

**DISCIPLESHIP AND CHRISTIAN'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN THE DIOCESE OF  
KIGEZI: A CASE OF ST. MARK KIKUNGIRI ARCHDEACONRY**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I, **Atwongyeirwe Judith**, hereby declare that this research dissertation is my original piece of work and has never been presented or submitted to any institution for examination.

Sign: 

Date: 31 / 05 / 2024

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## APPROVAL

This research on the Discipleship and Christian's spiritual growth in the Diocese of Kigezi: a case of St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry, has been written by Atwongyeirwe Judith (RJ20MO4/001) under my supervision.

Sign\_ 

Date\_25\_/\_08\_/\_2025\_\_\_\_\_

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**University Supervisor**

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the Almighty God the Father who initiated the redemptive mission; to the Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who died for us and to God the Holy Spirit who fellowship with us and leads us in the journey as the followers of Jesus.

To my husband, Mr. Apollo Arinda, our children Joy Akatukunda, Faithful Akatutorana and Noel Nimurungi for your great support and encouragement to this course. To my siblings, the whole family and friends and the leadership of the Anglican Church of Uganda in the Diocese of Kigezi, who encouraged me to pursue this course and who greatly contributed for my financial essentials.

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## ABSTRACT

Biblical studies, research from the field and literature reviews of the area of study reveal that Christian discipleship is of paramount importance to Christians' spiritual growth and lead to a wholistic growth of every church. Both the priest and confessing Christians have an obligation to do this ministry of Christian discipleship. In doing so, all Christians, young and old are nurtured to nurture the new converts to faith. Although there were discipleship programs which included catechism classes, fellowships, Mother's and Father's union, youth groups, among others, they faced several challenges which included in appropriate discipleship strategies, inadequate theological trainings, inadequate time and finances, nonexistence curriculum, misconduct in church leaders and lack of commitment to intentional discipleship. In spite of these challenges, Christian discipleship has a modest contribution to the growth of the church in that it sustains church life, leads to improved stewardship, leads to a person's greater spiritual transformation, development of a person's spiritual disciplines like bible study, scripture memorization, production of more evangelists and volunteers to support church ministry, fighting complacency and improves accountability among brethren. Data was collected using interviews and questionnaires and observation. It was then analyzed and interpreted for use. Therefore, it is recommended and suggested that Christian discipleship be made a priority in all churches and there must be intentionality in Christian nurture. Fellowship, follow up and mentorship programs of all age groups and in different fields of Christian ministry should be strategically planned for holistic development of both individual and church growth.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1.1 Introduction**

This research study is about discipleship and Christians spiritual growth, a case of Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi. It gives the background to the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, scope of the study, justification of the study, and limitations, literature review and methodology.

#### **1.1.2 Background to the study**

This research study is on discipleship and Christian's spiritual growth. It focuses on how discipleship can be realized in order to produce long lasting fruits. Discipleship is a condition of being a follower of someone, a student of a certain philosophy and in this research, a student of Jesus Christ. (Foster, R. 1998). comer (2024) adds that discipleship is not only a belief system but as a lived mentorship or traineeship to Jesus. To him, this mentorship must be intentional, embodied and practical nurture following Christ.

Furthermore, Ron Benet (2001) supports Moore's definition of discipleship when he writes that "discipleship is a continuous relationship that takes place in and within accountable relationships within accountable time in order to bring this student to spiritual maturity in the lord Jesus." It is important to note that discipleship involves accountability and disciples ought to be aware of this. They need to know that they are accountable to someone. Fruitful Christian discipleship must be intentional in nature in order to ensure a continuous holistic church growth. Babatunde (2024) in his article describes discipleship as a social practice. He adds that in discipleship,

The gospel of Mark 3:14 presents Jesus choosing the 12 disciples to be with him. As for Luke, he presents Jesus with a bigger group of 72 disciples in Luke 10:1. Mark 9:2-6 presents Jesus with a much smaller group of 3 disciples. Despite the different levels of discipleship, all the four gospel writers prove Jesus' intentionality in Christian discipleship, something all his disciples should emulate. Jesus commissioned his disciples to go and do the same in John 20: 21 and Mathew 28:19. These two

commands, “as the father sent me, so I send you and go into the world and make disciples of all nations”, clearly shows that the main duty of the church is Christian discipleship and therefore determination of any church’s performance must be based on this. We may not refute the usefulness of quantitative assessment of the church but we cannot as well ignore to measure how effective this church has been able to grow her Christians to spiritual maturity in order to counteract a saying that African Christianity is one mile wide, and one inch deep. Emphatically, Barna (2000), states that the strength of any church is wholly dependent upon its commitment to true discipleship to come, (2024) Christian discipleship is the core mission of the church.

The early church followed Jesus’ example of discipleship as reflected in the book of Acts. This book shows how the church moved from Jerusalem (the center of Judaism) to Rome (the Gentile world-center). 2 Timothy 2:1-2, depicts Paul’s relationship with Timothy as a young believer, how he set him a good example in all aspects of a Christian journey as well as Paul entrusting Timothy to also disciple other young believers. This is not the first time Paul is urging Timothy to hold on to his teachings as we read in 2Timothy1:13, but he often warned, beseeched, and encouraged Timothy to do the same to others who were around him as well as those entrusted to his care. In fact, Paul goes ahead to encourage Timothy to be an example to other believers in speech, conduct, faith and purity (1Timothy 4:12). All Paul’s letters to Timothy show intentionally in discipling Timothy into a church leader a position that he later held as an overseer. Due to the disciple’s commitment on following the Jesus’ mode of discipleship, Christianity which started with a humble beginning in the Roman Empire and in short time became a worldwide religion. According to Ruyendo (2012), Ehrman (2018) wrote that Christianity gained ground because of the social cohesion and doctrinal attractiveness. This was so because of the commitment of the early apostles, the character of the early Christianity, the apostolic mission model which involved convincing, the traveling teachers that did a lot of preaching, teaching and healing, and writing of relevant materials to brethren. With the help of these materials, the gospel was spread widely and the Christian faith defended against the

Jewish heretics. This therefore led the church to excel and flourish in the first 3 centuries according to Ruggyendo (2012).

During the fourth and fifth century, the church lost its favors and at the same time the Roman Empire crumbled, Christian trainings shifted from homes to churches and schools. It is very historical that during the Middle Ages, there was loss of ancient model for discipleship in families. At that time there was increased illiteracy, Christian trainings and discipleship was left to the professional clergy in their ecclesiastical institutions. At the same time, there was a call on the clergy, fathers and mothers to embark on their responsibility of intentionally nurturing children in their Christian faith. The Christian training mainly consisted of memorizing prayer, creeds, and the 10 commandments. Small books on prayer and catechism were availed to parents to help them in Christian trainings to their children. Such a kind of training was later hindered by feudal responsibilities. The fathers were no longer available to their children for a long period of time. This was so especially in the noble families.

During the 13<sup>th</sup>C, the western church was transformed spiritually due to monastic orders. The clergy committed themselves to do pastoral work with an aim or intention to produce well trained and committed laity who could continue the work of nurturing others into faith.

The practice of Christian trainings from home was often done by mothers and sometimes the God parents unlike the past when this work was done by the fathers. Thus, the 16<sup>th</sup>C reformation leaders called upon fathers to embrace their work as faith trainers of their children. On this, Martin Luther a German theologian once said, “if we are to re-instate Christianity to its former glory, we must improve and elevate the children, as it was done in the days of the old....it is the chief duty of the father in the family to bestow more greater more constant care upon the lives of his children than upon his body. For this is his own flesh but the child’s soul is a precious jewel which God has entrusted to his care. Since the father is responsible to instruct his children in godliness, he is responsible to serve as a bishop in his house.” (Strohl, 2004). Alongside such a model for discipleship was the age-based discipleship classes

for children. Martin Luther's plea to re-instate Christianity to its former glory was thus a call for intentionality Christian nurture. The 1549 book of common prayers gave priests a responsibility to instruct the children on Christian tradition one and a half hours on Sunday afternoon at least once in six weeks, and by 1552, this kind of instruction was done on a weekly basis.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century, Missionaries from Europe came to evangelize Africans. This was the time when the European countries were competing for territories in Africa after the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. Missionary work during this pioneer period concentrated mainly on rehabilitating former slaves. They were instructed in the Christian faith and eventually became 1<sup>st</sup> effective missionaries to the interior of East Africa. Byaruhanga. (2015) believes that the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a wave of great missionary activity worldwide. Churches were established and the local people actively involved. Later, according to H. H. Osborne (2000), there was a very low level of spiritual life observed in those who showed outwardly eagerness to receive Christian faith. Ruyendo (2012). The truth of the gospel which people appeared to accept with such enthusiasm made very little impact on their moral lives and this death of spiritual life in the lives of those who professed to be Christians caused a prayer meeting led by Rev George Pilkington at the island of Kome (one of the islands on Sese islands in Lake Victoria and another mission in Kampala in 1893 He further noted that the effects of this 1893 mission were not lifelong but some African leaders were transformed individually of whom included Simeon Nsibanbi. Ruyendo (2012) notes that it became routine work, with the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the church had completely declined and lost its meaning. Between 1928 and 1935, there arose the East African revival that was spreading like bush fire and this revived the church in Kigezi region, Western Uganda.

Canon Jovan (2012) writes that with the coming of the East African revival movement, the new born again were encouraged to join the fellowship groups and members shared as groups in their meeting. They helped each other grow spiritually, supported each other in times of joy and sorrow, visited each other and shared meals thus supporting each other physically and spiritually. If a member wanted to buy a bicycle

or marry, he would first seek the approval of the fellowship. This is what was called “okugyendera omumushana.” (Walking in light). The members of the fellowship would give every support because they were involved. Whenever a member missed fellowship, members would go to find out why she or he had missed. To the new born again, the fellowship would attach someone mature in faith to help nurture this young fellow into the way of the Lord, thus the element of discipleship was emphasized a lot in every Christian’s Walk. This attracted many people to the fellowship. And because of this intentionality of discipling the young converts, the church in Kigezi produced many evangelists out of which came priests, Bishops of which Festo Kivengere was a product. School teachers and church teachers, and other church leaders emerged out of the same intentionality in discipleship. Such a depth of fellowship had ceased in the official church. This led to the growth and vibrancy of the church in Kigezi region.

From the 1930’s up to 1990’s, the church in Kigezi was growing rapidly, discipling and nurturing her Christians. The church put a lot of emphasis on thorough teaching of the baptism and confirmation classes. The child would not be baptized unless the God parents attended the baptism class. As for the confirmation class, one could not be confirmed until he or she was 15 years old and above. More so, the confirmation catechism took six full months. This intentionality in teaching the doctrine and Christian faith produced staunch Christians able to fight and defend their faith and church property. Stewardship was at the highest level. Today, it is unfortunate, as long as the parents of the child are able to pay the required baptism fees, the child can get baptized. Even many clergies in this diocese do not have ample time scheduled for baptism catechesis. This too happens within the confirmation class. As a result, children have been baptized and confirmed without being grounded in their faith, a reason why the most cannot defend their faith. It is against such a background that the researcher is conducting this study to examine discipleship and Christian’s spiritual growth, at Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi.

### **1.1.3 Problem statement**

According to Mathew 28:16-20 and 2 Timothy 2:2, discipleship should be intentional. It involves person to person relationship or person to group relationship. The process does not become complete until the disciple has been able to disciple other people too. Therefore, discipleship is a continuous process. Currently, within Kikungiri Archdeaconry, there is a growing apathy and insensitiveness for discipleship programs leading to stunted spiritual growth in the archdeaconry. Both Ogden (2019) and Willard (2009) attest to the church leader's insensitiveness to Christian's discipleship. The reasons they give for such insensitiveness is the insufficient teaching on discipleship, on what it means to be a disciple leading to lack of understanding and growth and the focus on the other programs, activities and events rather than on spiritual growth and development of individuals. Yet, the church needs both spiritual and physical growth. Thus, this research aims at filling the gap of insensitiveness to discipleship in order to realize as the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20).

### **1.1.4 General Objective**

The general objective is to examine discipleship and Christian's spiritual growth at St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi.

### **1.1.5 Objectives of the study**

- i. To investigate the available discipleship programs in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi.
- ii. To examine how discipleship contributes to the spiritual growth of a Christian in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry, in the diocese of Kigezi.
- iii. To explore the challenges facing the discipleship Ministry in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi.

### **1.1.6 General Research Question**

What is the contribution of discipleship in Christian's spiritual growth at Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi?

### **1.1.7 Research Questions**

- i. What are the available discipleship programs in Kikungiri Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi?
- ii. How does discipleship contribute to the spiritual growth of a Christian in Kikungiri Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi?
- iii. What are the challenges facing the discipleship Ministry in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi?

### **1.1.8 Scope of the study**

#### **1.1.8.1 Geographical scope.**

The research was carried out in Kikungiri Church of Uganda, Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi. Kikungiri Archdeaconry is located in the southern ward of Kabale Municipality, Kabale district in the South western Uganda. It is neighbored by All Saints' Church Archdeaconry in the North, Muyebe Archdeaconry in the east, St. Peters Cathedral in the west and Kamuganguzi Archdeaconry in the south. This archdeaconry is made up of seven parishes. The total membership is over one thousand adults (1000). This archdeaconry is one of the eldest archdeaconries in the diocese. It is also peri-urban in nature.

#### **1.1.8.2 Content scope**

The study evaluated discipleship ministry as a tool for Christian growth. To achieve this, the researcher reviewed the literature from published work; present biblical and scholarly understanding of discipleship. Data was be collected, analyzed and discussed, recommendations made and conclusion drawn, there after presented the findings to the relevant authorities for further studies. The study was be restricted to examining discipleship and Christians spiritual growth in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi.

#### **1.1.8.3 Time scope**

This research study covered a period of two years. This time frame was adequate for enabling the researcher gather reliable data necessary for explaining the phenomenon.

### **1.1.9 Justification of the study**

Christian discipleship lays a firm foundation to building a holistic church. Almost all Christian ministries within the church are built on Christian discipleship. As per the Diocese of Kigezi mission statement, the diocese thus has an obligation to work hard towards attaining a high percentage of church members with quality Christian standards. This means that there is need for intentional discipleship ministry. One of the most vital duties of the clergy is to build a well disciple team in his local church that will be able to continue discipling others. This is a fundamental shift from emphasis on preaching and administrative work to intentional Christian discipleship. The resultant will be increased discipleship base in the smallest local church. However, the church meets various challenges in trying to attain this. This research will thus assist fighting insensitivity to discipleship as well as solving the challenges faced by discipleship ministry in order to produce Christians who are spiritually grounded and mature, to continue the process of discipleship in not only Kikungiri Archdeaconry but worldwide.

### **1.1.10 Significance of the study**

This research is of great importance to St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Kigezi in the Anglican Church of Uganda. The findings point out the most factors in nurturing young believers so that the Church of Christ can grow to maturity both in quantity and quality thus forming a strong Church for today's generation and the generations to come. Furthermore, the findings were not only significant for Kikungiri but for the entire Church, its leaders and the lay as far as Christian's spiritual growth is concerned.

### **1.1.11 Limitations of the Study**

This research dissertation is limited to St. Mark Kikungiri and not the whole Diocese of Kigezi. Therefore, it may not reflect the whole recent research on discipleship. This research incurred certain limitations such as rugged and slippery roads which was overcome by using a motorcycle that could easily pass in those narrow roads and use of phone calls to those that the researcher was unable to reach easily. Another limitation was mainly on those who refused to give information genuinely and here

the researcher used rapport building to get the right information freely. Furthermore, since the researcher was an active clergy and a student at the same time, she could not find enough time and so she opted to use phone calls and emails. This research study was descriptive but not prescriptive.

#### **1.1.12 Definition of key terms**

1.1.12. **Discipleship** is a condition of being a follower of someone, a student of a certain philosophy and in this research, a student of Jesus Christ (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/discipleship> research). Wright (1995) defines discipleship as “a life lived in obedient to Jesus, rooted in the understanding of God’s redemptive plan and characterized by commitment to living out the gospel in all areas of life”. This elucidates what Foster (1998) believes that discipleship transforms one’s belief, practices, values, and leads to the development of spiritual growth among many other church activities. So, in this study, discipleship is a continuous training of a young believer or young disciple in faith to spiritual maturity.

**Intentionality in discipleship.** This is a deliberate and purposeful approach in following Jesus. To Dallas, in intentional discipleship, a conscious and deliberate decision must take place under the transformative power of God. The outcome is to become more like Christ in character and action. Dallas in his book, “the spirit of the disciplines” emphasizes that intentionality is essential for living a disciplined life, a life that is directed towards the goal of being fully formed learner of Jesus Christ. Ogden defines intentionality in discipleship as a deliberate and intentional approach to following Jesus. To him, it must be marked by a clear focus, must be a thoughtful plan and that there must be a willingness to take concrete steps towards spiritual growth. He further adds that intentionality in discipleship is essential for effective discipleship in this research, intentionality in discipleship is very paramount in all departments of the church for a holistic growth. A deliberate effort towards producing more church leaders like priests Archdeacons, future Bishops, Lay leaders must be done as well as other departmental heads. This must begin from the grassroot level (local church) to the Diocesan or provincial level.

**Insensitiveness to discipleship.** This is defined as lack of awareness or concern for the spiritual wellbeing of others. This thus results into failure to intentionally invest in their growth and development. Ogden (2019) describes the concept of insensitivity to discipleship as “discipleship blindness” which manifests in busyness in other priorities other than discipleship, lack of intentionality in making disciples and inward focus on one’s spiritual growth while leaving behind the spiritual needs of others. This is usually a result of church leaders being program driven, mainly focusing on other programs and activities leaving out people and their relationships, prioritizing other tasks and responsibilities over discipleship and being inward looking spiritually. Insensitive to discipleship in this research leads to the church losing its focus and mission since people to carry on their work have not been groomed.

**1.1.12.2 Spiritual growth.** Ogden (2019) further describes spiritual growth as a process of becoming more like Christ in character, relations and actions. This can be achieved through intentional and on-going pursuit of spiritual disciplines and practices. It involves character transformation, developing healthier relationships and demonstrating Christ’s characters and values through one’s action and decision. Since Christian discipleship in this diocese is done mainly under church nurture groups and fellowships, spiritual growth or maturity is a paramount virtue in every leader of a department in church. Its now unfortunate that in the current trends, leaders of these Christian nurture groups are not born again but just church attendants.

**1.1.12.3 church.** Whereas the book of Acts 19:39 refers to the church as regularly convened political body, the same book in 7:38 designates the church or Ekklesia as the congregation of Israel. The New Testament predominantly uses church in reference to Christian assembly or congregation. 8:1, when Paul writes to the Romans in chapter 16:5 and 16:16, he shows the church as a house church and as ecclesia of Christ. As for Halsey1981:179, he writes that the church is a particular group of Christians united by same doctrine, belief and discipline. He as well adds that the church is a building for public worship especially of a Christian denomination.

**Church of Uganda.** According to the provincial canons of 1997:1, the church of Uganda is an independent ecclesiastical province that was established according to

the provincial constitution. Its fundamental belief is in holy Trinity and is in communion with the worldwide Anglican communion.

**Archdeaconry.** This an ecclesiastical unit made up of a certain number of parishes. It is headed by an archdeacon. In this research, the archdeaconry shall mean kikungiri archdeaconry. In the diocese of kigezi, in the church of Uganda.

**Diocese.** the provincial canon (1997) this is an ecclesiastical unit made up many parishes. It's under the jurisdiction of a bishop. In this research a diocese shall mean the diocese of kigezi under the bishop of kigezi.

### **1.2.0 Literature Review**

This part gives us a review of the literature concerning the study area under investigation. It will discuss the various studies and scholarly work related to Christian discipleship. The discussions and reviews will be guided by these research objectives: the available discipleship programs used by the churches; the challenges facing discipleship ministry in churches and examine how discipleship contributes to spiritual growth of a Christian.

#### **1.2.1 Discipleship programs in the Church**

It is agreeable that there are some churches which carry out Christian discipleship with some purposely designed training programs. However, the issue lies within the quality of disciples they make. Therefore, this section seeks to investigate the available discipleship programs that the churches are using to disciple their Christians.

One of the major programs is holding baptism lessons. Elmer & Leslie (1951) define baptism as a rite of initiation into the Christian faith where by a person becomes a member of the house of God. Here, a person renounces sin and evil acts. The book of common prayers 1666 stipulates what the God parents should teach this child so as to grow into a good Christian. This implies that the clergy before baptism must first teach the parents of the child so that in turn, they are able to help teach these young believers in faith. Towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> C, baptism classes were very extensive and would take close to three years of training. This training would end with the

initiation ceremony in the holy week. The church lost such intentionality when Christianity became a public religion, and the practice became impossible because of the overwhelming numbers of Christians and so baptism could no longer be preceded by a time of repentance and participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Indeed, today though the church considers baptism as a program of discipleship and yes, it is, however, it seems the church is giving less attention to the teaching of the new Christians. More to this, Masoka (2006) adds that baptism is understood as a graduation from any study, a reason why it has been taken as a public ceremony for weaning new converts from being nurtured. After baptism, these new members of the Christian family are not given plans to help them attain spiritual growth that would eventually lead to spiritual maturity. So, how do they mature up spiritually? J.T. English (2020) emphasizes in his book the importance of teaching doctrine in discipleship.

Related to the above is the catechism class for confirmation ceremony. Haasnoot (2015) in his research found out that the catechesis class for baptism and confirmation classes increased the number of Christians but they did not go deep as it should. He further notes that however much the numbers of these Christians are big, they have to a lesser extent impacted their church positively and this has been so because teaching is not done well as in the past, according to some of his interviewees. This implies that intentionality in training these classes is not done. Similarly, in Kigezi, there are a lot of mushrooming churches, Christians move from one church to another and many others have gone back to African traditional religions. Yet majority of these Christians come from the Anglican Church, are baptized and confirmed in the Anglican faith. This degree of insensitivity to the above discipleship program is high. This practically challenges what the priests swear in presentation of the catechumens to their bishops before he confirms them into their faith. For example, in Kigezi, the priests swear that “before God and all people witnessing, these catechumens are well taught and able to behave as God’s children, confess and believe in Jesus Christ and are able to bring other people to God. If this

oath is true, why are there increased cases of nominalism, witchcraft and other many social evils among the people that ‘are able to bring others to Christ?’

The church in the Diocese of Kigezi has established fellowship meetings to build up believers in their faith as part of discipleship. Throughout the whole diocese, every Tuesday and Thursday, either early in the morning or in the evenings, born again Christians meet for fellowship and bible study. Min 10/ 2016, 5(1), of the diocesan synod meeting that sat in 2016 also set aside Wednesday for healing and deliverance ministry to those churches that would wish to have that fellowship. The only challenge to these fellowships is that they meet for only a short time and members come in small numbers. In most cases, the clergy rarely attend these fellowship meetings and yet these fellowship meetings would provide a fertile ground for mentorship and follow-ups programs which are vital in discipleship. In view of this, the church leaders especially the clergy are seen as being insensitive or not intentional in discipleship. More on fellowships, Acts 2:45 shows a caring spirit that the disciples had; sold their property and shared it among those in need, gave up funds to provide to church family, they were of one mind and also met regularly. Their driving force behind this was their genuine love for Christ. Today this practice may not be well realized in a conventional church setting because many of the Christians are no longer as committed to Christ as before. A church that has discipleship at the center provides a conducive atmosphere for nurturing young believers and transforming their characters. Furthermore, Ogden (2006) believes that as far as intentionality in Christian discipleship is concerned, small fellowships are ideal for the pastor to manage leading to spiritual transformation among the new converts. Geiger (2005) in his survey discovered a similar advantage of small group fellowships that they were best for spiritual transformation. He discovered that people who were in a group displayed characters of a disciple in comparison to those that belonged to no nurture groups. They prayed more fervently, are generous, and offer sacrificial services to the church and regularly shared the gospel. Berna (2015) also supports small group fellowships when he writes that they are a preferred method of nurturing Christians in today’s church. Putman (2006) notes that in the

area of small groups, churches focus on the number of groups and the percentage of the congregation who attend a group. Seminars on small groups focus on organizing groups to get the most people in them. This is not a wrong focus but when the discussion ends here it neglects the weightier issue of what type of disciples are being produced. Thus, the church needs to return to its roots of how Jesus made disciples and implement Jesus' method.

Elizabeth Jordan (2015) quotes Ijeoma, A., Ayogu, B., & Ijeoma, B. (2019), gives Christian nurture groups like Christian women, fathers union, youth group and Mother's union as a program of discipleship in the church. They write: The Mother's Union, for example, which brings together both men and women, both ordained and lay into a fellowship committed to support families, transform communities as well as praying together. The Mothers Union 2015 and the Anglican Cassillo, a movement in the church provides a way to empower Christians grow through prayer, study and action, sharing Gods love with everyone (Anglican Cassillo, 2015). However, these nurture groups may not necessarily have a leadership of born-again believers or confessing Christians. So, one wonders how they can lead young believes in the journey that they are not walking. Instead, these are Christian social groups and practically help their members improve their relationships in community and family.

Another program for discipleship is the theological training. This is mainly given to the clergy and lay readers in their theological schools. To this, Masooka (2015) observes that since the clergy are enablers of the laity, they themselves must be well disciplined in order to train the laity in discipling other new members.

Bandura (1986) gives another discipleship program as intentional observational learning. In this strategy, he emphasizes the disciple's attention to the disciple. On the same discipleship program, Kile, (2010) adds that, "in order to learn from observation, it is necessary first that the model must attract the individual's attention". It is clear that Jesus at the beginning of his ministry called the 12 disciples to be with him. They learnt from him through this method of observation how they would carry on the ministry. He later sent them to go continue the ministry as in Mark 3:14. In order to model his disciples for servant leadership, he washed their

feet according to the gospel of John. Paul writes to the Ephesian church and in chapter 5, he calls upon them to be imitators of God. And yet to the Corinthians he boldly told them to follow him as he follows Christ. As for Peter, he calls upon the leaders to be good examples of the flock that has been entrusted to them. (John 13:5, Ephesians 5:1, 1Corinthians 11:1, 1Peter 5:3). Generally, this seems to be a kind of discipleship that scriptures advocate for. And this implies that teachers and church leaders need to follow Christ so that they can model Christians into Christlikeness. Groenendijk (2011) in his research concluded, ‘that it was worthwhile to implement observational learning in education as it was an effective teaching tool. He suggests that modeling examples supported the students to produce original work.’ This is equally important as far as Christian discipleship is concerned.

Groenendijk (2011) gives another discipleship program as direct instruction on curriculum to new believers. According to him, as soon as a new members of the Christian faith come, there is use of age-appropriate curriculum for church groups. This very well supports the idea of intentionality in discipleship process in all age groups of the church leading to holistic growth of an individual as well as the church as a whole. The Province of the Church of Uganda has designed a curriculum for discipleship. Unfortunately, it is written in English only and has not been distributed to all the dioceses within the province. So, there is still need for translation of the discipleship curriculum into the local languages if it was to be well utilized by the local people.

### **1.2.2 Contribution of discipleship to spiritual growth of a Christian**

Chris (2024) emphasizes the importance of discipleship through the whole lifespan of human life. Christian discipleship sustains the church life. William (2013) in his final remarks concluded that intentional Christian discipleship is difficult to embark on but very important to the continued growth of the church. He further indicated that if Christian’s mindset of discipleship does not abound, in a single generation the church will cease to exist. Furthermore, William (2001) indicated that discipleship appears in

the New Testament 270 times thus indicating the prime place of discipleship in a Christians life. This justifies how important Christian discipleship is.

According to Sanou (2016), when discipleship has been intentionally done, a Christian becomes wholistically mature. He further writes that wholistic maturity is neither hazardous nor inconsequential and that growth is progressive. Intentionality in discipleship affects the whole of a disciples' pursuit of resembling Christ and this can be observed in one's intellectual development, physical, social and spiritual maturity.

Willard (2006) observes a big difference between Christians who have been intentionally discipled and those who have not had that exposure. He thus concludes that a well disciple Christian exhibits a character and value system of Christlikeness. According to his surveys, Christians who have not been intentionally disciple instead do not make difference with the unchurched people in terms of attitudes. Willard further observes that in some cases those Christians who intend to lead holy lives are ridiculed as fanatics. Moreso, if the undiscipled Christians do not make a difference with the unchurched people, then what kind of church is it and one wonders whether this church makes an impact in the community when lives have not been transformed.

According to Barna (2001), Christians who have gone through different discipleship programs like small group fellowships, role modelling, and mentoring, formal discipleship curriculum have been able to display greater spiritual transformation among members of the redeemed church than those who have not gone through any discipleship program. Such spiritual transformation contributes to the growth of the church both numerically and spiritual.

According to Howard (2008) believes that discipleship especially through mentorship helps one to achieve the following: a long-term commitment to the spiritual welfare, growth of believers, personal attention to believers' spiritual growth needs, modeling a spiritual walk with God to mentees and teaching of the biblical truth. Such are invaluable attributes to a healthy church.

Some scholars further note that discipleship helps the disciple to acquire spiritual disciplines in his journey of spiritual growth. These spiritual disciplines may be intended self-imposed spiritual habits to help him build his spiritual health thus leading to his spiritual growth and maturity (Calhoun 2015; Whitney 2014; Dybdahl (2008). These spiritual disciplines may include bible study, memorizing bible verses, meditation on scripture, prayer and fasting among many others. These spiritual disciplines lead a close relationship with God and pave way for one's spiritual transformation.

Discipleship leads to production of many evangelists. Ruyendo (2012) noted that one of the impacts of the East African revival movement was production of many evangelists of whom some later joined the ordained ministry including the late Rt. Rev. Festo Kivengere. He further noted that learning how to preach was through fellowship meeting, and mentorship program where young believers would be attached to mature Christians for nature. A church with many evangelists is an outgoing church and relieves the parish of expense of inviting preachers from outside the parish.

Intentional Christian discipleship gives birth to many volunteers in the church. These volunteers may help the church in terms of community charitable services, teacher assistants especially among the youth and children, thus freely modelling a church for tomorrow's generation, Powell (2020) believes that volunteering helps people to use their gifts, talents and time for the kingdom of God. He further notes that such volunteers work behind the curtains leading to a vibrant and growing congregation. These volunteers are strong and passionate, committed to strengthening the vision and mission of their church and its leader. In any case it may be difficult for the church to pay every person for the work done on church.

Christian discipleship plays an important role in fighting complacency. In most cases churches that aim at only teaching from the pulpit and do not pave ways for Christians to be walked alongside by seasoned Christians end up becoming stagnant

and pulpit focused. Complacent Christians do not have a concern for spiritual growth of fellow Christians. This also implies that complacent Christians do not work towards their church growth. This poses a serious danger to the church's wellbeing especially in this era of liberalism, modernity and scientific findings.

Through the process of Christian discipleship, young believers are introduced into accountability. This is important in a new believer's life. Accountability begins with the basics and urging in them on towards a deeper thing. Importantly is a reality to hear the truth from the church leader or priest and to have someone holds this young believer accountable, encouraged to press on and walking through life with this young believer is another thing entirely. Accountability is very vital in all aspects of human life and other sectors of the economy. Lowes (2002) believes that accountability is an indispensable aspect of discipleship for a variety of reasons. He quickly adds that when one is not held accountable for by someone else, it may be too hard for someone to do what he consistently should do.

### **1.2.3 Challenges facing discipleship ministry**

The church lacks appropriate and efficient discipleship strategies. Closely looking at the findings for Masoka (2006) quotes Haloviak, a renowned Archivist and Adventist scholar in North America and the General Conference Archives and Statistics Director, who discovered that, "more than 5 million people joined the church between 2000 and end of 2004, making the church that had 972,000 members in 1954 grow to 13,936,932 by the end of 2004." To a larger extent, this exponential growth culminated from the church's commitment to evangelism and outreaches. However, he quickly stated that 'the disturbing thing is that more than 1.4 million members left the church during the same period of time'. This indicates a huge problem. It implies that these new members were not well taught and nurtured in the faith that they had just joined. Losing 1.4 million Christians in the same period of time that they entered the church is evidence to lack of intentionality in discipleship. If the church leaders were so sensitive to discipleship, then all those people couldn't have gone back. This

church needed sustained active discipleship strategy that would produce both quantity and quality growth of church members.

Inadequate theological training is a serious challenge hitting discipleship ministry. I agree with John Greig and Scheller, (2001) that when a pastor is inadequately trained, he can become the greatest barrier in empowering lay persons. Some pastors feel insecure of their calling and become afraid of the multi-talented and better qualified lay persons ministering alongside them. This hinders the pastors from realizing the potential that is in committed laity. According to John Grays (2001), there is another group of the clergy that may fear to delegate the discipleship ministry to the laity for fear that they may not be successful. Ogden (2003, 2007) mentions that Christian leaders unintentionally show that one can become a Christian without being a disciple. This implies laxity or insensitiveness in the area of discipleship and so there is need to pay serious attention to intentionality in discipleship since it's a core of the Christian faith.

According to Masoka (2006), intentional Christian discipleship needs adequate time as well as finances, not only for literature but also other methods of communication and follow-up. More to this is a reality that in these modern times, the use of WhatsApp channels, Facebook, YouTube among others is very much costly and yet appropriate in church mission activities. Due to the demand at the workplaces and other many activities assigned to individuals, time to attend these fellowship meetings they may be in-adequate thus making discipleship a challenge. According to Willard (2006), church leaders carry the greatest blame for not fully implementing the great commission.

Mathews (2005) notes that there is nonexistent of curriculum to teach on spiritual disciplines in the local church which had contributed to spiritual decline of Christian disciplines. According to the Provincial mission office, the Church of Uganda has some discipleship materials in form of literature but unfortunately these materials have not been accessed by all diocese in the Province of Church of Uganda. More so, they are written in English but not the local language, thus making them impossible to enrich the laity that are committed to discipleship in cases of those not well educated.

Masoka (2006) compliments this when he notes that the church does not have a continuous process to foster personal spiritual growth of individual members which affects her mission in the world. Burggraff (2015) calls upon the church leaders to have a curriculum designed accurately and systematically to help young believers reach Christian maturity and be able to disciple others. The implication is that the church does not have a specific curriculum it follows in discipling her Christians or it's there but inadequate.

Masooka (2006) is right when he notes that the church in 21<sup>st</sup> Century faces many challenges which includes population increase from the time that the commission was given including the endless conflicts and wars that have filled many nations. Worse still many nations especially the Moslem dominated states openly fight evangelism and discipleship. Though Masoka sees the increased population as a challenge, it is rather an opportunity because this big population using the multiplication method can easily disciple much more people in even a short period of time since the population has increased after the commission. The challenge is that the first church began with much vigor to fulfill the great commission and later relaxed. Secondly not all this much population is pagan, they are Christians but who are not well taught and disciplined. This is clear evidence that baptism and confirmation classes give inadequate trainings to young believers.

Discipleship ministry faces a challenge of undisciplined church leaders who are unable to model their Christians into Christlikeness. Kile (2010) calls upon leaders to be role models just as St. Paul the apostle was. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians actually calls upon believers to look to him as he also looks to Jesus .1Corinthians. 11:1, 1Thessalonians. 1:6, 2Thessalonians. 3:9, Philippians 3:17-18 etc. That is one of the ways the bible presents discipleship. Since the disciple is to look up to the teacher as the teacher looks up to Christ in reference to Paul's letter to the Corinthians that "imitate me as I imitate Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1), this means that his behavior or conduct is key as far as spiritual transformation is concerned. Unfortunately, news of clergymen flood newspapers about their misconduct especially

in the area of adultery, financial mismanagement and drunkardness (the New Vision September, 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and New Vision January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020). And one wonders how such can do discipleship ministry faithfully. In fact, Newton, (2018). In his article: An Evaluation of the Master Life Christian Discipleship Program's Influence on the Disciple of Christ states," states that over the past nine years, there was a significant absence of Christ like transformation in the lives of numerous disciples of Christ in my local church. To be more specific, the issue was detected in the areas that encompassed Christian attitudes, behaviors, relationships, ministry, and doctrine, which are all components of being a disciple of Christ". This is directly connected with what Putman (2006) wrote that discipleship faces a challenge of leadership. Church leaders are accepted more for their performance than for their character. In relation to this, Maming (2011) wrote about someone who left the faith ..." he left the Christian faith because he traversed the circles of most influential Christian leaders and teachers, he saw very little evidence of true Christian transformation of character, values and lifestyle. What he witnessed was a group of men and women who resembled the world more than they did Jesus."

Masoka (2006) and Bosch (1996) both agree that during Jesus' time and the early church times, Christian discipleship was well done. To Brandon Guindon (2023), Jesus vividly lived out the gospel he preached, setting up an example for his disciples. But the development in Christian history when the papacy and the clergy assumed all ecclesiastical powers and disregarded the laity as immature and non-professionals in church life thus making them only passive as far as Christian discipleship is concerned became the source of the problem. As for Eastwood (1962), he rightly puts it that, "All Christians have God's Word and are under obligation to see its propagation." In support of what Eastwood writes, Peter in his first letter to the brethren chapter two verse nine writes that we are all a priesthood of believers. Mores so, closely looking at the great commission, we realize that the command to make disciples is not strictly to the clergy, but a sole responsibility of every believer. Secondly, the clergy cannot work alone. They cannot disciple that much number of Christians alone. Adoption of such ecclesiastical power and underrating the role of the laity in ministry

was a great mistake done that affects the church today unless otherwise. And so, Croft (2015) concluded that clericalized of church and ministry has been the biggest obstacle in any development of ministry.

Stott (2014) observed that while the church exploded worldwide, feedback on the ground from church leaders showed that her depth still remained shallow. Canon Kanfwanke, the Director of Missions in the Anglican Communion noted almost a similar case when he highlighted that there was a difference in the professed faith and the lived faith among many parts of the Anglican Communion thus making it a serious challenge to Christian discipleship (Anglican Communion news service, 2015). Discipleship is facing the above challenges probably because it is investing highly in evangelism but doing less of teaching and follow-ups. This can be best evidenced by the fact that many Christians are now nominal Christians, others have gone back to traditional African religion and practices. David (2001) discovered that the lifestyles of church goers weren't much different from that of the unchurched people. The kinds of disciple modern day churches are producing make little impact in their circles of influence. Barna (2001) in his book growing true disciples documented through his group research that the beliefs and lifestyles of believers and non-believers were practically the same. In other words, there is very little transformation of the person and their approach to life. So, one wonders how such disciple can disciple others following Jesus and Paul's model of discipleship.

Ogudiran (2013), an American writer says that the state of discipleship in America is in a poor state this does not conquer with what some scholars have written about discipleship in Africa. Some current researchers have discovered that the increased number of Christians in Africa does not match with the quality of Jesus' disciples. In support, one of the observations that has been made by some authors is that the many confessing Christians do not show evidence of Christlikeness. He thus advises that the great commission should not end with alter call but should go ahead to lead these young believers to spiritual maturity.

Willard (2009) blames the church leaders for not doing enough of teaching in their evangelical life. To him, the church leaders have a duty to teach her members to

obey everything that Jesus commanded. If they are not teaching, one wonders who then should teach. To this irony, Wilhoite (1991), notes that teachers carry more value in their classrooms than the curriculum they teach. Whitney (2024) emphasized the central role of pastors in discipleship. He adds that the pastor is a key discipler. Unfortunately, The church lacks commitment into intentional discipleship. As a result, there is lack of comprehension among the many confessing Christians as to the implications of following him as lord. This implies that these confessing Christians have not been transformed and therefore unable to impact the world as much as the first disciples of Jesus did. To this, Ogden (2003), reports, "there is a lot of superficiality especially in the incongruity between numbers of people who profess faith in Jesus Christ and the lack of impact on moral and spiritual climate of our times". So, how can such a kind of Christians cause the church to grow both wide and deep? In fact, in the East Bourne Consultation, Joint Statement on Discipleship (1999,) it was stated that, "As we face the new millennium, we acknowledge that the state of the church is marked by growth without depth. Our zeal to go wider has not been matched by a commitment to go deeper". The church is thus called upon to commitment to intentional discipleship if it is to realize a change in its spiritual realm.

### **1.3.0 Research Methodology**

This part describes the research design, Area of study, describes the target population, Sampling technique, data collection instruments, procedure for the data collection, data analysis, and finally the limitations of the study.

#### **1.3.1 Study design**

The research study to be carried out was be mainly Qualitative in nature with quantitative data as well. Social scientific method of data collection was also used. Much of it was descriptive survey since it would involve detailed explanations of the existing situation (Kateeba, 1996:5). The situation was studied in terms of discipleship and Christian's spiritual growth in the Anglican Church of Uganda.

Qualitative research methods involved use of interviews, observations, focus groups, and review of secondary data sources. Quantitative methods involved surveys/questionnaire method. For purposes of this research; secondary data, questionnaires, and interviews was be used. Thus, this research was both quantitative and qualitative in nature, but majorly qualitative.

### 1.3.2 Information sources

The information was collected by face-to-face interviews with research respondents, written material and questionnaires.

### 1.3.3 Description of the population and sampling techniques

This research study was conducted in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry- Diocese of Kigezi C.O.U. The target population were clergy, lay readers, missionaries, group leaders like youth leader, mother’s union leader, and born-again Christians within the time and area scope of the research study since primarily Christian discipleship is a sole responsibility of these people groups.

Observations were made while visiting the Christian nurture groups, attending fellowships, bible study groups, participating in some conferences and Christian seminars. It was easy to do all this because fellowships, bible study and mothers union study groups meet weekly, but also because of the urban and peri urban nature of the area of study. The researcher observed the activities done in these fellowships and Christian nature groups. The findings of this study were discussed basing on the objectives of the research and the data collected was analyzed according to the methodology. All the above were done basing on the objectives of the study which are: the available discipleship programs used by the churches, the challenges facing discipleship ministry in churches and examine how discipleship contributes to spiritual growth of a Christian.

### 1.3.4 Population size

**Table 1.1: Table showing the categories of the population sample**

Target population	Number of	Data collection	Reason/Justification
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	people	method	
Diocesan missionary	1	Interview	He is the head of all mission programs in the diocese.
Diocesan Secretary - D.O. K	1	Interview	He is the administrator of the Diocese
Clergy	10	Interview	They head the parishes and schools in the research geographical area and know much about Christian discipleship in those areas.
Group leaders, (parish missionaries, youth leaders, mothers' union leaders etc.)	20	Questionnaires	These directly disciple all members that join their groups.
Believers	70	Questionnaires	Questionnaire will work best on such a big number of respondents and the target is on those who know how to read and write.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>		

Source: Primary data, October 2023

Table 1.2: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percent
Returned	68	97.1%
Unreturned	2	2.9%
Total	70	100%

Source: Primary data, October 2023

Table 1.2 shows that the study obtained a good response. Only 2 questionnaires were never returned. This was a limitation that the researcher met. These respondents claimed they did not have time to fill the questionnaires and were always unavailable whenever the researcher tried to do a follow up on them.

**Table 1.3: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
23-32	10	14.7
33-42`	14	20.6
43-52	24	35.3
53-62	13	19.1
63-72	7	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Gender of Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	53	77.9
Female	15	22.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Single	10	14.7
Married	58	85.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Leadership role in Ch+</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Priest	8	11.8
Missioner	16	23.5
Church Warden	15	22.1
Youth Leader	4	5.9
Synod Member	7	10.3
Youth Leader	5	7.4
Brethren	6	8.8
Lay Readers	7	10.3

<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-5	20	29.4
6-10	11	16.2
11-15	9	13.2
16-20	22	32.4
20+	6	8.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

According to proctor (2000), demographic data is vital for obtaining basic information about the respondents. As for this study, the characteristics of respondents provided information about the respondents such as age, marital status, gender, leadership role in church and the years of experience in discipleship ministry. In addition, demographic data helped through the analysis to provide a way for identifying differences in key results in responses by subgroups such as age and the years of experience in discipleship.

Table 1.3 further showed 77.9% of the respondents were males. This implied that men occupied key leadership roles in church since the main target were church leaders in different areas of leadership. It further revealed that 85.5% of the respondents were married men and women and this also meant this group exhibited a certain level of maturity. Furthermore, majority of the respondents 23% were mission coordinators because discipleship directly falls under the mission department in our churches. And lastly this table also indicated that majority of the respondents 33% were people of great experience in discipleship ministry for the past 16-20 years.

Out of the 12 people that were interviewed, 10 were males.

### **1.3.5 Sampling technique**

The researcher used purposive sampling to select the area of study. This method was also be used to select the respondents since she requires those that have knowledge and experience on the phenomenon.

### **1.3.6 Variables**

This research study has two variables that is; the independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is discipleship; the dependent variable is Christian's spiritual growth.

### **1.3.7 Procedure for data collection**

The researcher sought an introductory letter from the School Dean of Bishop Tucker School of Theology -Uganda Christian University and take it to the respondents.

Then the researcher also thought for permission from the respondents and begin collecting data and distributing questionnaires.

The researcher analyzed the data collected from various sources into meaningful information for use.

Lastly, the researcher has compiled a research report and presented it to her supervisor for marking and thereafter will give a feed back to the participating parishes.

### **1.3.8 Data collection instruments**

In order to collect both primary and secondary data, the researcher used the following research instruments: interviews and questionnaires.

#### **1.3.8.1 Interviews**

The researcher conducted a face-to-face interaction with the respondents to collect data. This method helped to collect first-hand information and also get in depth information about the phenomenon under study. This was mostly used in descriptive studies and allows for compellability of one interviewee with another, (Kothari, 2004:98).

This method helped the interviewer to explain more clearly just what information is needed and if the interviewee misinterprets the question, the interviewer may follow it up with a clarifying question as need arises, (Amin 2005:178).

Interviews can be unstructured which allows the respondent talk freely what they wish or structured in which the subject responses are limited to answering direct questions. Structured interviews enable the interviewer to ask each respondent the same questions in the same way, (Mathers, et.al 2000:113).

The researcher used unstructured interviews to allow the interviewees give their responses freely to help the researcher understand more about the phenomenon.

#### **1.3.8.2 Questionnaire**

According to McLeud, (2018) a questionnaire is a tool used in research that is made up of a series of questions or other statements purposely designed to collect information from a respondent. A Questionnaire is composed of both close-ended and open-ended questions. Questionnaires are an effective means of measuring behavior, attitudes, preferences, opinions, and interventions of relatively large numbers of subjects more cheaply and quickly than other methods.

The researcher used questionnaire method because it allows the respondents to answer the questions on their own and are cost effective even when the scope of the study (geographical area) is huge. Respondents give well thought answers, write in their own words, respond at their convenience and large samples can be made use of this making the research more dependable, (Kothari 2004:100-101). A questionnaire containing both open and close ended questions will be set and administered to believers.

#### **1.3.8.3 Observation**

Observation as the name says is a method of collecting data through observing. This kind of data collection is participatory because the researcher has to be present in the real area where the respondents are while taking notes or recording. The researcher used passive observation to observe how fellowships, bible study groups, catechism classes and Christian nurture groups were handled and this method helped the researcher get firsthand information from the people who were not genuine in giving information. This is supported by Denscombe (2007) when he noted that daily

life and non-verbal expressions revealed more than direct answers got from correspondents.

### **1.3.9 Quality control**

#### **1.3.9.1 Validity of the research instruments**

Validity explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation (Ghuri and Gronhaug, 2005). Validity basically means “measure of what is intended to be measured” (Field, 2005). In this research, the following types of validity will be considered that is face validity, and content validity.

Face validity is a subjective judgment on the operationalization of a construct. Face validity is the degree to which a measure appears to be related to a specific construct, in the judgment of non-experts such as test takers and representatives of the legal system. That is, a test has face validity if its content simply looks relevant to the person taking the test. It evaluates the appearance of the questionnaire in terms of feasibility, readability, consistency of style and formatting, and the clarity of the language used. In other words, face validity refers to researchers’ subjective assessments of the presentation and relevance of the measuring instrument as to whether the items in the instrument appear to be relevant, reasonable, unambiguous and clear (Oluwatayo, 2012). In order to examine the face validity, the dichotomous scale will be used with categorical option of “Yes” and “No” which indicate a favorable and unfavorable item respectively. Where favorable item means that the item is objectively structured and can be positively classified under the thematic category.

Content validity is defined as “the degree to which items in an instrument reflect the content universe to which the instrument will be generalized” (Straub, Boudreau et al. 2004). In general, content validity involves evaluation of a new survey instrument in order to ensure that it includes all the items that are essential and eliminates undesirable items to a particular construct domain (Lewis et al., 1995, Boudreau et al., 2001).

The judgmental approach to establish content validity involves literature reviews and then follow-ups with the evaluation by expert judges or panels.

The procedure of judgmental approach of content validity will involve the supervisor interacting and discussing with the researcher to ensure that the research instrument has all the questions that will cover the required content.

#### **1.3.9.2 Reliability of the research**

According to Drost (2011), reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable when different people perform the measurement on different occasion, under different condition, supposedly with alternative instruments which measure the construct or skill. It can also be defined as the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable.

Reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consistent result (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Reliability is also concerned with repeatability. For example, a scale or test is said to be reliable if repeat measurement made by it under constant conditions will give the same result (Moser and Kalton, 1989).

Testing for reliability is important as it refers to the consistency across the parts of a measuring instrument (Huck, 2007). A scale is said to have high internal consistency reliability if the items of a scale “hang together” and measure the same construct (Huck, 2007, Robinson, 2009). The most commonly used internal consistency measure is the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. It is viewed as the most appropriate measure of reliability when making use of Likert scales (Whitley, 2002, Robinson, 2009).

Although reliability is important for study, it is not sufficient unless combined with validity. In other words, for a test to be reliable, it also needs to be valid (Wilson, 2010).

Validity and reliability increase transparency, and decrease opportunities to insert researcher bias in qualitative research (Singh, 2014).

#### **1.3.9.2 Strategy for data processing and analysis**

The collected data will be analyzed on the basis of research questions. Data collected using the questionnaires and interviews will be categorized into Tables, pie charts, frequencies, percentages, as well as descriptions to make it more relevant for use. The researcher will then analyze data using the SPSS program.

#### **1.3.9.3 Anticipated methodological constraints (Challenges and how they were overcome)**

Some roads were impassible with a vehicle due to the terrain of the area of study but this was overcome by using a motor-cycle since it can easily pass in narrow and ragged places.

Some respondents would not easily give in their time which necessitated call backs and here patience enabled the researcher to accomplish the task. The researcher also sought appointments with respondents who were not very available at the time when the research is conducted.

Some of the respondents were not willing to disclose information. Rapport building here helped the respondents to share freely the available information with the researcher.

#### **1.3.9.4 Ethical considerations**

The researcher sought firstly seek Ethical approval from UCU Research Ethics Committee and permission from the University. Additionally, she sought participant's consent and ensure confidentiality of the information given. Information obtained is academic and will not be disclosed to third parties except for the primary purpose.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The main aim of the study was to examine discipleship and Christians spiritual growth in Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi, Kabale District. Thus, this chapter dealt with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from the respondents. Furthermore, the chapter covered the demographic characteristics of respondents. Data in this chapter was collected using questionnaires and interviews with key stakeholders. 12 people were interviewed and their responses will be handled in the interpretation and analysis of data. Data presentation in this chapter will be discussed basing on the objectives of the study.

#### **PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

**2.1 To investigate the available discipleship programs in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry.**

**Table 2.1: Christian Discipleship**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	68	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.1, indicated that all the respondents 100% knew something about Christian discipleship. They also agreed that their churches participated in this ministry of Christian discipleship.

**Table 2.1.1: Current Discipleship programs**

	Frequency (N=68)	Percent
Mother's and Father's Union	41	60.3
Youth Programs	34	50.0
Monthly Missions	18	26.5
Seminars	20	29.4
Bible Study	32	47.1
Fellowship	29	42.6
Choir Ministry	12	17.6
Home Cells	29	42.6
Pastoral Visitations	27	39.7
Children's Church	10	14.7

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

The main discipleship program according to table 2.1.1 indicated mothers' union and fathers' union. With 60.3% frequency rate. This was followed by the youth programs with 50% frequency rate. Whereas the core aims of Mother's Union and Fathers Union nurture groups are centered on family life, and parenting, one wonders why there is increased rate of divorce as reported in different newspapers (New Vision, July 9<sup>th</sup> 2013, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Daily Monitor, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 etc.). This implied that though the church considers these nurture groups to help in the discipleship ministry,

there is still a big gap to be filled. Furthermore, these Christian nurture groups are not mainly concerned with a spiritual growth and its continuity.

Furthermore, it was important to find out the church has put up programs for the youth to be disciplined but current studies showed youth to be in a serious exodus from their mainline churches to Pentecostal or charismatic evangelical churches. Kahenya (2010) in his study in Kenya found out that youth below 30 years of age feel the church is irrelevant and does not address their needs and have lost a sense of belonging thus the exodus. In the same study, the clergy also agreed that they had not met the expectations of the youth and as a result have lost some charismatic members of their faith. This study does not contradict what Masoka (2006) wrote when he stated that the church lacks appropriate and efficient discipleship strategy. Similarly, Daniel young (2025) say that many of the young people describe the church as boring. He quickly added that the church is disconnected from the real-life interest of the youth. This depicts a big gap in discipleship ministry.

Table 2.1.1 also shows that bible study and fellowship had a medium percentage of frequencies of 47 % and 42% respectively. This meant the church leaders ought to invest more on the bible study and fellowship since these two lay a foundation and background for family life and parenting.

In an interview with the diocesan missionary, he confessed that the diocese has no specific discipleship programs but instead the province to implement the strategic discipleship movement which involves daily scripture reading. On programs like Mothers' union and the Fathers' Union, the diocesan mission coordinator emphasized that these groups were intended to equip others, nurture their family members. He also quickly added that confirmation class is one of the discipleship programs. In an interview, one of the retired bishops and a retired clergy in the diocese emphasized mentorship discipleship program and fellowship meeting that the two contributed immensely to the growth of the Church in Kigezi during the early revival times.

**Table 2.1.2: Effectiveness of Discipleship Programs**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Fair	4	5.9	5.9	5.9
Good	31	45.6	45.6	51.5
Better	28	41.2	41.2	92.6
Excellent	5	7.4	7.4	100.0
Total	68	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, October 2023

Table 2.1.2 showed that the cumulative percentage of the effectiveness of the discipleship programs was 92%, close to excellent. 51.5% of the respondents also agreed that the discipleship programs in their parishes were very good. This is strange. These discipleship programs might have produced some good fruits but not close to excellence as majority responded otherwise why would the rate of divorce increase or the rate of youth exodus increase if these discipleship programs were good and better? The researcher thinks that those who responded fair were more genuine than those who responded excellent and better. On the other hand, Ogden (2003) in his study found out that the small groups fellowship was easy for the pastor to manage and provide proper attention, discipleship and care. Geiger (2015) also found out that nurture groups were very important for spiritual transformation, the researcher thus believes that if the team leaders invest heavily in these nurture groups, tangible results would be realized.

**Table 2.1.3: Effective to produce other disciples**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	68	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary data, October 2023

Table 2.1.3 indicated that all the respondents 100% agreed that the discipleship programs at their churches were able to effectively produce other disciples. This supports Barna's (2001) conclusion that the strength of any church is wholly dependent on its commitment to true discipleship. The researcher agreed with the

respondents that the discipleship programs they have are able to produce other disciples but this wholly depends on the implementers of these programs.

**Table 2.1.4: Most effective Program in Transforming lives**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Tues and Thurs Fellowship	57	83.8	83.8	83.8
Baptism	6	8.8	8.8	92.6
Confirmation class	3	4.4	4.4	97.1
Theological Training schools	2	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	68	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.1.4 showed that Tuesday and Thursday fellowship were the most effective methods of discipleship programs with 83%. Turyamureeba (2012) in his study also found out that during the East African revival period, in the fellowship meetings, believers helped each other grow spiritually, supported each other in times of joy and sorrow, visited each other and shared meals. As a result, many people were attracted to fellowship and this led to the growth of the church in Kigezi. However, the 21st century with its modern technology of employment opportunities has left brethren with no time for fellowship meetings and yet virtual fellowships too tend to be costly, a reason why discipleship ministry is crimpling.

In an interview with one of the canons, a retired clergyman and chairman board of mission in the Diocese of Kigezi, said that discipleship in the early times was done mainly by the fellowship members but not mainly the priests. He quickly added that this was mainly done by the exemplary members of the fellowship. In another interview with one of the retired bishops, he also emphasized that fellowships were vital part of discipleship programs. He explained how brethren would look for those

who got lost from fellowships, how they prayed together, shared the word and walked in light. He also noted that repentance was a key element of their fellowship.

**Table 2.1.5: How Discipleship Programs enhanced discipleship Ministry in Kikungiri Archdeaconry**

	Frequency (N=68)	Percent
Many come to Christ	59	86.8
Strengthened Faith	49	72.1
Strengthened fellowship	36	52.9
Increased church funds	14	20.6
Increased church attendance	17	25.0
Equipped Leaders	31	45.6

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.1.5 shows the ways in which the available discipleship programs have enhanced discipleship ministry. 86% of the respondents believed that these discipleship programs have brought many to come to Christ. 72% of the respondents also indicated that discipleship programs strengthened the faith of believers and 52% of the respondents indicated that the available discipleship programs strengthened fellowship meetings. However, one wonders why this discipleship programs have brought many people to Christ, strengthened their faith and fellowship and yet church attendance has remained low with almost the least percentage of 25%. This depicts a similar problem which Haloviak (2005) established while he was the general conference archives and statics director in the Baptist church of North America. In his study, he discovered that 5million people joined the church between 2000-2004, making the church that had 972,000 members grow to 13million, and yet more than 1.4 million people left the same church in the same period of time. This indicates a serious problem. The church might need to think of a discipleship strategy that not only looks at the quantity of disciples but also the quality of disciples made.

**Table 2.1.6: Duration for Baptism Training**

	Frequency	Percent
One week	16	23.5
Two weeks	21	30.9
One Day	24	34.8
Two days	7	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary data, October 2023

**A bar graph 2.1.6 showing duration for Baptism Training**

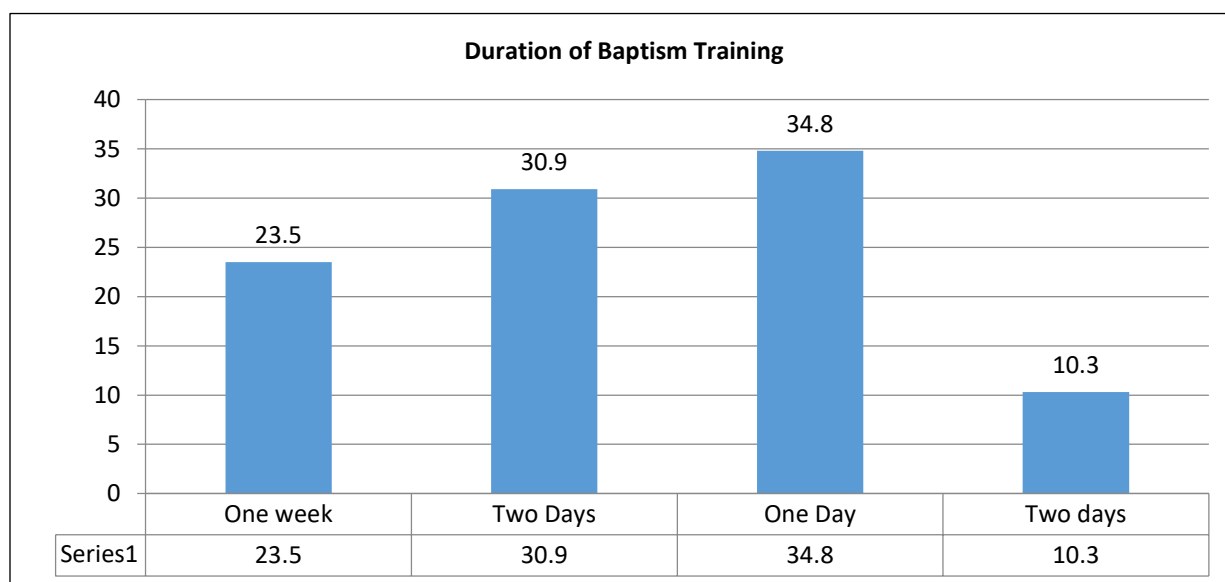


Table 2.1.6 answers the question of how long is the baptism class conducted before the baptism ceremony. Majority of the respondents agree that baptism class is taught and majority about 34.8% agreed that they are taught one day. This was followed by 30.9% who said that their baptism class takes two weeks. Teaching the baptism class the traditional aspect in the Anglican Church since the God parents are expected to teach the young one their faith and the way of the lord as the 16<sup>th</sup> century leaders of reformation encouraged.

Though respondents agreed to have had several baptism classes according to this table 9, the same respondents do not look at it as effective in making disciples evidenced in table 7. Haasnoot (2015) in his study found out that the catechesis class for both baptism and confirmation classes increased the number of Christians but they did not go deep as it should be. Where only 8.8% of the total respondents rated baptism as the most effective method of discipleship.

In the same interview with bishops, he recalled that in 1870's, people would attend baptism class for six months. He also said that other Christians who wanted to convert to Anglicanism would study for one year. He quickly added that before baptism ceremony, the candidates would be seriously questioned and those who failed to answer the given questions would be asked to repeat the training. He however lamented on today's lack of teaching which he said that it is slowly killing the church and that it leads to loss of church doctrine.

During the interview with some senior clergy in the diocese, the researcher discovered that baptism and confirmation classes lasted between six month and one year and the candidates would be examined. Those who failed the examination would be asked to repeat.

**Table 2.1.7: Presence of a Specific Teaching Syllabus for Baptism**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	36	52.9	57.1
	No	27	39.7	42.9
	Total	63	92.6	100.0
Missing	System	5	7.4	
Total		68	100.0	

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.1.7 presented the respondent understanding whether there was a specific syllabus for baptism or not. 52% of the respondents agreed that there was a syllabus for baptism, 39.7% said that the syllabus was not there and 7% of the respondents were unable to answer the question. This is not strange because the episcopal of New York (2021) showed that preparation for baptism in many places had developed into an extensive period of preparation often as long as three years.

According to one of the retired bishops, baptism class took one-year after which the candidates would be examined and only those who passed the examination would be baptized and others would repeat. This tallies well with what other clergy, said about baptism. 10 out of the 12 interviewees lament why the church leaders are no longer putting a lot of emphasis on preparation for baptism classes. Through the interviews, the researcher found out that the church had catechism one and catechism two which were used during the instruction of the candidates.

**Table 2.1.8: Location of the Syllabus**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Prayer Book	35	51.5	85.4	85.4
2.00	6	8.8	14.6	100.0
Total	41	60.3	100.0	
Missing System	27	39.7		
Total	68	100.0		

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.1.8 showed that 85.4% of the respondents said that the syllabus for Christian baptism is in the prayer book. But according to one of the interviewees, the church has also other books for catechism called catechism 1 and 2. This implies that these

other books for catechism are rarely used and one wonders whether they are now almost irrelevant or why the church kind of disregarded them. 39.7% could not answer the question. Sykes (1988) noted that in England, there were many catechism manuals available for both clergy and the laity. At that time there were injunctions issued requiring clergy to teach and explain the creed, the Lord’s prayer and the 10 commandments. He further adds that the early reformation days created fresh efforts to teach the faith. The clergy were also to teach their Christians and exhort all parents to teach their children and servants to do the same. This explains well how deep the early Christians fathers valued catechism.

### Confirmation

**Table 2.1.9: Duration of confirmation Training**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 6 months	53	77.9	77.9	77.9
4 Months	4	5.9	5.9	83.8
3 Months	10	14.7	14.7	98.5
Never Taught	1	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	68	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, October 2023

**A bar graph 2.1.9 Duration of confirmation Training**

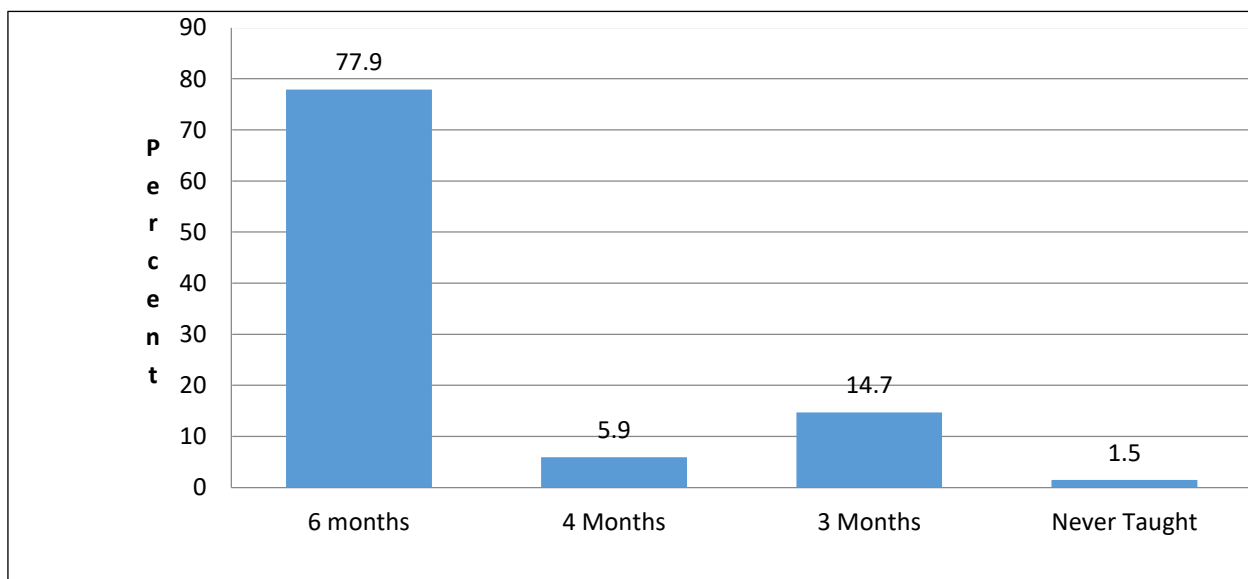


Table 2.1.9 shows the duration of confirmation class. It revealed that 77.9% of the respondents agreed that confirmation class was usually taught for six full months. And a very small percentage believes that children are never taught before confirmation. Surprisingly, results of table seven also show that confirmation was not an effective method of discipleship because only 4% out of the respondents amounting to only 4% of the total respondents believed in confirmation as an effective discipleship strategy. This supports what Haasnoot (2015) found out in his study when he concluded that the reason, we don't see a big impact after confirmation among Christians is that teaching is not done well as in the past according to some of his interviewees.

**Table 2.1.10: catechumens accept Jesus Christ**

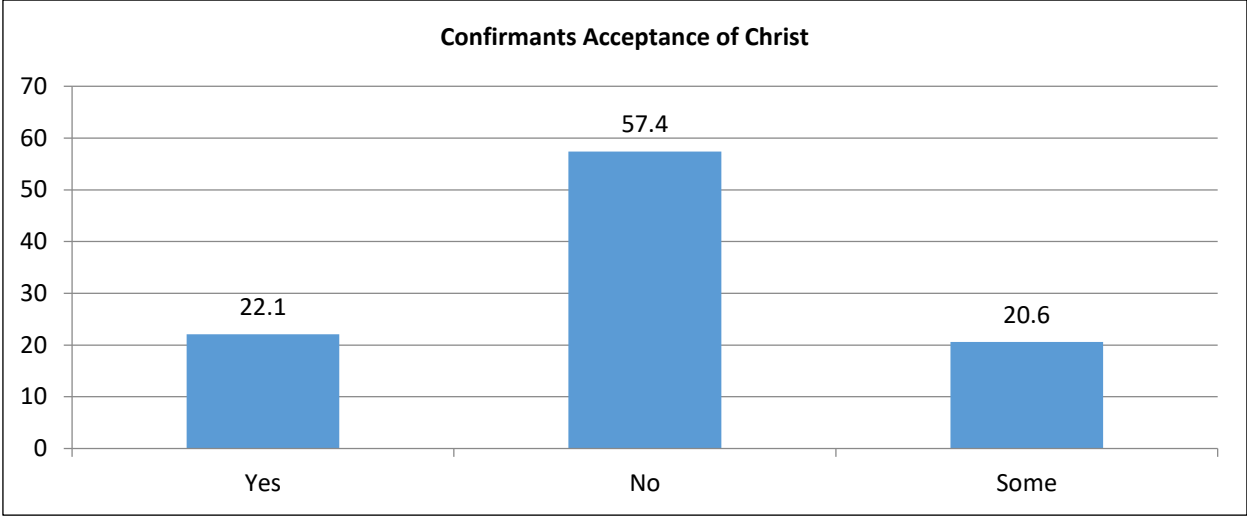
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	15	22.1	22.1	22.1
No	39	57.4	57.4	79.4
Some	14	20.6	20.6	100.0
Total	68	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.1.10 shows that majority of the respondents amounting to 57% of the respondents said that not all catechumens accept Christ as their Lord and savior. 22.1% of the respondents believed that all the catechumens accept Christ. 20% of the respondents said that not all but just a few accept Christ. This then contradicts what the clergy swear as they present the catechumens to the bishop for confirmation. In the diocese of Kigezi, the clergy swear an oath that he has interviewed each person himself and found that each of them confesses Christ as lord and savior, is well disciplined, can bring others to Christ, can answer all questions in the catechism etc. In an interview with the retired Bishop, he said that since salvation is a free gift from

God, initiated by God, it's not a must that all should first accept Christ before confirmation but should rather be taught good Christian conduct.

**A bar graph 2.1.10 Catechumens accept Jesus Christ**



2.2. To examine how discipleship contributes to the spiritual growth of a Christian.

**Table 2.2: Contribution of Discipleship to the growth of the Church**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	58	85.3	100.0	100.0
	No	10	14.7		
Total		68	100.0		

Source: Primary data, October 2023

**A bar graph 2.2 showing contribution of Discipleship to the growth of the Church**

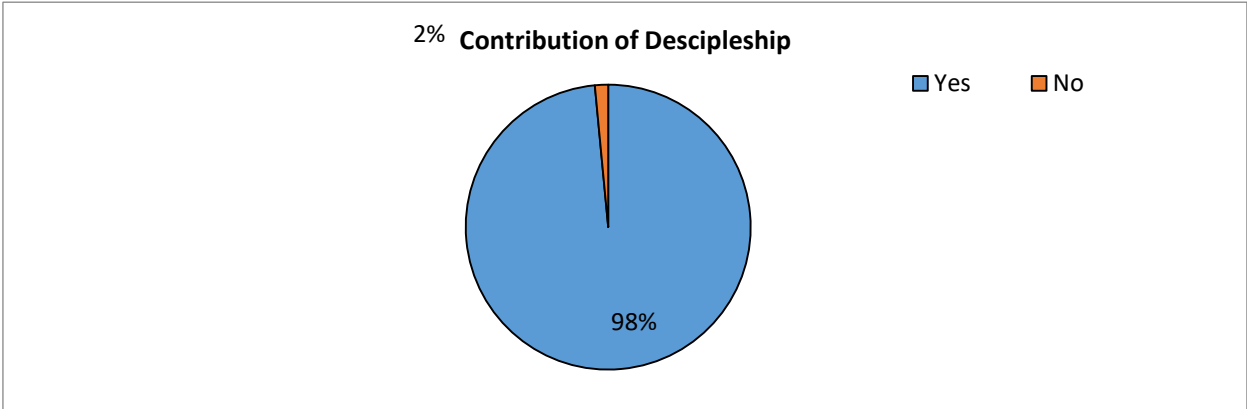


Table 2.2 showed that 98% of the respondents agreed that discipleship had contributed to the growth of their churches. This implies that the church needs to put in more efforts of this ministry since without it the church’s continuity is at stake, not only the church but also a country’s future leaders.

**Table 2.2.1 Contributions of discipleship ministry to the growth of the church and Christian.**

	<b>Frequenc y</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Increased church marriages	29	42.6	100.0
Increased church giving	28	41.2	100.0
Minimized social evils	12	17.6	100.0
Increased church participation	22	32.4	100.0
Improved church structures	21	30.9	100.0
People are more grounded in God's word	24	35.3	100.0
Christians like their church	33	48.6	100.0
Reduced divorce rate	17	25.0	100.0

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.2.1 showed that 48% of Christians said that because of discipleship, Christians have been able to love their church no wonder this table shows an increase in church participation 32%, an increase of church giving 41%, an increase in church marriages 42% and improved church structures. This matches well with what Sanou (2016) found out in his study when he wrote that when discipleship is done, a Christian becomes holistically mature. The above are attributes of a mature Christian.

35% of the respondents said that as a result of discipleship, they have been grounded in God’s word. This takes a discipline of fellowship and bible study. According to (Calhoun 2015; Whitney 2014; Dybdahl (2008), in addition to bible study and fellowship is, memorizing bible verses, meditation on scripture, prayer and fasting among many others. These spiritual disciplines lead to a close relationship with God and pave way for one’s spiritual transformation.

**2.3 To explore the challenges facing the discipleship Ministry in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry.**

**Table 2.3.1: Are there Challenges faced by discipleship ministry**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	67	98.5	98.5	98.5
No	1	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	68	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, October 2023

**A bar graph 2.3.2 showing contribution of Discipleship to the growth of the Church**

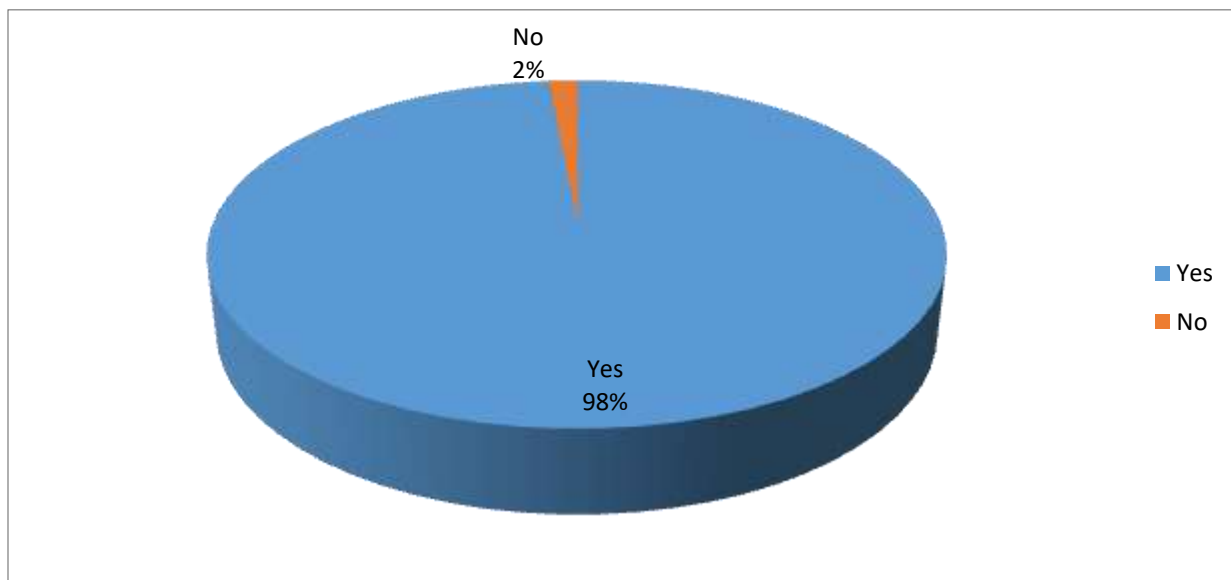


Table 2.3.1 showed the number of respondents who said that there were challenges faced during discipleship. 98% of the respondents agreed that there were challenges incurred in this ministry. Only 2% respondent believed that there were no challenges in discipleship ministry.

All the people interviewed in this research also agree that there were numerous challenges affecting this ministry from time memorial.

**Table 2.3.2: Challenges of Discipleship ministry**

	Frequency (N=68)	Percent
Limited Time	35	51.5
Opposition from Fellow X-tians	29	42.6
Competition from other Churches	23	33.8
Many Christians leave the church	15	22.1
Limited resources	44	64.7
Limited human resource	41	60.3
Illiteracy	19	27.9
Not a Priority	45	66.2

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

Table 2.3.2 showed that 66% of the respondents confirmed that the main challenge of discipleship ministry was that discipleship was not given the first priority in Church. This was followed by limited resources with 64% score. This indicates the source of the serious challenges the Church is facing today. It contradicts the great commission as in Mathew 28:19 which is the foundation of the church's mission. Well, limited resources are a serious problem in this hard economy but still how much is needed to mentor one person like how Jesus mentored his disciples or how Paul mentored Timothy, Titus among others? How much money is needed for these clergy to set an example and model good leaders out of them? If the church can spend money on the building projects, why has it failed to raise money for discipleship programs? As for Jacob (2016), he found out that the church lacked vision and motivation. Could this be case if the above challenges mentioned were rated?

**Table 2.3.3: Solutions to Discipleship program Challenges**

	Frequency (N=68)	Percent
proper use of holidays	11	16.2
Sensitization seminars	59	86.8
Encourage Family Alters	9	13.2
Strengthen fellowships	30	44.1
House to house missions	15	22.1
Bible study	35	51.5
Prayers and fasting	8	11.8
Missions	9	13.2
Network with relevant bodies	38	55.9
Form groups and clubs	23	33.8
Do follow-ups	35	51.5

**Source: Primary data, October 2023**

86% of the respondents believed that sensitization seminars could help combat the problem. This means that both the Christians and church leaders need to be sensitized more about discipleship ministry. This table also showed that 55% of the respondents also believed that the church should network with relevant bodies to get discipleship materials. This was followed by 51% of respondents saying that the church leaders need to do follow up on Christians who receive Christ. 44% of the respondents also said that fellowships needed to be strengthened in order to bear much impact. Jacob (2016) in his study found out that many pastors lacked vision, knowledge, training and good materials. Though the least percentage of respondents 11% said that prayer and fasting can solve these discipleship programs, the researcher thinks this is a better idea and priority because it gives both the disciple and the disciplined an opportunity to hear from God, and know his will. It also gives the disciple a chance to learn from God directly, thus easing discipleship process.

Turyamureeba (2012) narrated how follow ups contributed greatly to the growth of the church in Kigezi. He writes that whenever a brethren missed fellowship, members would go at his place and find out why. To the new born again, they would be

attached to mature Christians in faith to help nurture them. This attracted many people to fellowship and such a depth of fellowship groomed many who in turn were accountable to grooming others

## CHAPTER THREE

### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDING

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings based on the objectives of the study and the related published work.

#### 3.1 The available discipleship programs in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry.

The main discipleship program according to table 2.1.1 indicated mothers' union and fathers' union. With 60.3% frequency rate. This was followed by the youth programs with 50% frequency rate. Whereas the core aims of Mother's Union and Fathers Union nurture groups are centered on family life, and parenting, one wonders why there is increased rate of divorce as reported in various newspapers (New Vision, July 9<sup>th</sup> 2013, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Daily Monitor, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 etc.). This implied that though the church considers these nurture groups to help in the discipleship ministry, there is still a big gap to be filled. Furthermore, these Christian nurture groups are not mainly concerned with a spiritual growth and its continuity. These nurture groups do not deal with bible study and they don't have a specific syllabus or curriculum that they follow. Basing on these findings about the Christian nurture groups, the researcher therefore feels that they are insufficient to spiritual growth of an individual thus leading to limited spiritual maturity.

Furthermore, it was important to find out that the church had put up programs for the youth to be discipled but current studies showed youth to be in a serious exodus from their mainline churches to Pentecostal or charismatic evangelical churches. Kahenya (2010) in his study in Kenya found out that youth below 30 years of age feel the church is irrelevant and does not address their needs and have lost a sense of belonging thus the exodus. In the same study, both the active and retired clergy also agreed that they had not met the expectations of the youth and as a result have lost some charismatic members of their faith. This study does not contradict what Masoka (2006) wrote when he stated that the church lacks appropriate and efficient discipleship strategy. This therefore implies that the church in the diocese of kigezi,

not only in Kigezi but worldwide has got to improve her programs to curb down the youth exodus.

Table 2.1.1 also shows that bible study and fellowship had a medium percentage of frequencies of 47 % and 42% respectively. In an interview, one of the retired bishops and a retired clergy in the diocese emphasized mentorship discipleship program and fellowship meeting that the two contributed immensely to the growth of the Church in Kigezi during the early revival times.

This meant that the church leaders ought to be more intentional and invest more on the bible study and fellowship since these two lay a foundation and background for family life, parenting, spiritual growth, stewardship and general church growth. Unfortunately, most of the churches in this archdeaconry do fellowships more than bible study. Worse still, most clergy do not actively attend these fellowship meetings in the name of being too much busy with parish work. That is a sign of insensitiveness to discipleship. It was evident that the most fellowship the Christians will be either alone or with the lay reader who is also inadequately trained especially in areas of bible study and exposition. Bible study is mainly an abstract not practical since a few have been trained to interpret the bible more challenging was the reality that even a fellowship takes between forty minutes to one hour time because of shortage of time. This time is also inadequate for a whole service including praise and worship, intercessions, lesson reading, preaching or teaching, testimonies etc. This today poses a serious challenge to the forth coming generation as it creates immature Christians unlike in the past where fellowship was given time, and bible study given its right place. In fact, Ruyendo (2012) and Turyamureeba (2012) both write about the east African revival and they show how vital bible study and fellowships were vital towards nurturing young believers, no wonder, during that time of revival, there were increased cases of stewardship and production of many evangelists as well as church leaders and government officials. But fellowships are really good for discipleship as Ogden (2006) believes that as far as intentionality in Christian discipleship is concerned, small fellowships are ideal for the pastor to manage leading to spiritual transformation among the new converts. Geiger (2005) in his survey discovered a

similar advantage of small group fellowships that they were best for spiritual transformation. He discovered that people who were in a group displayed characters of a disciple in comparison to those that belonged to no nurture groups. They prayed more fervently, are generous, and offer sacrificial services to the church and regularly shared the gospel. Berna (2015) also supports small group fellowships when he writes that they are a preferred method of nurturing Christians in today's church. To bear lasting fruits, these fellowships must be conducted with an intentionality to disciple making.

In an interview with the diocesan missionary, he confessed that the diocese has no specific discipleship programs but instead was going to implement the provincial strategic discipleship movement which involves daily scripture reading. On programs like Mothers' union and the Father's union, the Diocesan mission coordinator emphasized that these groups were intended to equip others, nurture their family members. He also quickly added that confirmation class is one of the discipleship programs.

More so, under discipleship programs in the church. Both respondents those who filled the questionnaires and those who responded orally both agreed that baptism and confirmation classes were part of Christian discipleship strategy that the church had. However, this program has challenges, Masoka (2006) adds that baptism is understood as a graduation from any study, a reason why it has been taken as a public ceremony for weaning new converts from being nurtured. After baptism, these new members of the Christian family are not given plans to help them attain spiritual growth that would eventually lead to spiritual maturity. So, how do they mature up spiritually?

Related to the above is the catechism class for confirmation ceremony. Haasnoot (2015) in his research found out that the catechesis class for baptism and confirmation classes increased the number of Christians but they did not go deep as it should. He further notes that however much the numbers of these Christians are big, they have to a lesser extent impacted their church positively and this has been so because teaching is not done well as in the past, according to some of his

interviewees. Similarly, in Kigezi, there are a lot of mushrooming churches, Christians move from one church to another and many others have gone back to African traditional religions. Yet majority of these Christians come from the Anglican Church, are baptized and confirmed in the Anglican faith. This practically challenges what the priests swear in presentation of the catechumens to their bishops before he confirms them into their faith. For example, in Kigezi, the priests swear that “before God and all people witnessing, these catechumens are well taught and able to behave as God’s children, confess and believe in Jesus Christ and are able to bring other people to God. If this oath is true, why are there increased cases of nominalism, witchcraft and other many social evils among the people that ‘are able to bring others to Christ?’

Table 2.1.2 showed that the cumulative percentage of the effectiveness of the discipleship programs was 92%, this is close to excellent. 51.5% of the respondents also agreed that the discipleship programs in their parishes were very good. This is strange. These discipleship programs might have produced some good fruits but not close to excellence as majority responded otherwise why would the rate of divorce increase or the rate of youth exodus increase if these discipleship programs were excellent, good and better? The researcher thinks that those who responded fair were more genuine than those who responded excellent and better. On the other hand, Ogden (2003) in his study found out that the small groups fellowship was easy for the pastor to manage and provide proper attention, discipleship and care. Geiger (2015) also found out that nurture groups were very important for spiritual transformation, the researcher thus believes that if the team leaders invest heavily in these nurture groups, tangible results would be realized.

Table 2.1.3 indicated that all the respondents 100% agreed that the discipleship programs at their churches were able to effectively produce other disciples. Cuthbert (1970) believes that discipleship gives opportunities for come back, for question and answer, for dialogue and criticism. He further narrated how a young man was beaten after accepting the new faith, but received continued visits by the lay reader and how he was later prepared for confirmation and joined church ministry. He concluded that

through discipleship, many people gained enormous confidence, served God in different ways and worked towards church development. This supports Barna's (2001) conclusion that the strength of any church is wholly dependent on its commitment to true discipleship. The researcher agreed with the respondents that the discipleship programs they have are able to produce other disciples but this wholly depends on the implementers of these programs.

Table 2.1.4 showed that Tuesday and Thursday fellowship were the most effective methods of discipleship programs with 83%. Turyamureeba (2012) in his study also found out that during the East African revival period, in the fellowship meetings, believers helped each other grow spiritually, supported each other in times of joy and sorrow, visited each other and shared meals. As a result, many people were attracted to fellowship and this led to the growth of the church in Kigezi. The NIV bible commentary reveals Enoch to have had a fellowship with God; they had a close relationship and because of that he lived up to 365 years and then God took him away. He didn't die. Genesis 5:24. The commentator adds that his close walk with the Lord should move and inspire Christians to make Christ their consultant and closest companion in their Christian pilgrimage. And this is best developed in fellowship meetings. However, the 21<sup>st</sup> century with its modern technology of employment opportunities has left brethren with no time for fellowship meetings and yet virtual fellowships too tend to be costly, a reason why discipleship ministry is crimpling. In an interview with one of the canons, a retired clergyman and chairman board of mission in the Diocese of Kigezi, said that discipleship in the early times was done mainly by the fellowship members but not mainly the priests. He quickly added that this was mainly done by the exemplary members of the fellowship. In another interview with one of the retired bishops, he also emphasized that fellowships were vital part of discipleship programs. He explained how brethren would look for those who got lost from fellowships, how they prayed together, shared the word and walked in light. He also noted that repentance was a key element of their fellowship.

Table 2.1.5 shows the ways in which the available discipleship programs have enhanced discipleship ministry. 59 (86%) of the respondents believed that these discipleship programs have brought many to come to Christ. 72% of the respondents also indicated that discipleship programs strengthened the faith of believers and 52% of the respondents indicated that the available discipleship programs strengthened fellowship meetings. However, one wonders why the discipleship programs have brought many people to Christ, strengthened their faith and fellowship and yet church attendance has remained low with almost the least percentage of 25%. This depicts a similar problem which Haloviak (2005) established while he was the general conference archives and statics director in the Baptist church of North America. In his study, he discovered that 5million people joined the church between 2000-2004, making the church that had 972,000 members grow to 13million, and yet more than 1.4 million people left the same church in the same period of time. Closely related to this is the observed number of Christians that the bishop confirms into faith and the rate of youth exodus from the mainline churches to these mushrooming churches. Unfortunately, most of these people who leave the Anglican faith have been baptized and confirmed into their faith and majority fall into the youth age group. This indicates a serious problem. The church might need to think of a discipleship strategy that not only looks at the quantity of disciples but also the quality of disciples made.

Table 2.1.6 answers the question of how long is the baptism class conducted before the baptism ceremony. Majority of the respondents agree that baptism class is taught and majority about 34.8% agreed that they are taught one day. This was followed by 30.9% who said that their baptism class takes two weeks. Teaching the baptism class the traditional aspect in the Anglican church since the god parents are expected to teach the young one their faith and the way of the lord as the 16<sup>th</sup> century leaders of reformation encouraged.

Though respondents agreed to have had several baptism classes according to this table 9, the same respondents do not look at it as effective in making disciples evidenced in table 7. This statement confirms that less attention has been given to intentionality while implementing this discipleship program. Similarly, Haasnoot

(2015) in his study found out that the catechesis class for both baptism and confirmation classes increased the number of Christians but they did not go deep as it should be. where only 6 respondents out of the 68 respondents amounting to only 8% rated baptism as the most effective method of discipleship.

In the same interview with bishops, he recalled that in 1870's, people would attend baptism class for six months. He also said that other Christians who wanted to convert to Anglicanism would study for one year. He quickly added that before baptism ceremony, the candidates would be seriously questioned and those who failed to answer the given questions would be asked to repeat the training. He however lamented on today's lack of teaching which he said that it is slowly killing the church and that it leads to loss of church doctrine.

During the interview with some senior clergy in the diocese, the researcher discovered that baptism and confirmation classes lasted between six month and one year and the candidates would be examined. Those who failed the examination would be asked to repeat.

Table 2.1.7 presented the respondent understanding whether there was a specific syllabus for baptism or not. 52% of the respondents agreed that there was a syllabus for baptism, 39.7% said that the syllabus was not there and 7% of the respondents were unable to answer the question. This is not strange because the episcopal of New York (2021) showed that preparation for baptism in many places had developed into an extensive period of preparation often as long as three years.

According to one of the retired bishops, baptism class took one-year after which the candidates would be examined and only those who passed the examination would be baptized and others would repeat. This tallies well with what other clergy, said about baptism. 10 out of the 12 interviewees lament why the church leaders are no longer putting a lot of emphasis on preparation for baptism classes. Through the interviews, the researcher found out that the church had catechism one and catechism two which were used during the instruction of the candidates. But the catechism 1 and 2 syllabus

were meant for only the confirmation class. It was evident that though the Christians and other church leaders believe that the church has a syllabus for baptism candidates in the prayer book, it was actually a baptism service order not a syllabus.

Table 2.1.7 showed that 85.4% of the respondents said that the syllabus for Christian catechism is in the prayer book. This implies that these other books for catechism are rarely used and one wonders whether they are now almost irrelevant or why the church kind of disregarded them. 39.7% could not answer the question. Sykes (1988) noted that in England, there were many catechism manuals available for both clergy and the laity. At that time there were injunctions issued requiring clergy to teach and explain the creed, the Lord's prayer and the 10 commandments. He further adds that the early reformation days created fresh efforts to teach the faith. The clergy were also to teach their Christians and exhort all parents to teach their children and servants to do the same. This explains well how deep the early Christians fathers valued catechism. More so, archbishop Thomas Cranmer, in the prayer designed in 1548, during reformation labored hard to include a short instruction into Christian religion in the prayerbooks

Table 2.1.8 shows the duration of confirmation class. It revealed that 77.9% of the respondents agreed that confirmation class was usually taught for six full months. And a very small percentage believes that children are never taught before confirmation. Surprisingly, results of table seven also show that confirmation was not an effective method of discipleship because only 3 out of the 68 respondents amounting to only 4% of the total respondents believed in confirmation as an effective discipleship strategy. This supports what Haasnoot (2015) found out in his study when he concluded that the reason, we don't see a big impact after confirmation among Christians is that teaching is not done well as in the past according to some of his interviewees.

Table 2.1.9 shows that majority of the respondents amounting to 57% of the respondents said that not all catechumen accept Christ as their Lord and savior. 22.1% of the respondents believed that all the catechumen accepts Christ. 20% of the respondents said that not all but just a few accept Christ. This then contradicts what

the clergy swear as they present the catechumens to the bishop for confirmation. In the diocese of Kigezi, the clergy swear an oath that he has interviewed each person himself and found that each of them confesses Christ as lord and savior, is well disciplined, can bring others to Christ, can answer all questions in the catechism etc. In an interview with the retired Bishop, he said that since salvation is a free gift from God, initiated by God, it's not a must that all should first accept Christ before confirmation but should rather be taught good Christian conduct. One also wonders, if they don't accept Christ and the lord and savior of their lives, then how do they bring others to Christ?

### **3.3 The Contribution of Discipleship to the Spiritual Growth of a Christian**

Table 2.2. showed that 98% of the respondents agreed that discipleship had contributed to the growth of their churches. This implies that the church needs to put in more efforts of this ministry since without it the church's continuity is at stake, not only the church but also a country's future leaders. Christian discipleship sustains the church life. William (2013) in his final remarks concluded that intentional Christian discipleship is difficult to embark on but very important to the continued growth of the church. He further indicated that if Christian's mindset of discipleship does not abound, in a single generation the church will cease to exist. Surprisingly, William (2001) indicated that discipleship appears in the New Testament 270 times thus indicating the prime place of discipleship in a Christians life. This justifies how important Christian discipleship is.

Table 2.2.1 showed that 48% of Christians said that because of discipleship, Christians have been able to love their church no wonder this table shows an increase in church participation 32%, an increase of church giving 41%, an increase in church marriages 42% and improved church structures. This matches well with what Sanou (2016) found out in his study when he wrote that when discipleship is done, a Christian becomes holistically mature. The above are attributes or parameters of a mature Christian. Similar to the above is what Cuthbert (1970) found out in his study many people who had been discipled gained enormous confidence, served God in different ways and walks of life, and worked towards church development.

35% of the respondents said that as a result of discipleship, they have been grounded in God's word. This takes a discipline of fellowship and bible study. Being grounded in God's word is a result of intentionality in fellowship and bible study lessons. According to (Calhoun 2015; Whitney 2014; Dybdahl (2008), in addition to bible study and fellowship is, memorizing bible verses, meditation on scripture, prayer and fasting among many others. These spiritual disciplines lead to a close relationship with God and pave way for one's spiritual transformation. The commentator of 1john 1:3-5 in the life application bible commentary (2007) writes about three principals of having fellowship with other believers which include a fellowship that is grounded in the testimony of God's word which creates togetherness, mutual built on the unity of believers and the daily renewal of the fellowship through the holy spirit.it is as a result of these three principles that the fellowship and bible study among believers are maintained which in turn lead to a spiritual maturity.

#### **3.4 The Challenges facing the Discipleship Ministry in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry**

Table 2.3. showed the number of respondents who said that there were challenges faced during discipleship. 67 respondents out of 68 agreed that there were challenges incurred in this ministry. Only one respondent believed that there were no challenges in discipleship ministry.

All the people interviewed in this research also agree that there were numerous challenges affecting this ministry from time memorial.

Table 2.3.1 showed that 66% of the respondents confirmed that the main challenge of discipleship ministry was that discipleship was not given the first priority in Church. This was followed by limited resources with 64% score. If Mbewe (2020) has put it that Christian discipleship is the life of the church, how comes discipleship is not given priority? This indicates the source of the serious challenges the church is facing today. It contradicts the great commission as in Mathew 28:19 which is the foundation of the church's mission. Well, limited resources are a serious problem in this hard economy but still how much is needed to mentor one person like how Jesus mentored his

disciples or how Paul mentored Timothy, Titus among others? How much money is needed for these clergy to set an example and model good leaders out of them? If the church can spend money on the building projects, why has it failed to raise money for discipleship programs? Then the researcher agrees with what Jacob (2016), found out in his study that the church lacked vision and motivation. Could this be case if the above challenges mentioned were rated? Mbewe (2020) emphasizes that the first responsibility Jesus gave the church was to make disciples of all nations and this responsibility of the Church to the world has not changed. Or else discipleship not being a priority of the church as per the primary source findings or the church lacking vision and motivation as Jacob found out implies that the church as forgotten its source and soon, we shall see the proverb which says that a river that forgets its source soon dries come to pass.

86% of the respondents believed that sensitization seminars could help combat the problem. This means that both the Christians and Church leaders need to be sensitized more about discipleship ministry. This table also showed that 55% of the respondents also believed that the church should network with relevant bodies to get discipleship materials. This was followed by 51% of respondents saying that the church leaders need to do follow up on Christians who receive Christ. 44% of the respondents also said that fellowships needed to be strengthened in order to bear much impact. Jacob (2016) in his study found out that many pastors lacked vision, knowledge, training and good materials. Though the least percentage of respondents 11% said that prayer and fasting can solve these discipleship programs, the researcher thinks this is a better idea and priority because it gives both the disciple and the discipled an opportunity to hear from God, and know his will. It also gives the disciple a chance to learn from God directly, thus easing discipleship process.

Turyamureeba (2012) narrated how follow ups contributed greatly to the growth of the church in kigezi. He writes that whenever a brethren missed fellowship, members would go at his place and find out why. To the new born again, they would be attached to mature Christians in faith to help nurture them. This attracted many

people to fellowship and such a depth of fellowship groomed many who in turn were accountable to grooming others.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to examine discipleship and Christians spiritual growth. In this chapter, the researcher presents a theological reflection of this chapter basing on objectives of the study.

## **4.2 The available discipleship programs in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry**

### **Fellowship meetings**

These may be either in small groups or big groups, even one on one. And the bible puts strong emphasis on fellowship for spiritual growth. The book of Acts presents the growth of the church as a result of fellowship meetings when he wrote that and they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and the fellowship to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42ff. The author of proverbs states it well when he writes that iron sharpens iron and one man sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17. This indicates how vital fellowships are in spiritual growth of a person. As for the writer to the Hebrews, he warns not to neglect to meet together as is the habit of some but encouraging one another and all the more you see the day drawing nearer. Hebrews 10:25. The same way Paul writes to the Thessalonians to encourage one another, build one another up just as you are doing admonish the idle, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak be patient with them all. This would thus lead to spiritual maturity so that they are able to have the solid food that Paul talks about in the letter to the Hebrews. Hebrews 5:13-14.

### **Teaching doctrine baptism and confirmation**

Sykes and booty (1988) noted that catechisms were meant for the instruction of children before and after baptism so that they might have a real knowledge of what baptism had meant for them and become responsible Christians as they approached confirmation. The teaching was well designed to instill obedience. It could also be a foundation of a reflective Christian life. It also laid a foundation of Christian education for the young. The clergy were to diligently instruct and examine candidates of catechism classes. This shows the importance of Christian teachings. Paul urges Timothy to, “pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching, persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.” 2 Timothy 4:16, he further goes ahead to add on that, “you however continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them and that from childhood you have known

the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God.....and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for right living.”2Timothy 3:14-17, Paul teaches the Colossians tirelessly hard in order to present every man complete in Christ. Colossians 1:28 and so is Paul’s charge Titus in 1:9. Psalm 78:5 presents God commanding their ancestors to teach his laws to their children so that the next generation must learn them and also teach them to their children. In other words, this teaching was supposed to be continuous and so is discipleship. Jesus himself commanded his disciples to teach those who would believe such a teaching is to everyone who follows Christ not only to the leaders. Ephesians 4:11-14, for he gave some to be apostles.

### **Mentorship program**

According to Ogden (2007) discipleship involves sharing life, purpose and the way of being. As for Paul when he writes his first letter to the Thessalonians, he used an image of the mother when talking about his process of discipling the Thessalonians. 1Thessalonians 2:7-8, “but we were gentle when we were with you, like a mother taking care of her child. Because of our love for you, we were ready to share with you not only the good news from God but even our own lives.” In the same chapter, Paul goes ahead to explain how he dealt with each of them like a father with his children, urging them to live a life that pleases God, encouraging and comforting them. Furthermore, Paul sets a good example of mentorship to Christians in Corinth. To the Corinthian church, Paul urges them ‘to follow my example as I follow the example of Christ’ 1corinthians 11:1, to the Christians at Philippi, he urges them that, ‘whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me, put it into practice. Philippians 4:9’ to the Philippian Church, he further adds that, ‘join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do’. Philippians 3:17. The Old Testaments also gives us good examples of mentorship especially when we look at Moses mentoring Joshua Exodus 27:18-23, God told Elijah to anoint Elisha to the status of a prophet as his replacement 1Kings 19:16 among many others.

I agree with Csinos (2022) when he writes that Christianity is more than cognitive understanding of doctrines, statements of faith and creeds but that it is a way of life that is learned, developed and experienced in a community. This asserts what is described in the above-mentioned biblical texts. It is thus true that the renewed focus on discipleship is bringing the need for a daily relationship with Jesus back to the foreground of Christian thought.

Peter in his first letter to the brethren admonished the religious leaders to be good examples to the flock under their care 1 Peter 5:1-10. The writer of Hebrews reminds the Christians to remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Hebrews 13:7,

#### **4.3 The Contribution of Discipleship to the spiritual growth of a Christian at St. Marks Kikungiri Archdeaconry**

The findings of this study show the parameters of spiritual growth which are as a result of Christian discipleship. Among them are increased church marriages, stewardship, minimized social evils, increased church participation, increased evangelists, improved church structures and income generating projects among others. All these are as a result of teaching. Biblically, the apostles took the word of Jesus seriously and did not see baptism as a by the way and as instructions that they could do away with. As we read in the book of acts. The story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch shows that he was first taught, helped him understand and baptism came last. Acts :35-38. Acts 2:41-42 stresses that the disciples devoted themselves to the apostles teaching which is in line with Jesus' command in Mathew 28:19-20. Acts 20 25-27 also shows Paul had taken good time in Ephesus teaching believers and church elders the ways of God, how they can leave as God pleases and this duty still stands today. 1 Timothy 3:14-15 Paul advises Timothy how to live as a leader of God's people. In fact, the letter to Timothy full of instructions Christian believers in church, who qualifies to be elders and deacons in church, how the church should look after the vulnerable among them as well as their pastors. All these, in addition to doctrinal

teachings result into mature Christians who in turn build holistic development of the church.

Both primary sources and secondary sources reveal that discipleship leads to the growth of the church as people become more grounded in God's word. Mbewe (2020) discovered that the need to instruct Christians to obey Jesus' command or instructions gave birth to the apostolic epistles from the book of romans to revelations. These letters were written to churches and individual church leaders. They were to help them how to live as God wants and how to believe in him. The apostles knew that it was their duty given to them by God to instruct the church and guard against erroneous teachings and that erroneous living must not take root. as a result, the church grew strong and produced many churches that fill the world today.

Christian discipleship also leads to spiritual growth of Christians. The indicators for spiritual growth include increased stewardship, helping the vulnerable, reaching out to others within and outside the community outside the parish and people using their giftings voluntarily, outside the parish, all these show the spiritual maturity that we read in Isaiah 58:6 end of that chapter. These verses explain the kind of worship and fasting that God desires and wants, about true fasting, or true and false worship. This tallies well with what James writes in his letter to the brethren james1:27 which says pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the father means caring for the orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

Since discipleship is a continuous process, the findings show that it has been able to develop church leaders through the Christian nurture groups and fellowships. Nicolaas (2009) writes that the nation of Israel did the same to ensure continuity of their culture and tradition. And indeed we see in the old testament Moses grooming the leaders of Israel in exodus 18: 19-26, Moses training Joshua in exodus17:8-13,33:7-11, Eli training Samuel from his youth in 1samuel2:11, 3:1-21, Samuel forming and training a company or school of prophets in 1samuel10:5-12, 19:20-24, and 2kings 2:15-17, 4:1, Elisa training Elisha in 1kings 19:19-21,2kings 2:1-15, and David training many for

ministry especially the musicians in 1chronicals 15:16-22,16:4-6. Blending (1975) states that Jesus calling of his disciples was a call to decisive and intimate discipleship of his earthly ministry. His call of the disciples and training them for three years was to enable them attain a holistic maturity which would result in continuance of his ministry thus the great commission in Mathew 28:19-10. Nicolaas (2009) writes that the method that Jesus used was to build certain essential skills into their lives like mentoring, leadership and coaching. He further gave them opportunities for ministry by sending them out as in the gospel of Luke 10 and even went ahead to discuss the results of their outreach in verses17-20. This groomed the disciples for the results and acts we see in the book of acts, from the start of the first church in acts chapter 2 at the Pentecost day where peter preached and 3000 people believed in the gospel, and its growth and fellowships as in acts2:42 -47 and spread to rest of the through different missionary journeys.

#### **4.4 The challenges facing the discipleship Ministry at St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry**

66.2% of the respondents believed that the major problem affecting discipleship is that it has not been made a priority. But this contradicts biblical view of mission. Immediately after his baptism, he called who to be his disciples as the first step, he trained them for three years as earlier mentioned and mandated for mission according to Mathew 28:19-20. Here Jesus commissioned the disciples to preach the gospel to all nations and teach and baptize those who would believe. In acts 11:23-26, preaching led to addition of believers, which was followed by teaching of people. Because this was very important, Barnabas even called upon Paul to come and help.

It was also evident that discipleship is affected by the poor examples set by the church leaders. Ruyendo (2012) writing about the Portuguese missionary activities in the kongo kingdom notes that the priest was referred to as corrupt, superstition, and idolatry. And contributed to the disappearance of Christianity. This does not very much contradict the news flooding over media of church leaders involved in adultery, alcoholism and financial mismanagement. It neither does not contradict what Masooka (2006) found out in his study about the immorality of church leaders. However, this

conduct is not new as we read in Ezekiel. Paul's charge to Timothy in his first letter 3:14-15, tells him of conduct befitting the church elders and deacons. On immorality, Jesus advises the religious leaders to revise their ways otherwise he says that woe to the hypocrites who say what they don't do, in Matthew 23:13-35, "woe to the scribes, the pharisees, the teachers of the law... and warns them of the calamity that will befall them. Therefore, the clergy should work hard to fulfill their obligations as far as their calling is concerned. Jesus himself calls upon

55% of the respondents said there was no time for discipleship this problem was on both sides i.e. the Christians and the church leaders in charge of discipleship. Jesus at the time of resurrection he charged Simon Peter to take care of his sheep and to feed his lambs John 21:15-17. Paul charges the Timothy to "preach the gospel in season and out of season. 1 Timothy 4:2-, to patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching" so, the church leaders especially the clergy, God charges them to take care of his flock. The book of Ezekiel shows God disapproving the shepherds who had not taken care of his sheep. To them he says, "as surely as I live, says the sovereign lord, you abandoned my flock and left them to be attacked, by every wild animal. And though you were my shepherds, you didn't search for my sheep when they were lost. You took care of yourselves and left my sheep to starve .... I now consider these shepherds my enemies and will hold them responsible for what has happened to my flock. I will take away their right to feed my flock and I will stop them from feeding themselves." (Ezekiel 34:8-10).

Both the secondary and primary finding reveal that discipleship faces a problem of limited resources. These resources are in terms of human and financial resources, The same challenge of limited human resource is evident even during Jesus' ministry when he told the disciples in the gospel according to St. Luke 10:2, that the harvest is plenty but the workers are few. This was when he was sending out the 70 workers to the disciples. In the gospel according to St. Matthew 9:35-38, Jesus after travelling through the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the good news of the kingdom, healing every kind of diseases and illness,

and looking at a big crowd, having compassion over them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd, he repeated the same statement that the harvest is plenty that the workers are few. These are two different occasions and circumstances. So, in all these texts, Jesus concludes that they pray that the lord of harvests will send more workers. For this problem, the remedy is to pray. as for Mathew 22:14, Jesus says many are called but a few are chosen.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented the summery of the whole research study, conclusions and recommendation to different key stake holders involved the discipleship ministry in kikungiri archdeaconry.

#### **5.2 Summary**

The purpose of the study was to examine Christian discipleship and Christian's spiritual growth in Kikungiri archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi. In this chapter the researcher presents the conclusions of discipleship and Christians spiritual growth

based on the objectives of the study: to investigate the available discipleship programs in Kikungiri archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi, to explore the challenges facing discipleship ministry in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry and to examine how discipleship ministry has contributed to Christian's spiritual growth in St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry, Diocese of Kigezi.

### **5.2.1 The available discipleship programs.**

The researcher found out the church in kikungiri has various discipleship programs which are good to lead many to spiritual maturity and can as well produce continuous disciples since discipleship is a continuous process. These discipleship programs include fellowships, bible study, mentorship programs, catechism classes, Christian nurture groups. Unfortunately, the implementation of these discipleship programs has been a challenge, a reason we see gaps in this ministry.

### **5.2.2 Contribution of discipleship to the spiritual growth of a Christian.**

The researcher further found out that indeed discipleship has contributed fairly to the spiritual growth of Christians which has then resulted into the spiritual and numerical growth of the church. Parameters that show church growth are Fellowship, stewardship, income generating, care for the vulnerable people, all these cannot be achieved without a personal's spiritual growth. However, it was discovered that if discipleship is effectively done, using the multiplication method, then it would immensely earn long lasting results for even the generations to come.

### **5.2.3 The challenges faced by discipleship ministry**

The researcher found out various challenges faced by discipleship ministry affecting both the disciple and the discipled. These challenges are not new; they have been there and may still be there because every generation may carry its own challenges. These challenges included limited time on both the church leaders and those to carry out discipleship, and those that need to be discipled or the new converts or entrants, limited finances, lack of models and mentors to look up to, discipleship not being a priority among others. However, the main challenge was that most Christians did not know that since they were discipled, they were supposed to continue dicipling others so that the process of discipleship becomes continuous. They looked up to their parish priests and mission coordinators to do this ministry alone thinking it is primarily their

duty of discipleship. The researcher was thus able to help the respondent realize that discipleship is for every follower of Jesus Christ.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Christian discipleship as a church program should be given the first priority and be well utilized because 98% of the respondents agreed that it has contributed to the growth of the church. And if these available discipleship programs are systematically and consistently done, they have enormous benefits to both the disciples and the disciplined. In spite of the many challenges that affect discipleship ministry, those responsible for discipling young believers or new entrants should implore modern gadgets to help them continue ministry despite the challenge of limited time on both sides. Most challenges came from church leaders. Discipleship ministry leads to a holistic growth of the church as it leads to spiritual growth and stewardship which in turn breeds responsible citizens and expansion of God's kingdom here on earth.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

#### **Discipleship programs**

The Church in Kigezi has invaluable discipleship programs but seems these programs are under-utilized. The researcher thus recommends that church leaders (clergy, lay readers, departmental heads) do effective utilization of these programs and monitoring skills and also to copy from other organizations like Compassion International and Cornerstone Leadership Academy. The researcher further recommends that the Church leaders especially the clergy and the lay readers put much emphasis on teaching her Christians both catechism and bible study lessons in order not to lose her identity and doctrine as well as groom future leaders both for church and government, believers' engagement in the implementation of the discipleship programs, the Thursday plan of Bible study to focus on the central or key doctrinal topics. The researcher also recommends that Syllabus and curriculums should be developed for uniformity providing what kind of knowledge should be passed on in all Christian nurture groups. Church leaders elected should be born again so that they can nurture their subjects to spiritual maturity. For pre-marital counselling, the idea of cram work should stop but rather be explained. The researcher also recommends that since discipleship is a continuous process, the

church leaders together with the Christians set convenient time for implementation of the discipleship programs.

It was found out that the priests were no longer very much engaged in these fellowships in the name of being busy. The researcher thus recommends that the clergy and general Church leadership be part of the fellowship meetings even when they are not on program to lead or preach. Their daily attendance of these fellowships encourages the brethren to keep coming for the same but also helps them to develop a closer relationship with the brethren community. It gives them the chance to guide, teach and correct this group of people. It's an opportunity to discover the strength and weaknesses of his Christians as well as discover their spiritual gifts and use them appropriately.

### **Importance of discipleship**

Christian discipleship is an invaluable aspect of every Church. Christian discipleship leads to the holistic development of every Church. The researcher thus recommends that the church leaders (clergy, lay readers, departmental heads) makes discipleship a priority in all her activities in order to ensure continuity of church. Some of the Parameters for church growth already evident include Fellowships, stewardship and spiritual maturity, church leaders' participation in meetings, discipleship be made a key ministry hub and designing age-based discipleship program. income generating projects, care for the vulnerable people, all these cannot be achieved without a personal's spiritual growth.

Since discipleship is a continuous process, the researcher recommends that a systematically age-based discipleship program be designed for all age groups in the church. the Sunday school should be disciplined to join the youth group and the youth group too should be disciplined to join other nurture groups and leadership positions in Church. This will produce a well-grounded group of Christians that is able to sustain the continuity of the Church since they would be following in the footsteps of their

elders. This would thus fit well in the saying that the children are the foundation of the Church, the youth are the pillars and the old people are the roofings. This accounts for why discipleship is an invaluable treasure for any organization.

### **Challenges facing discipleship**

The whole challenge of discipleship centers around the church leaders especially the priest/ lay reader. The church leaders are Archbishop, Bishops, priests, Lay readers, Wardens and Council Members. The major player in this field is the Priest in charge of congregations.

The researcher recommends that training of trainers' plan should be put in place and well implemented, have more of sensitization seminars, disciples avoid sin and compromise to the great commission. Clergy should be discipline; church laws and principals be strictly observed. the church leaders should be well trained so that they equip others to do the same ministry. To those who fail to dedicate their time to their ministry in search of jobs for more money, they should be reminded of their calling. They should impact the church to feel their presence in order to attain what they want. This corresponds well with what Jesus told peter when he asked him in the gospel of St. Luke, that I sent you with nothing, did you lack, anything? And peter responded that no. also Jesus promised his disciples that who left all he had for the sake of my ministry will be rewarded times ten. These priests should thus trust God to be the source of their providence as he had promised.

One of the alarming challenges of discipleship was that there was no time and that discipleship was not given priority. If time for other activities can be found, then also time for discipleship would be found. If finances for other church development can be found, then finances for discipleship can be still found. But if the church leaders knew very well the importance of discipleship, then it would me made a priority. The researcher therefore recommends that more sensitization seminars be carried out about the value of Christian discipleship in all churches at all levels in order to reduce this growing insensitiveness to Christian discipleship.

The researcher also recommends that the top church leadership (arch bishop, bishop) and others should stop compromising with sin. Sin kills the church. If these church leaders are to be role models, mentors, and disciples in all ways, how will they do this ministry yet they are over the media with news of adultery, drunkards and financial mismanagement? The researcher thus recommends that church laws and principals should be strictly followed. Even if it means de robbing, affected persons should be robbed.

### **5.5 Recommendation for further Research**

Further research should be done on the need for discipleship training, who needs to be trained for this ministry and what kind of training would be necessary for a disciple.

Also, more research should be done on clergy as an enabler in the discipleship process.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Research study Work plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
To have research proposal completed	Making of the research proposal	September 2022	Researcher
To have the questionnaires distributed to the respondents and to have the data collected	Distribution of the questionnaires and Collection of data	October 2023	Researcher
To ensure that the data collected is analyzed into meaningful information.	Sort, group, and interpret, the collected data to give meaning	January 2024	Researcher

To have the report written	Report writing	April 2024	Researcher
Ensure that the report is presented to the responsible supervisor	Present the report for marking	May 2024	Researcher

**Questionnaire Guide for Christian Leaders Both Lay and Clergy**

**Dear Respondent,**

I am **Rev Judith Atwongyeirwe**, a student of Uganda Christian University, pursuing a degree of master of Arts in Theology. I am conducting a research study on discipleship and Christian’s spiritual growth. The information collected shall be for academic purposes as well as enhancing discipleship ministry in the diocese of Kigezi. Your responses will be used for this particular study and will be handled with a lot of confidentiality.

**Name (Optional)**.....

**Background Information**

1. Age (please tick)

- i) 13-22
- ii) 23-32
- iii) 33-42
- iv) 43-52
- v) 53-62
- vi) 63-72
- vii) 73-82



- i. Gender:    Male                       Female
- ii. Leadership Role in the church.....
- iii. Marital Status:    Single                       Married
- iv. Other (Specify).....
- v. Years of experience in Discipleship Implementation.....

**Research Objective one**

**The available discipleship programs in your church**

1. Does your church carry out Christian discipleship?

YES                       NO

2. Apart from baptism class, confirmation class and the Tuesday and Thursday fellowships, what other discipleship programs do you have?

- i.....
- ii.....
- iii.....
- iv.....

3. how effective are the above discipleship programs in producing other disciples of Christ?

(a) fair    (b) good    (c) better                      (d) excellent

4. Are the above discipleship programs effective in producing other disciples of Jesus Christ?

a) YES                       NO

5. Of the following discipleship programs in the church, tick the one which you find most effective in transformation of lives as well as discipling them.

- i.        Tuesday and Thursday fellowships
- ii.       baptism class
- iii.       confirmation class

theological training schools for church leaders

**6. How has the implementation of these discipleship programs enhanced Discipleship Ministry in kikungiri archdeaconry?**

.....  
.....  
.....

How long is the baptism class taught before the baptism ceremony is conducted?

.....  
.....

Is there a specific syllabus followed while teaching the baptism class?

.....

If yes, where is that syllabus found?

.....

How long is the confirmation class taught before the confirmation day?

.....

Do all confirmants accept Christ as their personal lord and savior before being confirmed?

.....

**Objective two**

(A) Do you think there are challenges involved in the implementation of discipleship programs?

Yes

No

(B) If yes, what challenges has the church leadership faced while implementing its discipleship programs *in regard to discipleship ministry* in your church?

- i. ....
- ii. ....
- iii. ....
- iv. ....
- v. ....

(B) What do you think should be done to address some of the above challenges?

- i. ....
- ii. ....
- iii. ....
- iv. ....
- v. ....

**Objective three**

(A) Are there any measures the church has put in place to address the challenges faced while implementing her discipleship programs?

Yes No

(B) If yes, outline those measures

- i.....
- ii.....
- iii.....
- iv.....
- v.....

(C) suggest other measures that can be employed to address these earlier mentioned challenges.

- i.....

ii.....

iii.....

iv.....

*Thank you.*

### **Appendix III: Interview guide**

1. What are the best discipleship programs you propose the church in the diocese to coopt?
2. How best can these discipleship programs be implemented?
3. Who are the stakeholders in ensuring continuity of discipleship process?

**DIOCESE OF KIGEZI**

**Confirmation.**

**CONFIRMATION OATH BY THE PARISH PRIEST.**

I ..... (put your name) parish priest of (put the name of the parish) .....

Bring to you the following people (put the number of candidates) ..... on (put the date) .....

I affirm before God that each one of them has been taught catechism for (put the number of month or days) ..... Being taught by (put names of those who taught) and I personally examined each one of them and I found out that each one was able to:

- (a) Confess that he believes in the risen lord Jesus Christ.
- (b) Behaves like a Christian
- (c) Tries to bring other people to Jesus Christ
- (d) Can recite the apostle's creed, lord's prayer and ten commandments in his local language.
- (e) Understands and can answer questions in the catechism.
- (f) Is baptized
- (g) Is 14years and above.

(h) Can read (apart from those marked with the star\*).

Sign.....

(put your name)

Parish priest.....

Date

**AMAZIINA**

**Gahandike omu nyuguta empango**

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. ....  | 19. .... |
| 2. ....  | 20. .... |
| 3. ....  | 21. .... |
| 4. ....  | 22. .... |
| 5. ....  | 23. .... |
| 6. ....  | 24. .... |
| 7. ....  | 25. .... |
| 8. ....  | 26. .... |
| 9. ....  | 27. .... |
| 10. .... | 28. .... |
| 11. .... | 29. .... |
| 12. .... | 30. .... |
| 13. .... | 31. .... |
| 14. .... | 32. .... |
| 15. .... | 33. .... |
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53. ....  
54. ....



# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

04/01/2023

To: judith atwongyeirwe

uganda christian university  
0782227958

**Type:** Initial Review

**Re: UCUREC-2022-390: Discipleship and Christian's spiritual growth: a case of St. Mark Kikungiri archdeaconry, diocese of Kigezi, Church of Uganda., 1, 2022-11-30**

I am pleased to inform you that the Uganda Christian University REC, through expedited review held on **07/12/2022** approved the above referenced study.

Approval of the research is for the period of **04/01/2023** to **04/01/2024**.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **04/01/2024** in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by Uganda Christian University REC:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Informed Consent forms	English	1	2022-11-30
2	Data collection tools	English	1	2022-11-30
3	Protocol	English	1	2022-11-30

Yours Sincerely



Prof. Peter Waiswa

For: Uganda Christian University REC



# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

SCHOOL OF RESEARCH AND POST GRADUATE STUDIES DISSERTATION

CORRECTION COMPLIANCE FORM (POST VIVA FORM)

DATE 25<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2025

Name of the candidate: Atwongyeirwe Judith

Reg No. RJ20M04/001

Title of Dissertation: Discipleship and Christians Spiritual growth in the Diocese of Kigezi: A Case of St. Mark Kikungiri Archdeaconry.

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

S/N	COMMENTS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINER	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1.	Intentional discipleship not adequately defined	A page on definition of key terms has been included.	Pages 8-10
2.	The candidate needs to consider intentionality under other focal points	Intentionality under other focal points have been considered	Pages 3, 7, 8., 16&52
3.	The candidate used more than one writing style.	Only one writing style has been used and that is trebuchet MS	document edited.
4.	The study is to be unveiled for use, so the language should be edited.	On the significance of the study, the tense was changed from past to future tense	Page 8
5.	Definition of key terms linked to the real-life situation of the study	A special page was included	Pages 8-18
6.	Social scientific method not included.	It's now included.	Page 23
7.	Inadequate reasons for why the growing laziness of believers and church leaders to discipleship	Reasons given	Page 5&6
8.	The candidate to arrange recommendations in a scholarly way	Recommendations have been re arranged	Page 71-73

INTERNAL EXAMINER

S/N	SECTION	EXAMINERS COMMENT	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1.	Overall structure and presentation.	Table of content poorly formatted Spelling mistakes and tenses	Table of content edited Spelling mistakes and tenses edited.	Page 1-99
2.	Chapter 1, introduction.	Discipleship gap not clearly stated, place where the problem is not mentioned, scope not specific, population was not quantified.	Edited the affected pages.	Page 1-32
3.	Chapter 2 Literature review	No specific gaps identified Literature sources above 10 years old.	Gaps were identified and most current books included.	Pages 11-23
3.	Chapter 3: Methodology	Tables lacked enough explanation	More explanation was added.	Pages 25-27
4.	Chapter 4: Presentation and analysis of data.	MU and FU were not earlier defined Heading of the table was not clear	MU and FU are now defined Table heading made clear.	Page 34
5.	Chapter 5: Discussion of results	Need to check on spelling, need to use recent publications Need for consistency in use of numbers or percentages	Spellings checked, new literature contacted, and only percentages used.	Page 34-50
6.	Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations.	Sixteen of the thirty-four references are beyond ten years	New books have been added (seven of them)	Pages, 1, 2, 22-23, etc.
7.	References and Appendixes.		One style of writing has been used.	

Judith Atongeirwe (Student)

Omona Andrew David (Supervisor)

# Atwongyeirwe Judith

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