed above can be classified as an emotion. A feeling is an awareness of a person’s body or a system of something in it or on it.¹⁰ Thus, whenever a “being” becomes conscious of love, anger, joy, pain, hate, or fear, and responds or reacts, it may be said that the being is exhibiting emotions. The response is a result of the interpretations associated with the feelings. The interpretations are done by the one experiencing the feelings. Emotions may therefore be said to be the totality of expressible feelings in a being.

Negative and positive emotions

² Ghana Statistical Services, *Ghana 2021 Population and Housing Census, General Report Volume 3C: Background and Characteristics* (Accra: GSS, 2021), 58.

³ Sam Williams, “Toward a Theology of Emotion,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 7.4 (2003): 59-61.

⁴ Catherine Dawson, *Introduction to Research Methods: A Practical Guide for Anyone Undertaking a Research Project*, 4th Edition (Oxford: How To Content, 2009), 23.

⁵ Johnny Saldana, *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research: Understanding Qualitative Research*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.

⁶ Saldana, *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research*, 57.

⁷ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed method Approaches*, 4th Ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2014), 190.

⁸ Saldana, *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research*, 57.

⁹ The American Psychological Association (APA) adapts this definition used by Merriam Webster and presents emotions as “Emotions are conscious mental reactions (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feelings usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body.” See “Emotion,” American Psychological Association, accessed July 4, 2020, <https://www.apa.org/topics/emotions>; “Emotions,” Merriam Webster, accessed February 13, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/emotions>.

¹⁰ “Feeling,” Merriam Webster, accessed February 13, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feeling>.

Emotions can be categorized as either negative or positive based on their impact on a person's well-being. Negative emotions disrupt the balance in one's personal and social relationships, causing disharmony and crises.¹¹ Examples of negative emotions include hatred, anger, and disgust, which create a hostile environment and hinder healthy relationships. On the other hand, positive emotions contribute to maintaining and nurturing personal and social bonds.¹² They uplift a person's personality and foster unity, fellowship, and growth within oneself, with God, others, and the environment. Positive emotions protect individuals from harm and promote the welfare of all. For instance, a positive form of hate may arise when one detests actions like theft, rape, or murder, leading them to do what is right. Positive emotions, therefore, play a vital role in enhancing relationships.

Sources of Emotions

Emotions have two main sources which are spiritual and physical. First, physical sources of emotions involve the role of hormones, which are natural or artificial substances that can trigger emotional responses in human biological systems. The human body is responsible for storing and producing emotions in the form of hormones. Hormones are natural substances that impact bodily growth and development.¹³ Hormones can also come from the environment, including plants and animals. Some plant products, like cannabis, can affect human emotions and mood.

Additionally, scientists have created various drugs, such as steroids, sedatives, and painkillers, that can alter or enhance human feelings. These drugs are artificial. They are produced using man-made chemicals instead of natural ingredients.¹⁴ Artificial drugs, including Tramadol, can be misused for pleasure rather than for their intended medical purposes. This has become a problem among the youth in Ghana, prompting the government to intervene.¹⁵

Secondly, spiritual sources of emotions are often overlooked but play a crucial role in emotional development. Throughout history, there has been a decline in recognizing the spiritual roots of emotions, particularly after the passing of the Apostolic fathers.¹⁶ Over time, the manifestations of the *spirituals* were questioned and dismissed as outdated beliefs and superstitions. Some teachers advocated the "cessation theory," suggesting that such spiritual manifestations had ceased to exist.¹⁷ They intimate that gifts of the spirit are no longer existing or relevant in the contemporary world.¹⁸ Some individuals suggested removing or disregarding parts of religious texts that they considered to be myths or superstitions to make the faith more understandable and relevant in today's scientific and modern world.¹⁹ However, some scholars have criticized and disapproved of those teachings, considering them to be inconsistent with established religious doctrines and beliefs.²⁰ The rejection of supernatural teachings has had a significant impact on human understanding of emotions. By dismissing the spiritual aspect, emotions are often seen as purely psychological and physical, leading to

¹¹ Jacob Kwame Opata, *Emotional Integrity: A Pastoral Approach* (Accra: PhosAfric, 2021), 51.

¹² Opata, *Emotional Integrity*, 51.

¹³ "Hormones," Merriam Webster, accessed February 13, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hormones>.

¹⁴ Drug Free World, "What is Synthetic drugs," accessed November 29, 2020, <https://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/synthetic.html>.

¹⁵ Jamila Akweley Okertchiri, "Ghana fights against tramadol abuse," modified on May 5, 2018, Accessed on February 12, 2020. <https://mobile.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/Ghana-s-fight-against-tramadol-abuse-649148>.

¹⁶ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first century* (Boston: Addison-Wesley publishing, 1995), 47.

¹⁷ Cephas Narh Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism. A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), 77.

¹⁸ Robert L. Reymond, *What About Continuing Revelations and Miracles in the Presbyterian Church Today?* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977), 32–34; Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *The Charismatic Gift of Prophecy: A Reformed Analysis* (Memphis, Tenn.: Whitefield Seminary Press, 1986), 31–33; John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 165–66; Richard B. Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), 109.

¹⁹ Rudolf Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth*, ed. Hans Werner Bartsch, tr. R. H. Fuller (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), Electronic Version.

²⁰ Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997); Allan H. Anderson, *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context* (Pretoria: South Africa, 1991); Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first century*. ; J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005); J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa* Regnum Studies in Mission and Trends in African Christianity (Oxford: Regnum, 2015); Opoku Onyinah, *Pentecostal Exorcism: Witchcraft and Demonology in Ghana* (Blandford Forum, Dorset: Deo Publishing, 2012); E. Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: CPCS, 2001).

incomplete approaches to addressing emotional issues.²¹ Sam Williams has pointed out that psychological and philosophical activities that disregard the knowledge of God may offer some insights and ask important questions.²² However, their conclusions are often shallow and fundamentally flawed because they ignore the Creator, who has a significant impact on man's understanding and experiences.²³

Furthermore, most contemporary, and enlightened cultures have done away with angels, demons and to a substantial extent, the evil one. In such cultures, Satan and the powers are excused.²⁴ Walter Wink, suggests that "the image of Satan symbolizes the inherent human tendency towards evil, which influences us without our conscious awareness. It is a pervasive negative force that affects us from an early age, shaping our beliefs about race, gender, and societal roles as if they were unquestionable truths."²⁵ Satan and the powers are here portrayed by Wink as various oppressive world systems and behaviours and not as actual figures capable of interacting with humanity. Such a concept though criticized by some scholars reduces emotions to the realm of the human body and soul.²⁶

Conversely, most countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia still maintain belief in the spirit world and its influence over the physical world.²⁷ This is because, in their understanding, the universe is not sealed, rigid, petrified, and unchangeable. It is dynamic, open, clear, imaginative and imbued with the life of the Spirit, in whose life there are independence, freedom and liberty.²⁸ There are active engagements of the supernatural in the affairs of the world. God still rules in the affairs of men (Dan. 4:25). Emotions are therefore not limited to the physical world; they also exist in the spiritual realm. Biblical examples show how emotions are present among souls without bodies and spiritual beings like angels.

The spiritual realm refers to the unseen supernatural world that can influence human emotions. It consists of both divine and diabolic influences. The divine realm is where God and angels exist. God, being defined by love, has emotions and can experience holy feelings.²⁹ In the divine realm, angels express emotions such as joy and gladness. This realm is the source of all good and positive emotions. All emotions come from the divine realm. The divine realm communicates to its own *the* divine emotion called love.³⁰ All the different emotions, including love, originate from the divine realm and were given to humanity through creation. The love experienced towards others, families, and spouses is sourced from God's eternal love. These emotions are pure and uncorrupted, supporting relationships, growth, and development. The divine realm is the ultimate source of all the love humanity needs on Earth.³¹ The opposite of this realm is the diabolic realm.

The diabolic realm, also known as the realm of darkness, is an evil realm filled with wicked and rebellious beings. It is the source of destructive and negative emotions (John 8:42-44). Evil emotions and influences originate from this realm (1 John 3:12-13). It is a realm that cannot create emotions but rather corrupts what God has created. Jesus revealed that some belong to this realm, as they carry out the desires of the devil (John 8:44). Examples like Cain, Ananias, Sapphira, and Judas show how individuals can be influenced by the devil to commit wicked acts (1 John 3:12-13, Acts 5:1-11, John 13:2, 26-27). The devil can inspire, motivate

²¹ Carroll E. Izard, "The Many Meanings/Aspects of Emotion: Definitions, Functions, Activation, and Regulation," *Emotion Review* Vol. 2, No. 4 (October 2010) 363–370.

²² Williams, "Toward a Theology of Emotion," 61.

²³ Williams, "Toward a Theology of Emotion," 61.

²⁴ Gregory Boyd, "Response to Walter Wink," in *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, eds. James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012), 80-81.

²⁵ Walter Wink, "The World Systems Model," *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, eds. James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012), 47-71.

²⁶ David Powlison, "Response to Walter Wink," *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, eds. James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012), 72-77; C. Peter Wagner and Rebecca Greenwood, "Response to Walter Wink," *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, eds. James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012), 84-87; Boyd, Response to Walter Wink *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 78-83.

²⁷ Kwasi A. Dickson, *Theology in Africa* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1984), 45-62; Emmanuel Asante, *Issues in African Traditional Religion, Humanities, Ethnicity and Development: Impact on African Christianity* (Accra: Sonlife Press, 2005), 1-12, 40-46; Emmanuel Asante, *Culture, Politics and Development: Ethical and Theological Reflections on the Ghanaian Experience* (Accra: Combert Impressions, 2007), 34-47; John D. K. Ekem, *Priesthood in context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother-Tongue Biblical Interpretation* (Accra: Sonlife Press, 2009); Robert Kwasi Aboagye-Mensah, *Dynamics of Preaching the Word: God Still Speaks* (Accra: Adwinsa Press, 2011), 55-59; Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 98-127.

²⁸ Aboagye-Mensah, *Dynamics of Preaching the Word*, 58.

²⁹ Brian Steven Borgman, *Feelings and Faith: Cultivating Godly Emotions in the Christian Life* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009). Electronic Version.

³⁰ Emmanuel Asante, *Unity in Diversity* (Accra: Methodist Book Depot, 2010), 97-104.

³¹ J. Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973) 349.

and corrupt people to cause problems in homes, workplaces, churches, and society. It is important to recognize the influence of the diabolic realm and resist its negative temptations.

When Jesus identified Judas as the betrayer, Satan entered him, and Judas subsequently aligned himself with those who wanted to harm Jesus (John 13:26-27). The entry of Satan into Judas demonstrates how the devil can gain influence over a person, turning them into a source of evil. It is important to recognize that inspiration to commit evil deeds does not come from God or the Holy Spirit but from the devil. Jesus referred to the devil as a murderer and a liar. Therefore, it is crucial to discern the source of human inspiration and examine the motives behind actions. Whether it's the urge for illicit relationships, the pursuit of money or power, anger, or even the drive for success, humans must evaluate if their desires align with glorifying the Lord or if they originate from the diabolic realm. It is essential to distance oneself from activities inspired by the evil one.

Emotions are therefore strong feelings experienced by individuals, such as love, anger, joy, and fear. The nature of these emotions, whether good or bad, depends on their source and their impact on the individuals. Good emotions are inspired by God, leading to positive outcomes and constructive behaviour. On the other hand, bad emotions are influenced by the devil, causing destruction, promoting evil, and fostering wickedness.

Integrity

Integrity is a term related to being whole and complete, just like an integer compared to a fraction. It is synonymous with qualities like character, honesty, moral strength, incorruptibility, and sincerity. Integrity encompasses traits such as loyalty, reliability, trustworthiness, and maintaining a sound and wholesome nature.³² Integrity is key to the development and success of a nation or community. John Frame intimates that most intellectual academic accomplishments would be useless in the absence of integrity.³³ This leads to the production of “educated thieves”.³⁴

What is emotional integrity?

Emotional integrity is the state of being emotionally whole and complete. A person with emotional integrity maintains emotional balance and knows how to manage and express their emotions appropriately. Emotional integrity connotes completeness in life that remains constant no matter what others say or do. According to Aidoo “emotional integrity is about being 100% honest with oneself. It is not about being emotionally intelligent but being emotionally honest.”³⁵ Emotional integrity is not determined by age, titles, or academic achievements, and it requires conscious effort to develop and nurture.

It is important to recognize the significance of emotional development and support others in cultivating emotional integrity. Ignoring emotional well-being can have disastrous consequences. In the Church, the focus is often on the spirit and the mind, but understanding and cultivating emotional integrity is crucial in living out love and avoiding manipulation by negative forces. Love is not only a spiritual concept but also involves emotional and social aspects.³⁶ God desires that man cultivates emotional integrity, and the bible contains teachings and examples in various forms that emphasize its importance in man's relationship with God, humanity, and creation.

Implications for the Ghanaian Youth

The emotional difficulties faced by young people in Ghana are increasing. There are various reasons for these emotional challenges and instability and the discussions are beyond the scope of this article. It's important, however, to address these challenges comprehensively. But, this study will approach the issues from a pastoral perspective. It won't be able to cover all the issues, but it will focus on three areas: anger and violence, substance and drug abuse, and challenges related to sex. While these three areas are its main focus, they can overlap at times. For instance, drug abuse can lead to emotions that result in anger, violence, or inappropriate sexual behaviour.

³² Julia Elliott with Anne Knight and Chris Cowley, *Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 395.

³³ John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1987), 337.

³⁴ Aidoo, Foreword, *Emotional Integrity: A Pastoral Approach* by Jacob Kwame Opata, xix.

³⁵ Aidoo, Foreword, *Emotional Integrity: A Pastoral Approach* by Jacob Kwame Opata, xvii.

³⁶ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *In Living Colors: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling* (London, Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2003), 29.

a. Anger and Violence

Some challenges that have erupted in the country show the rising level of anger that leads to violence in the youth in Ghana. Generally, Ghanaian society is increasingly becoming an “angry” one. The fundamental reasons for the upsurge in anger are freedom, unmet needs and injustice. The anger appears to be various reactions against institutions and personalities that are perceived as enemies of the progress of the youth in the nation.

Lately, there have been incidents of violence reported in the country, particularly involving young people in colleges and high schools. One example occurred on Monday, October 22, 2018, when students from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) organized a demonstration to express their dissatisfaction with the treatment they were receiving from the university's security personnel and administration. Unfortunately, the demonstration escalated into a violent situation, resulting in damage to public and university property. The cost of the damage caused during the incident, which includes the destruction of cars, CCTV cameras, and other glass equipment, as well as stolen items, amounted to more than 1.7 million cedis.³⁷ As a result of the incident, the university was temporarily closed.

On February 22, 2020, another incident of violence and vandalism took place at the University of Cape Coast (UCC).³⁸ During the Oguaa Hall Week Celebration at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), a festive event turned violent, resulting in property damage and injuries to several students. As a consequence, all hall week celebrations on the UCC campus were suspended, and some individuals involved were arrested by the authorities.

The University of Ghana (UG), Legon, also faced its challenges. A scheduled debate in 2020 between students from UG and KNUST took a violent turn, with some students throwing stones at the Mensah Sarbah Hall of Residence. As a consequence, some students involved in the incident were arrested.³⁹ Additionally, the disqualification of a presidential aspirant for the Students Representative Council (SRC) at UG resulted in further property damage in the same year. This led to the intervention of the police, who stormed the UG campus to restore order.⁴⁰

At the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), the situation was slightly different. The tension extended beyond just the students and involved the university's management as well. In 2020, an uproar occurred when two members of the university council were dismissed, leading to heightened tensions within the institution.⁴¹ As the protest gained momentum, there were reports of damage to various properties, including buildings and vehicles, during the unrest.⁴²

Another example is the recent incident related to the 2020 West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) exams conducted for Senior High School students. The students expressed their frustration in various ways regarding the arrangements made for the exams.⁴³ Some individuals accused and criticized the president and other leaders of the nation during this incident, expressing their dissatisfaction and speaking ill of them.⁴⁴ The students, in their anger, resorted to destructive actions such as damaging furniture, disrupting meals at the canteen by damaging bowls, attacking invigilators and journalists, and making threatening statements toward school authorities who were enforcing strict oversight during the exams.⁴⁵

³⁷ “Destroyed property at KNUST estimated at GH¢1.7million,” Ghanaweb, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Destroyed-property-at-KNUST-estimated-at-GHC1-7million-696873>.

³⁸ “UCC’s Oguaa Hall Week Celebration turns bloody (video),” Graphic Online, Accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ucc-s-oguaa-hall-week-celebration-turns-bloody-video.html>.

³⁹ “Police investigate clash on University of Ghana campus,” Graphic Online, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/policeinvestigate-clash-on-university-of-ghana-campus.html>.

⁴⁰ “Police ‘Take Over’ Legon,” Ghanaweb, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Police-Take-Over-Legon-103313>.

⁴¹ “UEW boils as students protest dismissal of lecturers- V-C, finance officer accused of blowing GH¢5.7m on honorarium,” Graphic Online, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ghananews-uewboils-as-students-protest-dismissal-of-lecturers-v-c-financeofficer-accused-of-blowing-gh-5-7m-on-honorarium.html>.

⁴² “Ghana: Student protest turns violent in Winneba,” GardaWorld, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.garda.com/crisis24/newsalerts/212446/ghana-student-protest-turns-violent-in-winneba-march-14>.

⁴³ “2020 WASSCE: Tweneboah Koduah Students Protest Against Headmaster's Strict Invigilation,” Modern Ghana, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1020738/2020-wassce-tweneboah-koduah-students-protest.html>.

⁴⁴ “WASSCE 2020: Students caught insulting Akufo-Addo will be punished - CHASS,” Ghanaweb, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/WASSCE-2020-Students-caught-insulting-Akufo-Addo-will-be-punished-CHASS-1027075>.

⁴⁵ “WASSCE 2020: 14 students dismissed, 3 teachers interdicted over riots,” Education Ghana, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://educationghana.net/wassce-2020-14-students-dismissed-3-teachers-interdicted-over-riots/>.

One of the most alarming examples is the tragic lynching of Major Maxwell Adam Mahama, a military officer, in Denkyira-Obuasi on May 29, 2018.⁴⁶ Major Maxwell Adam Mahama was assigned to Operation Vanguard, a task force responsible for combating illegal mining and "galamsey" activities in Denkyira-Obuasi. Tragically, a crowd attacked him, using bricks, building blocks, and sticks, ultimately leading to his death. The attackers then set his body on fire. The horrifying incident was captured on video and received widespread condemnation. The case drew significant attention and sparked a campaign against mob justice in Ghana. There have been numerous calls for justice to be served and for the perpetrators to be held accountable for their actions.⁴⁷

In a separate occurrence, the unfortunate demise of 21-year-old Sherif Imoro, a Ghana Armed Forces recruit, resulted in the invasion of the Ashaiman community by soldiers belonging to the Ghana Armed Forces. It was in this community that Imoro lost his life.⁴⁸ The military operation that took place in the Ashaiman community on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, resulted in the brutalization of several individuals. The Military High Command claimed to have authorized this operation to apprehend the culprits responsible for certain acts, but it generated significant tension throughout the country.⁴⁹

The main problem discussed is anger and how young people handle it in various situations. When young people feel that an incident is unfair, their reactions and actions are crucial. The incidents mentioned above resulted in destruction, regrettable words, and negative consequences for individuals and the community. It is important to acknowledge that everyone has the right to feel anger, and it should not be dismissed. However, the Bible guides handling anger, emphasizing self-control and being slow to anger.

James 1:20 states, "For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." This scripture reminds Christians that a person's anger may lead him or her to do things that do not please God. Anger should not lead to sin or destructive behaviour. Ephesians 4:26-27 instructs, "Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil." It highlights the responsibility humans have in managing anger and not allowing it to persist or allow the devil to influence them negatively.

Leadership also plays a role in managing emotional issues. Ephesians 6:4 urges leaders not to provoke their children to anger, emphasizing the importance of providing a nurturing and fair environment. Just and fair practices are crucial in preventing anger among the youth.

The youth must learn from examples and handle issues responsibly without endangering and destroying lives and properties. They can exercise self-control, choose what is good, and cultivate qualities like patience and resilience for a better future. By applying the teachings of the Bible and acting responsibly, they can preserve and shape a better future for themselves and their nation.

b. Sexual Impropriety

Another area of concern for the youth is their approach toward sex. Just like anger, the emotions, hormones, and desires related to sex are inherent in human beings. Humans have the freedom to respond to these urges, but it must be done within an appropriate context. According to Christian beliefs, God has established the boundaries for the expression of sex, which is within the institution of marriage. Therefore, the Christian faith promotes abstinence from sex for the unmarried and faithfulness to one's partner for the married. This perspective aligns with biblical teachings. However, there is a growing concern about the current trend among the youth regarding sex. Many young people are sexually active, engaging in multiple sexual relationships. Some are involved in various forms of sexual orientations and practices, including homosexuality and bestiality, all in pursuit of personal sexual satisfaction.

A few years ago, there was a significant debate surrounding the introduction of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Ghana. The program sought to provide a "structured opportunity for adolescents to gain knowledge and skills, to explore their attitudes and values, and to practice the decision making and other

⁴⁶ "Major Maxwell Mahama was lynched in Denkyira-Obuasi exactly 3 years ago," Ghanaweb, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Major-Maxwell-Mahama-was-lynched-in-Denkyira-Obuasi-exactly-3-years-ago-965722>.

⁴⁷ "Major Maxwell Mahama was lynched in Denkyira-Obuasi exactly 3 years ago," Ghanaweb, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Major-Maxwell-Mahama-was-lynched-in-Denkyira-Obuasi-exactly-3-years-ago-965722>.

⁴⁸ Enoch Darfah Frimpong, "Ashaiman: Slain soldier identified as 21-year-old Sherif Imoro," Graphic Online, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ashaiman-slain-soldier-identified-as-21-year-old-sherif-imoro.html>.

⁴⁹ "Murder of soldier: Military swoops on Ashaiman ... beats, arrests over 72 residents for questioning," Ghanaian Times, accessed July, 11, 2023, <https://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/murder-of-soldier-military-swoops-on-ashaiman-beats-arrests-over-72-residents-for-questioning/>.

life skills necessary for making healthy informed choices about their sexual lives.”⁵⁰ The implementation of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) policy faced strong opposition, particularly from religious circles. There were significant concerns raised about the content of the CSE program, specifically regarding its acceptance and inclusion of various sexual orientations. Critics argued that the policy was perceived as un-African, unnatural, contrary to Islamic teachings, and against Christian beliefs.⁵¹ The introduction of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) policy faced strong resistance as many people believed it aimed to introduce unfamiliar teachings that could have detrimental effects on the nation. Consequently, the program was ultimately rejected. Thus, a bill has been introduced that could potentially limit certain sexual orientations which are considered unfamiliar to African culture.⁵² The Ghanaian Parliament is on the verge of passing this bill.⁵³

However, it is important to acknowledge that there are various sexuality-related issues present in Ghana. This includes the presence of individuals who identify as gay, lesbian, transgender, and others. In the year 2017, the son of a well-known media personality made a confident public announcement about his sexual orientation.⁵⁴ His father not only supported his son but also pledged unwavering support to him.⁵⁵

Sexual abuse in different forms is also a concern. The Top media personnel who pledged support for his gay son reportedly raped a lady.⁵⁶ A top football personality was also alleged to have raped and sodomized a lady.⁵⁷ There are also records of some senior members of some university campuses reportedly harassing some of their students.⁵⁸ Ghanaian military women were also reportedly detained by the army because they got married, an action that is not acceptable by law in Ghana.⁵⁹ Moreover, the sharing of explicit images and videos online through social media platforms is currently prevalent.⁶⁰

In a recent development (2023), Yvonne Nelson (a Ghanaian actress) has made some revelations in her book titled *I am not Yvonne Nelson*.⁶¹ She accused Sarkodie (a Ghanaian musician) of being the father of a pregnancy she had when she was younger and alleged that he played a role in her decision to abort it.⁶² However, the rapper, in a song, “Try Me,” which was released after the launch of the book has denied specific details mentioned in the book. Nonetheless, it appears that the duo regret certain incidences that happened in their youthful days and wished it had not gone that way.

Sexual impropriety issues in Ghana are further complicated by a cultural reluctance to openly address them, both publicly and privately. The youth must however be helped in developing their stance against sexual impropriety.

Young people in Ghana need to understand that God has given every man sexual emotions, hormones, and desires. Nevertheless, there is a responsibility to use them wisely. How to handle and manage these hormones is part of a person's contribution to life. Moreover, God rewards those who demonstrate emotional integrity by responsibly using their sexual desires. He expects humans to abide by the guidelines outlined in the Bible regarding sexual relationships. The stories of the families of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from the Bible serve as relevant examples of the consequences that can arise from engaging in improper sexual relations.

⁵⁰ "From Paper to Practice: Sexuality Education Policies and Their Implementation in Ghana," Guttmacher Institute, accessed December 5, 2020,

<https://www.guttmacher.org/report/sexuality-education-ghana>.

⁵¹ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Homosexuality and Ritual Filth: Christianity and Media Discussions on Alternative Sexual Lifestyle in Contemporary Africa," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 16.2 (2013):52.

⁵² Victoria Kendi Murumba, "Ghana Parliament unanimously passes extreme anti-gay bill," *Jurist*, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://www.jurist.org/news/2023/07/ghana-parliament-unanimously-passes-extreme-anti-gay-bill/>.

⁵³ "All 275 MPs consent to passage of anti-LGBTQ Bill," *Myjoyonline*, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://myjoyonline.com/all-275-mps-consent-to-passage-of-anti-lgbtq-bill>.

⁵⁴ "I've been gay since primary school," *Citifmonline*, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://citifmonline.com/2017/11/ive-been-gay-since-primary-school-kkds-son/>.

⁵⁵ "KKD reacts to son's gay status," *Pulse Ghana*, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://www.pulse.com.gh/entertainment/celebrities/kwasi-kyei-darkwah-kkd-reacts-to-sons-gay-status/nq1gsz7>.

⁵⁶ "KKD 'rape' case: 7-member jury to be formed Wednesday," *MyJoyOnline.com*, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://www.myjoyonline.com/kkd-rape-case-7-member-jury-to-be-formed-wednesday/>.

⁵⁷ "Asamoah Gyan to face rape, sodomy charges," *GBC Ghana*, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://www.gbcghana.com/1.4756420>.

⁵⁸ "University of Ghana lecturers suspended after 'sex-for-grades' exposé," *BBC News*, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51546271>.

⁵⁹ "Ghanaian Military Lesbian Couple Who Got Married Detained, Facing Court-Martial (VIDEO)" *Peacefmonline*, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/showbiz/news/202009/428141.php>.

⁶⁰ "Akuapem Poloo apologises for nude photo with 7-year-old son," *MyJoyOnline.com*, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://www.myjoyonline.com/akuapem-poloo-apologises-for-nude-photo-with-7-year-old-son/>.

⁶¹ Yvonne Nelson, *I am Not Yvonne Nelson* (Accra: YN, 2023).

⁶² Nelson, *I am Not Yvonne Nelson*, 89-93.

The lineage of Abraham strongly disapproved of engaging in inappropriate sexual relationships. There were instances within their family history where individuals made wrong choices in their sexual conduct. For example, Reuben had a sexual relationship with his father's wife, which caused his father, Jacob, to react unfavourably (Genesis 35:22). Esau also lost his birthright due to his involvement with foreign women, which went against the wishes of his parents, Isaac and Rebecca (Hebrews 13:16-17). The sons of Jacob also displayed inappropriate behaviour during their time as shepherds (Genesis 37:2). However, there was one positive example in the story of Judah, who handled a difficult situation with Tamar in an honourable way (Genesis 38).

Moreover, the children of Israel responded harshly to the city of Shechem after their sister, Diana, was raped by Shechem, the son of Hamor (Genesis 34:2). These stories highlight the importance of respecting boundaries and the consequences associated with sexual misconduct.⁶³ Despite the prince's efforts to rectify the mistake and make the marriage legitimate, the sons of Jacob retaliated by attacking the city, defeating the men, and capturing the remaining inhabitants (Genesis 34:25-31).⁶⁴ When their father expressed his concern, the sons of Jacob replied, "Should our sister be treated like a prostitute" (Genesis 34:31)? This response reveals how seriously the family of Abraham considered the importance of appropriate sexual behaviour, even though it can be argued that destroying the town was excessive.

Engaging in improper sexual behaviour can have serious consequences for individuals and their families. The story of Shechem's town in the Bible demonstrates this. Those who engage in sexual misconduct may forfeit the blessings and promises of God, while those who uphold proper behaviour are rewarded. Examples like Amnon's inappropriate behaviour toward Tamar and Solomon's decline due to his love for foreign women further illustrate the consequences of sexual sins (2 Samuel 13:1-37, 1 Kings 11:1-4).

Instances such as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the tragic events involving the tribe of Benjamin further emphasize the severity of sexual offences (Genesis 19:12-27, Judges 19:1-20:47). These examples serve as a reminder that sexual sins can lead to physical and divine judgment. The youth must, therefore, understand the consequences of sexual impropriety. Engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviour can result in physical harm (abortion that may lead to death or removal of the womb), hinder personal growth (school/career challenges), and ultimately displeases God (1 Corinthians 6:18-20). Creating an environment that supports proper avenues for marriage and providing resources for young couples can help establish committed relationships. Mentorship from experienced individuals aligning with Christian principles can guide young couples in developing godly families (Titus 2:3-5).

c. Substance Abuse

Substance abuse, particularly drug abuse, is another issue that requires attention. The previous sections have discussed how emotions can be influenced by physical factors, and one way individuals may seek to alter their moods is through the use of substances. In Ghana, it is common for people to consume alcohol during festive occasions or times of mourning. Unfortunately, during funerals, alcohol consumption tends to increase. The behaviour of some individuals after consuming alcohol and becoming intoxicated is problematic. Many individuals use alcohol as an excuse to engage in harmful activities that negatively impact their families and others. Some people consume alcohol as though they are possessed. This has been corroborated by Hilliard K. Dela Dogbe who has noted that alcohol addiction goes beyond being a social issue but also has spiritual connotations.⁶⁵

A recent problem that affected the country was the misuse of Tramadol. Tramadol is a medication prescribed to alleviate moderate to moderately severe pain. It belongs to a group of medications called opioid analgesics. Tramadol acts on the brain to alter how the body perceives and responds to pain.⁶⁶ Tramadol, a drug used to relieve pain, can cause side effects such as feeling sick, vomiting, constipation, dizziness, drowsiness, or headaches.

⁶³ Yael Shemesh, "Rape is Rape is Rape: The Story of Dinah and Shechem (Genesis 34)," *Zeitschrift die Aittestamentliche Wissenschaft* 119 (2007): 2-21.

⁶⁴ Dennis T. Olson, "Genesis" in *Old Testament and Ethics: A Book-By-Book Survey*, eds. Joel B. Green and Jacqueline E. Lapsley (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2011,2013), 43-45.

⁶⁵ Hilliard K. Dela Dogbe, *The Church & Alcoholism in Ghana: A Practical Theological Interpretation* (Tema: Print Logistics, 2014), 76.

⁶⁶"Tramadol HCL," WebMD, accessed December 5, 2020, <https://www.webmd.com/drugs/2/drug-43985239/tramadoloral/tramadoloral/details>.

Sadly, many young people became more interested in using Tramadol, initially attracted by its pain-relieving and energizing effects.⁶⁷ Tramadol became popular among young people as it helped them relax and unwind after a tiring day. When feeling exhausted, the drug was used to alleviate physical strain and fatigue. Another reason for its popularity was its perceived ability to enhance sexual performance, leading many to use it to showcase their sexual abilities. However, the negative effects mentioned earlier outweighed any potential benefits. The youth in Ghana misused and abused Tramadol to such an extent that the government had to intervene and prohibit its sale to the public through legislation.⁶⁸

Apart from alcohol and Tramadol, other substances are also being abused by young and mobile individuals. Some buy sexual enhancement drugs from quack sellers at unapproved places. Cigarettes, as well as narcotic drugs like weed (Indian hemp) and cocaine, are becoming more prevalent. Some young people believe that using these drugs can help them become successful entertainers, as they may feel more confident and perform better on stage under their influence. However, there are also stories of famous entertainers who nearly destroyed their careers because of drug usage. Two examples in Ghana are discussed as case studies: Lord Kenya and Okomfo Kwadee.

Lord Kenya, who was once a popular hiplife artist in Ghana, had a successful music career and was known for his excellent stage performances and vocal skills. However, he faced challenges in his career, and it was later discovered that these challenges were linked to his use of narcotic drugs. These substances initially seemed to enhance his mood and performance, but they eventually led to negative effects on his life and career. Okomfo Kwadee, who was mentored by Lord Kenya, was introduced to these drugs and has been struggling with their effects ever since.⁶⁹ These two examples highlight the consequences of substance abuse, but there are many other cases with different outcomes. Some individuals like Lord Kenya were able to recover from addiction, while others either died or experienced worsened conditions. Substance abuse is not beneficial for young people. The following points may help the youth avoid abusing substances.

First, engaging in substance abuse goes against the principles outlined in the Bible, even if there isn't a specific commandment against all substances abused but alcohol. The scriptures encourage using substances in moderation and for the well-being of the human body (1 Corinthians 6:12). The human body is considered the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, and humans should treat them with care and avoid anything that hinders their purpose (2 Corinthians 6:16).⁷⁰

Second, God expects mankind to live with a clear and healthy mind, making wise decisions and focusing on things that are true, honourable, and pure (2 Timothy 1:7, Philippians 4:8). Substance abuse leads to destructive outcomes, both mentally, and financially and in terms of personal priorities, and it doesn't bring honour or goodwill.

Third, substance abuse also has detrimental effects on health and can lead to premature death. The human body requires the ingestion of proper substances and the elimination of waste. Thus, prolonged substance abuse can distort cells and lead to bioaccumulation resulting in various health issues. Youth needs to understand the long-term consequences and make wise choices for a fulfilling and healthy life.

Fourth, leaders and authorities should provide guidance and support to help youth navigate emotional disturbances and make responsible choices. The banning of substances like Tramadol by the FDA is a positive step, but justice, fairness, equity and equality within the systems of society are also necessary to address the underlying issues.

Finally, religious leaders should take the lead in providing the youth with the knowledge and teachings of God through His word. The messages shared should be relevant and address their current needs and challenges.⁷¹ By immersing themselves in God's word, the youth can develop the desire to prioritize emotional well-being and live a purposeful and fulfilling life.

⁶⁷ "Facilitators to the continuous abuse of tramadol among the youth: A qualitative study in Northern Ghana," Wiley Online Library, accessed December 5, 2020,

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/nop2.353>.

⁶⁸ "Health Minister warns of dangers of Tramadol abuse," Ministry of Health, accessed December 5, 2020,

<https://www.moh.gov.gh/healthminister-warns-of-dangers-of-tramadol-abuse/>.

⁶⁹ "I introduced Kwadee to drugs – Lord Kenya confesses," MyNewsGH, accessed December 5, 2020,

<https://www.mynewsgh.com/i-introduced-kwadee-to-drugs-lordkenya-confesses/>.

⁷⁰ Frederick Mawusi Ameenku and Isaac Boaheng, *The Bible and Ethics in Contemporary Africa: Exegetical Insights* (Accra: Noyam Publishers, 2022). 130-137.

⁷¹ John Abedu Quashie and Mark S. Aidoo, *Biblical Preaching in A Contemporary African Setting: An Introduction* (Tema: Kabkork, 2018), 95-97.

The Significant Role the Church can Play

The church in Ghana plays a significant role in guiding the youth towards emotional integrity. With a large Christian population, the church has a direct or indirect influence on many young people. To support Ghanaian youth effectively, church leaders must lead by example, demonstrating emotional integrity in their character and actions (1 Tim. 3:15, 2 Tim. 2:19). The behaviour of leaders is closely observed and imitated by the youth, and any negative or immoral conduct can damage the church's reputation and cause some to question or abandon their faith. Therefore, church leaders need to uphold high moral standards to positively impact the lives of the youth and maintain the credibility of the church's teachings. When leaders are involved in corruption, it can spread to the congregation, community, and even the entire nation.⁷² As John C. Maxwell puts it, "When leaders fail to conquer their own problems, their followers never become victorious."⁷³ Lovett Weems asserts that three key competencies play a significant role in enhancing pastoral effectiveness: personal character, personal integrity, and Christian example.⁷⁴ Conversely, three critical factors hinder effectiveness: self-serving ministry, undisciplined life, and emotional immaturity.⁷⁵ Donald Aultman emphasizes that integrity necessitates a challenging process of identifying one's core beliefs about right and wrong, and it goes a step further, demanding actions that align with those beliefs.⁷⁶ If Christian leaders engage in immoral and corrupt behaviour, it can create a harmful and negative influence that may continue for generations, unless God's mercies intervene. Therefore, Christian leaders must avoid immoral actions, inappropriate speech, and dishonest dealings, so that their conduct sets a positive example for others to follow.

Secondly, the Church should establish facilities to support individuals facing emotional challenges. While the government's efforts are commendable, their solutions may not address all aspects of a person's well-being. Emotional issues go beyond the physical and mental realms; they also have a spiritual dimension. The gospel offers substantial help for emotional problems. Therefore, the Church needs to create facilities that provide comprehensive services to address the needs of the whole person. Since its establishment, the Church in Ghana has been dedicated to developing treatment centres for this purpose.⁷⁷ In the past, churches often had medical facilities and schools alongside their regular services, aiming to care for people comprehensively. These additional facilities allowed the churches to provide not only spiritual support but also medical assistance and education to the community. It was a way for the churches to serve the needs of the people in a well-rounded manner, taking care of their physical, spiritual, and educational well-being.⁷⁸ The Church provides dedicated facilities to support individuals facing emotional challenges, offering hope and healing through prayer, the ministry of the Word, uplifting songs, and other disciplines. These efforts aim to address the growing prevalence of emotional challenges in today's world and bring the comforting and transformative power of Christ to those in need.

Thirdly, the Church needs to ensure that its leaders are properly trained to handle emotional challenges professionally. This involves providing professional training to accurately diagnose and handle emotional issues, and making appropriate referrals when necessary.

Fourthly, the Church should also strive to minimize shaming and blaming, particularly towards vulnerable individuals, and create an environment where everyone is honoured and valued.⁷⁹ Over-spiritualizing emotional challenges should be avoided, as they can lead to destructive advice and division. Love should be emphasized in preaching and service, as fear-based manipulation is inappropriate. By addressing emotional challenges with a combination of natural and supernatural approaches, the Church can provide healing and promote emotional integrity, bringing glory to the Lord.

CONCLUSION

This article underscores the importance of emotional integrity and its implications for the youth in Ghana. It highlights the pivotal role of the Church in providing guidance and support to young individuals facing emotional challenges, specifically addressing issues such as anger and violence, sexual impropriety, and substance abuse. The Church can effectively harness the transformative power of Christ by establishing

⁷² Mark S. Aidoo, *Leadership in the Book of Esther: An African Contextual Hermeneutics* (Accra: JEM Publishers, 2020), 26.

⁷³ John C. Maxwell, *Be All You Can Be: A challenge to stretch your God-Given potential* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 2002), 85.

⁷⁴ Lovett H. Weems, *Church Leadership: Vision, Team Culture and Integrity* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 67, 116.

⁷⁵ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 67.

⁷⁶ Donald Aultman, *Leading with integrity* (Cleveland: Pathway Press, 2004), 91.

⁷⁷ Jacob Kwame Opata, *Medical Evangelism in Ghana: A Holistic Approach Towards Missions* (Accra: CMRF, 2019), 46.

⁷⁸ Opata, *Medical Evangelism in Ghana*, 150.

⁷⁹ Amevenku and Boaheng, *The Bible and Ethics in Contemporary Africa*, 94-95.

dedicated facilities for emotional well-being, equipping its leaders with professional training, and fostering an environment that values and respects the youth. It cautions against the tendency to excessively spiritualize emotional issues, emphasizing the need to prioritize love and genuine care in preaching and service. The article emphasizes that personal character, integrity, and setting a Christian example are indispensable competencies for pastoral effectiveness, while self-serving ministry, an undisciplined life, and emotional immaturity hinder the ability to effectively minister to others. Aultman's concept of integrity is highlighted, emphasizing the importance of conscientiously discerning one's values and consistently acting upon them. By addressing these aspects, the Church can assume a vital role in empowering young individuals to navigate emotional challenges, find healing, and establish a strong foundation for their personal and spiritual growth. Ultimately, the promotion of emotional integrity within the youth population can contribute to their overall well-being and foster a healthier society.

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