Scientific Research Publishing

Consideration of Situational and Behavioral Leadership Aspects in Enhancing Youth Mentoring

Chepkwony Paul[1], Safary Wa-Mbaleka[2]

[1]Post-Graduate School, Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
[2]Higher Education Graduate School, Bethel University, St Paul, MN, USA
Email: chepkwonyp@aua.ac.ke

Abstract

Successful youth mentoring is a desired ethical social development in a given society. Youth in the modern times seem to manifest a need for a circumstantial mentor whose behavior and engagement create an understanding and conducive working relationship. In this regard, the mentor's ability and competence to integrate into different emerging youth trends and decisively make informed actions and behaviors to effectively impact youth development depend on relevant situational and trait leadership approaches. A religious organization is obligated to ensure an effective youth nurture by facilitating practical expression of spirituality, relationships, a formalized youth mentorship structure—a situation that can be utilized by youth mentors. The paper aims to enhance Christian youth mentoring through the implementation of situational and behavioral theories and principles. Further, an avenue to explore more leadership theories in youth development is provided.

Keywords

Youth Development, Mentor, Individuation, Situational, Behavioral, Mimesis, Mentee, Spiritual, Christian

1. Introduction

The modern society is complex with dynamic issues around social, political, spiritual and economic paradigms. The youth may be susceptible to an identity crisis that may be caused by a disconnect between communal personalities and substantive adult influencers. According to Erikson's stages of development, 13 - 21 year olds is a period of identity and confusion as a result of transference from childhood to adulthood (Orenstein & Lewis, 2022). In this regard, the youth is

faced with the reality of whom they are and the desired expectation of the society of who they ought to be as aspiring adults. Figuring out who they are, what they want to be with the emerging changes in their bodies due to age and also trying to define their future being as they navigate prospective carrier choices, the youth are daring at an identity challenge, which in a situation where there is lack of role models among the adults to positively influence them, they may find themselves in an unfamiliar identity crisis and confusion. Coupled with harsh realities in their context, hostility and rejection, the young peoples' growth is hampered (Clark, 2011), a classification of this atmosphere part which Clark (2011) called it a "systemic societal abandonment" (p. 15). This may lead the young people to fashion their worldview by themselves (Noble-Carr & Woodman, 2016) devoid of a Christian worldview.

Yet, it is during the youth age that a person should learn through the assistance of an experienced individual to discover the Christian way of life. It is at this age group that the kingship of God should be instilled. This is the time the young people should learn that the responsibility of advancing God's kingdom is paramount to all as was demonstrated by Jesus throughout His earthly mission beginning as a youth at 12 years (Luke 2: 41-52). It was in His youth that Jesus began seizing every situation to develop His followers as He displayed admirable character worth emulating. This paper seeks to discuss youth mentoring and how Christian organizations and leaders can utilize situational and behavioral aspects of leadership to enrich a youth mentorship process.

2. Understanding Youth Development in a Christian Context

Developing a moral, ethical and responsible religious society is a desired outcome that necessitates stakeholder's technical and spiritual expertise, and implementation skills. Personality development includes the understanding of the various tenets and norms of a social setting; in this case a Christian setting based on theological teaching on virtues. A person's moral character is key to instilling Christian virtues that are embedded in human coexistence. In this sense, Christian religious education is an important component in youth mentoring process to inform the concept of responsibility in a social setup by the acquaintance of information about Biblical teaching, knowing God, ethical values, moral virtues and personal decorum (Jaroslaw, 2020). In this, the upcoming youths are made to be responsive disciples by those who nurture them. Christian youth development is a discipleship engagement for all children to acquire the attitudes, competencies, values, and social skills they need to become potentially successful religious adults. Christian discipleship is a key program in nurturing and developing spirituality among believers. In order to make disciples, attachment and relationship building are key as seen in Jesus' developmental mentoring approach for His disciples as stated in John 13: 1: "… having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (NKJV, 2010). In this respect, He guided them to know Him, His mission, and to understand that through Him, they may

know the Father (John 17: 6). As a result, the disciples were to eventually represent God's love to fulfil the joy of Jesus in saving humanity by asking them to emulate Him in the world (John 17: 13, 18). He reminded them to be servants not masters (John 13: 12-17) as He gave an example by washing their feet imploring them to do likewise (Belsterling, 2006).

To understand youth development through the lense of situational and behavioral aspects, it is important to explain these leadership approaches in mentorship context. Situational theory in youth mentoring is based on the effectiveness of youth influencers and leaders who contextualize their actions based on the developmental levels of the youth with the aim of achieving certain specific objective in nurturing and directing them to make informed choices and adopt the expected behaviors (Geir & Lars, 2015). Subsequently, behavioral leadership theory in youth mentoring encompasses observation and appraisal of a mentor's actions and behaviors as they navigate certain situations. The making of a responsive society is a learning process where people learn and emulate each other and therefore, behavioral approach to mentorship is a relationship-oriented trajectory when the mentors and the youth interact as a motivational way of enabling the youth to be who they desire to be. Further, task-oriented behavior in mentoring informs how the mentors present themselves and their performance in their endeavors to present an exemplary lifestyle and actions (Dunaetz, 2020). In this regard, youth mentoring is a process of toning mentors with young people who desire for helpful and responsible and mature personalities in their lives as role model to shape them as they define their destiny. To be successful in this process, it is ideal for the influencers of youth development to consider a diversity of contextual aspects of mentoring and practices encompassing emotional, social, spiritual cognitive and identity dimension in the growth of the youth.

The youth is to be guided through various programs and experiences to help them develop spiritual, social, moral, emotional, and mental abilities with necessary competencies to interact with realities of life situations (John 17: 14-19). This can be achieved by providing services, opportunities, and support to enhance developmental environment and ability as Jesus did to His disciples before He left (John 17: 17-26). This explanation can be well summarized through the 5 Cs identified by Bottomley (2013) in developing the youth including: Competence (John 17: 2) to be able to facilitate eternal life to many; confidence (John 17: 7-8) in knowing; connection (John 17: 20-23) to the Master, themselves, and to the mission; caring or compassion (John 17: 12) to keep them through challenges and joy, and character (John 17: 15) to keep them from evil. It is important therefore to note that Jesus began early enough to mentor His disciples and He kept the momentum until His departure. He was 12 years old when He began learning from the leaders in the temple while His parents taught Him from childhood (Luke 2: 40-52). Puberty is the beginning of youth development until individuation status is attained (Strong, 2014) as Jesus did. Youth mentoring that is based on caring and loving relationship like Jesus' example and an at-

tachment with the mentor's character and love, goals and mission focus at an early age is a sure way of instilling ethical and responsible leadership principles for their lifetime. In this regard, it is prudent to understand a suitable spiritual model and the role of a Christian organization in ensuring a vibrant youth mentoring program is achieved.

2.1. Biblical Mentoring Model

In the Christian perspective, mentorship is biblical and Jesus exemplified it when He mentored the 12 disciples. His style of mentoring is worth emulating and learning from for practical love and servanthood as seen in foot the washing experience (John 13). In this regard, mentoring takes place when a mentor extends help and utilizes resources in serving others with a special focus on growth. The Bible is rich with many other mentors who developed their young associates to maturity as social influencers, such as Abraham mentoring Isaac, Jacob mentoring Joseph, Moses mentoring Joshua, Elijah mentoring Elisha, Jonathan mentoring David, David a mentor to Solomon his son, Eli mentoring Samuel, Mordecai mentoring Esther and Priscilla and Aquila mentoring Apollos among others. Mentoring relationship principles are explicitly exercised throughout the Bible impacting every sphere of life and behavior from one generation to another, targeting individuals and groups.

The Biblical model of mentoring is chain-like because it impacts subsequent generations into the future; thus culminating in the Second Advent of Jesus. Jesus' missional goal was to establish his kingdom through salvation as preached by his followers throughout generations (Mathew 28: 18-20). Relationally, Jesus affirms a relationship model that can be used to meet a desired social behavior and order by an exemplary lifestyle (1 Tim. 4: 12). Jesus began by mentoring the 12 apostles who nurtured the early Christian Church leaders like Paul, who subsequently mentored Titus and Timothy among others. Timothy on the other hand mentored "faithful men" (2 Tim. 2: 2) such as Epaphras (Col. 4: 12-13) who also mentored others. This ongoing intentional mentorship led to several new churches in Asia, which eventually led to the beginning of the establishment of churches in many parts of the world as witnessed today. Moreover, because of an experiential interest in life, the most effective way of developing good character and behavior in the youth is walking side-by-side with them through their life challenges, and connects them to an ideal social interaction.

The youth today are immersed in technological and face disrupting realities that can negatively affect their personal spirituality and family attachment. By extension, the duty of the youth in spreading the gospel is often neglected. It is therefore important to have a mission in context and mentors to live an exemplary lifestyle to be their role models through intentional situational and behavioral leadership approaches, relational practices and principles to connect with others, and contextual or missional strategies to create meaning and purpose in a mentorship relationship. A Christian organization therefore has a big role to

play in the pursuit of the youth development program.

2.2. The Role of a Christian Organization in Youth Mentoring

An organization dealing with people has the obligation to ensure social normalcy, individual and organizational growth. Part of the main objectives of a Christian organization is to enable youth's spiritual growth and social responsibility through a well-thought program. In 1 Thess. 2: 8, Paul says, "So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us" (NKJV, 2010). Paul implored believers that the organization planned to demonstrate approach to faith development; that is, living an all-inclusive expression of doctrinal matters through identity formation which need a spiritual foundation for the youth alongside maturing into adulthood (Cloete, 2012). It is therefore crucial to have both faith formation (doctrinal) and identity formation (questions regarding life and its meaning) entrenched in a religious setup (King, 2007) through various initiatives of youth mentoring.

Peer mentoring is about enabling age group members to impart healthy norms, beliefs, and behaviors as an avenue to challenge unresponsive characters (Finnegan et al., 2010). In Prov. 27: 17 (NKJV, 2010), the phrase "Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" is in reference to those who know each other well enough that they are in a better position to help each other grow sustainably despite everyone's strengthens and weaknesses. David was a successful king because of his friend and mentor Jonathan whose life, character, and mission proved successful after winning the garrison of Philistines (1 Sam. 13-14). Jonathan loved David by encouraging and believing in him, by making a binding covenant to help him all through his life challenges with wholehearted loyalty, defending and enabling him to become king (1 Sam. 18-20). He was instrumental when David was in danger of his life and was on the run but Jonathan became his close confidant and associate as a mentor friend (1 Sam. 23: 16-17). In this regard, Jonathan had an admirable behavior for David to learn from and also adapt to the various unfolding situations in their lives as friends and associates with focus to achieve their desired objectives. The closeness of friends necessitates generosity and selfless love for one another as the basis of friendship and courage where both parties have confidence in each other especially on private life issues and openness to the need of help. In the Bible, Moses and Joshua were together all through. Thus, friendship of peers can be harnessed through a mentoring program among the youth. From this example, it is important to know how to implement a holistic and dynamic youth mentoring program in a Christian organization.

2.3. Initiating a Christian Youth Mentoring Model

In dealing with youth mentorship programs on matters of moral practice and doctrine, participants are to use the Bible as the main source to create sound bib-

lical basis in life choices (Widstrom, 2011) to be able to consciously serve God and humanity. The main aim of helping the youth analyze the bible is to extract real life situations (Freeks, 2016) that challenge and strengthen them to do mission, motivate, inspire, and develop generations mostly in their decision making on behavioral problems. A curriculum to inform character and interaction, and to reflect a positive youth development approach must be considered. Mentors are to follow a specific and intentional guidance in consideration of the mentees' opportunities in making decisions, setting goals, serving the community, and being able to learn from their successes and failures. This is to ensure that mentorship is not only influencing the behavior and development of the youth, but also should be in line with Christian organizational goals (Vroom & Jago, 2008) to fulfil the mission with committed members.

On skills training, mentors must also help the mentees develop leadership skills, access opportunities, support the community, develop active listening skills, and assist mentees to develop personal skills. Another key area in training is relationships where mentors give guidance about diversity and culture with mentees as well as encourage positive family and peer relationships. Furthermore, the engagement between a mentor and mentee should entail setting developmentally appropriate limits through shared decision-making strategies that help mentees to feel empowered and motivated. From this training model, the aspects of situational and behavioral considerations are explicit as the main drivers of a youth mentorship process. The next section looks at these two leadership theories and their importance in religious youth mentoring.

3. Situational and Behavioral Theories in Youth Mentoring

To underscore the possibility of utilizing situational and behavioral leadership theories in youth mentoring in a Christian environment, it is important to take note of the availability of necessary skills, resources, and the applicability of the model to ensure a sustainable youth mentoring venture. Situational leadership relates to choosing the right leadership style relevant for a specific group of people based on their competence and maturity in an amalgamated and contextualized manner (Northouse, 2019). The behavioral leadership theory emphasizes that leadership ability can be learned based on the leader's actions that necessitate explicit response from the followers (Hersey et al., 2008).

Situational and behavioral approaches are naturally intertwined in the sense that a prevailing situation may necessitate a certain behavior. Jesus did not need to wait for a specific situation to develop leaders. He began right at the sea where fishermen were doing their daily routine. He seized the opportunity and turned fishing into an avenue to develop fishers of men (Mat. 4: 19). The analogy of fishing was perfectly contextualized to instill in those men the importance of resilience, hope, endurance, and hard work. From this experience, the aspect of effective, quality, skill-building relationship between mentors and mentees forms the main gist in a mentorship engagement (DuBois & Rhodes, 2006). Further,

Jesus utilized the available human resources to align His developmental agenda through His conduct, character, and utilized the emerging scenario in the social setup. In this respect, situational and behavioral aspects of social dynamics prove that there are human developmental factors at the individual, social, and church levels that are potentially helpful in building a well-coordinated caring mentorship plan, sustainable bonds and relationships among supportive adult mentors and youth mentees (DuBois & Karcher, 2013). Thus, the church has essential structures to implement such programs and experience a positive outcome through situational and behavioral approaches in youth mentoring.

3.1. Situational Perspective in Youth Mentoring

This mentoring approach creates more of partnership than an officious scenario. Paul in his letter to Corinthians states, "Though I am free from all *men,* I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more… I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some… and I do for the gospel sake, that I may be partaker of it with you" (1Cor. 9:19-23, NKJV, 2010). In this case, mentors are placed as role models (Doran, 2008) with whom the mentees' positive desires are developed. In reference to Girard's theory of mimesis on imitation of reality, Buck suggests that role modelling forms an effective framework of personal change (Buck, 2016). For the mentor to stimulate this simulated model of youth mentoring engagement, every situation needs to be treated differently in view of relevance, diversity, and dynamism.

Situational leadership integrates diverse skills with an adaptive tendency where leaders assess their teams and existing operational variables, and choose an appropriate method to ensure the objective is satisfactorily achieved (Spahr, 2015). In this approach, leaders dynamically consider relevant management styles for every emerging situation in order to meet the desired goal irrespective of the changing trends. In Acts 22, Paul alluded to a situational leadership style of doing as Romans do when in Rome.

Spahr highlighted five characteristics of the situational style which are relevant in a mentoring program (Spahr, 2015). These include: insight to be able to understand the needs in order to adjust leadership style accordingly; flexibility to fit into diverse leadership styles; trust to win the confidence of the mentees; problem solving to be effective in handling challenges; and coaching to be able to integrate maturity, competence, and strategy in the mentee's personality and development. Situational leaders need to have appropriate knowledge of the mentees' needs and competence and ensure a flexible approach of leadership to effectively meet those needs. The understanding of the situational leadership theory in a youth mentoring process is the utilization of various leadership styles, and that there is no one style of leadership specific to mentorship. Cultural identity, community, and context play an equally important role in situational leadership (Gordon, 2014). Hence, where a person belongs, irrespective of associates, the place, time, and environment one is exposed to, all requires a situa-

tional approach to be effective. Furthermore, the character of the individual leader mentor plays a key role in influencing a follower mentee—in this context, the youth.

3.2. Behavioral Perspective in Youth Mentoring

The leader's actions in various contexts, beliefs, values, attitude, and interpersonal relations, influence the behavior and perceptions of the followers. From this perspective, how to achieve a leadership target and how to maintain a cordial and comfortable relationship within a desired framework are crucial since "behavioral leadership is composed of two general kinds of behaviors: task behaviors and relationship behaviors" (Northouse, 2019: p. 136). Behavior is a critical aspect in youth life and if not guided well, the youth may establish an unbecoming character that may affect self and social order (Erwin, 2010). Due to a number of issues around youth life, including a potentially dysfunctional family environment where ethics are supposed to be entrenched, youths are left to venture life manners through other avenues. These other avenues are not always the most conducive to youth's spiritual development. Therefore, mentoring youth behavior should be exemplified by mentor's lifestyle and attention to youth's anxiety and concerns.

In the formative stages of the youth, they seek answers to their questions and a pursuit to construct the existential questions to life in their quest for identity (Cloete, 2012). In a study to assess the effectiveness of youth mentoring for the vulnerable youth facing different behavioral challenges, three major areas of concern were recommended for youth mentors to handle (Whitney et al., 2011). These include internalized behavioral symptoms like depression, suicidal ideation and low self-esteem; externalized behavioral symptoms such as antisocial behavior and drug use; and interpersonal behavioral challenges of social skills and social support. It is therefore crucial for a mentor to consciously manage personal character as an ethical leader who must be morally strong as an accomplished personality (Brown & Mitchell, 2010). Inculcating good moral behaviors among the youth to influence their beliefs, knowledge, norms, attitudes and behavior change is dependent on the actions of a mentor. The practicality and notable outcomes of the two youth developmental theories considered in this article may be realized through a well-thought and intentional establishment of a dynamic model entrenched in a church system with specific policies for implementation, sustainability, and positive impact.

3.3. Impact of Situational and Behavioral Youth Mentoring Approaches

In underscoring the essence of blended learning in a school setting, a behavioristic approach for learners to embrace knowledge as a reflection of reality with a cognitive framework of opportunities to comprehend the real world has been suggested (Meier, 2016). In a Christian context, an individual learner build own

knowledge exposed by religious teachers who function as moderators through their own spiritual personalized skills and experiences with real world issues. This can be useful in a social context in a subjective manner, aided by feelings and identification with a constructive tendency. The ultimate goal of a Christian youth mentoring is character change which is preceded by the desire of the mentee to be in a relationship with a prospective mentor. This happens when there is a well-structured situational and behavioral youth mentoring program establishment within a church organization.

3.4. Establishing a Situational and Behavioral Youth Mentoring Model

Due to the low maturity level of the youth and their transitive age group, situational and behavioral mentoring approaches are ideal as it has been touted as the age at which God reveals Himself in their ontological dilemma (Counted, 2016). In this regard therefore, a leader mentor applies different leadership styles according to the follower's maturity, development and performance levels (Hersey et al., 2008). Further, religious endeavors must promote positive behaviors and growth of the youth, precisely in social control by teaching them to abstain from engaging in immoral behaviors. Additionally, Brittian et al. (2013) identify five areas that inspire youth spiritual attachment that "provides support, connection to the past, moral compass, promotes healthy development, and intersections between… traditional practices and Christian beliefs" (p. 649). Religion is thus an effort to address negative issues and to promote positive behavior among the youth to endure and grow even in challenging times and situations. Christian youth mentoring is fundamental in spiritual formation especially in the present times when the world is subjugated by secularism, hostility, evil, insecurity and technological advancement (Brailey & Parker, 2020). Mentors have a major stake in guiding the youth in the wake of the dilemma they may face as they engage the realities of life amidst these daring challenges standing on their way of development. Guiding youngsters in spiritual formation requires not only teaching them but more importantly being with them through mentoring process.

An ideal religious youth mentoring embodies an intergenerational system composed of parents, friends, school teachers, and spiritual mentors who can be of service in shaping and strengthening youth behavioral change, professional growth and spiritual development in mentoring relationships (Schwartz et al., 2006). In this regard, there are two explicit models which may apply in religious youth mentoring process: informal mentoring to encourage communal events such as youth groups, family partnerships, and other social programs which are mainly applied in a behavioral approach; and formal mentoring through the church structure, which is suitable in a situational mentoring approach (Hamilton et al., 2006). This establishment is to be guarded by putting in place guidelines and considering applicability of the various proposals in situational and behavioral approaches in tandem with church mission and rules.

4. Policy Formulation and Implementation Strategy for Successful Youth Mentoring

The Bible contains rich information on how to nurture God's people. In the Bible, God used young people in His engagement with the people like in the case of Samuel, David, Timothy, Joseph, Esther, and Mary the mother of Jesus among others. It is therefore imperative to entrust the youth with greater responsibility as part of a mentorship process to motivate them to inspire them to be leaders and positive social influencers. The youth are to take part in training the siblings at home as an essential nurturing and development of their leadership skills guided by the religious leaders (Nielson, 2016) because home is where church membership is found and real-life issues are handled. The church and the family institutions where the youth live their better part of social lives have a responsibility to invest in young people's ability to be instrumental in advancing church activities in the community (Chancey & Bruner 2017). Through this, the community can benefit from the church dynamism of young leaders who are efficient in mentoring others as they grow.

The church must integrate dynamic modern technological strategies in the youth ministry and provide an enabling environment for adult mentors to be circumstantial and adjust to the constantly shifting needs of young people. This can be accomplished by upgrading and synchronizing the youth vigor and vivacity with new behavioral and situational mentorship approaches while evaluating old models and retaining the ensuing principles. It has been proven that the success of a mentoring program is likely to be enhanced by actionable training, supportive mentors and an interactive and reliable execution of programs (Hawkins et al., 2020) within a sustainable, emotional bond, and relationship between the mentor and the mentee youth who feel valued in the process. In addressing behavior issues, this suggests the implication of formal, well-trained mentors to provide needed relationships to the youth. The church is to establish a facilitation framework for the youth activities by providing the necessary resources and facilities that empower them to growth (Thompson, 2017). It has been found that, the closer the mentors are connected with the youth mentees, they are well integrated in the community and enhance their positive growth and maturity socially, spiritually and mentally (Austin et al., 2020). They are more likely to get involved and create networks that expedite their developmental maturity. Through this plan, the youth are committed to the church which must reciprocate by enhancing youth development as an obligation.

5. Conclusion

From the example of Jesus' perfect mentorship, youth mentors can develop a robust engagement with their mentees in a relational, missional, and incarnational manner. From the discussion above, it is clear that behavioral and situational aspects of leadership play a key role in youth mentoring and are intertwined in the portrayal of behavioral actions in reaction to a certain situation such as cul-

ture, religious beliefs, emotional influence, set values, and different social activities. From Peter's mentorship experience, Jesus understood the situation Peter was in and wanted to use His love attribute to bring change in the life of Peter to develop him as a useful instrument to society.

Some of the training areas to consider in relation to youth development include developmental stages on competence to grow skills and actions in specific areas, confidence to build positive self-worth, identity, and focus; and connection to enhance bonds and relationships. Others are character to instill respect for societal and cultural norms, morality, values, spirituality, and integrity; and caring and compassion for the youth to have sense of sympathy and empathy for others (Bottomley, 2013). There are skills to consider in behavioral and situational leadership when mentoring the youth such as the ability to observe, create opportunity for engagement, optimism, correctional feedback, listening, vision and focus to describe a situational mentor. On the other hand, a behavioral mentor needs abilities such as trustworthiness, teaching, empowerment, compassion, encouragement, spirituality, and determination among others as in the case of Jesus mentoring His disciples. Mentors are to understand the situational skills well to be able to assimilate into the various unfolding situations in youth culture; and in order to be respected, accepted and change the youth, a mentor's behavioral skills are important.

The situational leadership approach of a mentor contains implicit actions to win the mentee's participation while the behavioral approach entails explicit lifestyle of the mentor to influence and win the heart of the mentee. Jesus seized every unfolding situation to mentor His disciples without compromising doctrine and His divine behavior. Jesus's adaptive tendency as a mentor confused the tradition of the day but He had to affirm to them that He came to fulfill the Law not to abolish (Mat. 5: 17). Equally, His missional and relational behavior to mingle with sinners and outcasts got the leadership of the day on their perceived social norm the wrong way but He reminded them that He came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19: 10). The role of the church is to facilitate youth involvement, growth of the family members, and train specialized volunteer mentors. Therefore, through a situational mentoring approach, the youth are inspired to grow their social skills, competencies, and positive attitude; and through the behavioral approach, they are convicted to character change and moral development. Although the situational and behavioral theories are crucial in youth development in a Christian context, there is need to look into the aspect of alignment with spiritual values to enable uncompromising standards. From this perspective therefore, there is need to look further into the parameters for mentors and mentees' engagement in a situational and behavioral Christian concept of mentorship. While there are many excellent leadership theories, approaches, models, styles, and strategies that have been developed; none of them can be effective in Christian youth mentoring without the blessing, guidance, and wisdom from the Greatest Mentor that the world has ever known. Therefore, whatever is presented and proposed in this paper must be aligned with and under the

intentional submission to the will of God.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

Austin, L. J., Parnes, M. K. F., Jarjoura, G. R., Keller, T. E., Herrera, C., Tanyu, M., & Schwartz, S. E. O. (2020). Connecting Youth: The Role of Mentoring Approach. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 49,* 2409-2428.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-020-01320-z

Belsterling, R. (2006). The Mentoring Approach of Jesus as Demonstrated in John 13. *Journal of Youth Ministry, 5,* 77.

Bottomley, L., & Michigan State University Extension (2013). *Putting the 5 C's Together.*
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/putting_the_5_cs_together

Brailey, S. G., & Parker, S. D. (2020). The Identity Imperative: Mentoring as a Tool for Christian Young Adult Identity Formation. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality, 25,* 109-123. https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2020.1819775

Brittian, A. S., Lewin, N., & Norris, S. A. (2013). You Must Know Where You Come from: South African Youths' Perceptions of Religion in a Time of Social Change. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 28,* 642-654. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558413480834

Brown, M. E., & Mitchell, M. S. (2010). Ethical and Unethical Leadership: Exploring New Avenues for Future Research. *Business Quarterly, 20,* 583-615.
https://doi.org/10.5840/beq201020439

Buck, G. (2016). "I Wanted to Feel the Way They Did": Mimesis as a Situational Dynamic of Peer Mentoring by Ex-Offenders. *Deviant Behavior, 38,* 1027-1040.
https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2016.1237829

Chancey, D., & Bruner, R. (2017). *Owning Faith: Reimagining the Role of Church & Family in the Faith Journey of Teenagers.* Leafwood Publishers.

Clark, C. (2011). *Hurt: Inside the Wolrd of Today's Teenagers.* Bakers.

Cloete, A. (2012). Spiritual Formation as Focus of Youth Ministry. *Dutch Reformed Theological Journal, 53,* 70-77. https://doi.org/10.5952/53-3-4-250

Counted, V. (2016). Missionizing Youth Identity Crisis: Towards a Missional Hermeneutics of Coping in Youth Ministry Practice. *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Missiology, 44,* 86-101. https://doi.org/10.7832/44-1-141

Doran, R. (2008). *Mimesis and Theory: Essays on Literature and Criticism.* Standford University Press.

DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (2013). *Handbook of Youth Mentoring.* Sage Publications. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412996907

DuBois, D. L., & Rhodes, J. E. (2006). Youth Mentoring: Bridging Science with Practice. *Journal of Community Psychology, 34,* 547-565. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20121

Dunaetz, D. (2020). *Behavioral Approach to Leadership.*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342166019_Behavioral_Approach_to_Leadership

Erwin, P. (2010). *A Critical Approach to Youth Culture: Its Influences and Implications for Ministry.* Zondervan.

Finnegan, L., Whitehurst, D., & Denton, S. (2010). *Models of Mentoring for Incluion and Employment: Thematic Review of Existing Evidence on Mentoring and Peer Mentoring.* Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion.

Freeks, F. (2016). Youth Intervention through Trining and Equipping in the Midst of Challenges and Crisis. *Missionalia, 44,* 205-223. https://doi.org/10.7832/44-2-150

Geir, T., & Lars, G. (2015). Situational Leadership Theory: A Test from Three Perspectives. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 36,* 527-544. https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-10-2013-0130

Gordon, E. D. (2014). *A Contextual Transformative Practical Theology in South Africa.* AcadSA Publishing.

Hamilton, S. F., Hamilton, M. A., Hirsch, B. J., Hughes, J., King, J., & Maton, K. (2006). Community Contexts for Mentoring. *Journal of Community Psychology, 34,* 727-746. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20126

Hawkins, S., Karcher, M., Stewart, K., & DuBois, L. (2020). *Mentoring for Preventing and Reducing Delinguet Behavior among Youth.* OJP Publications. https://www.ojp.gov/library/publications/mentoring-preventing-and-reducing-delinquent-behavior-among-youth

Hersey, P., Blanchard, K. H., & Johnson, D. E. (2008). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Laeding Human Resource* (9th ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.

Jaroslaw, H. (2020). Christian Religious Education and the Development of Moral Virtues: A Neo-Thomistic Approach. *British Journal of Religious Education, 42,* 447-458. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2020.1752618

King, P. E. (2007). Adolescent Spirituality and Positive Youth Development: A Look at Religion, Social Capital and Moral Functioning. In R. K. Silbereisen, & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Approaches to Positive Youth Development* (pp. 227-242). SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446213803.n12

Meier, D. (2016). Situational Leadership Theory as a Foundation for a Blended Learning: Frameowrk. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7,* 25-30.

Nielson, J. (2016). *Faith that Lasts: Raising Kids That Don't Leave the Church.* CLC Publications.

NKJV (2010). *Bible.* Andrews University Press.

Noble-Carr, D., & Woodman, E. (2016). Considerinh Idnetntity and Meaning Constructions for Vulnerable Young People. *Journal of Adolescent Resaerch, 33,* 672-698.

Northouse, P. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th ed.). Sage Publication.

Orenstein, G. A., & Lewis, L. (2022). Eriksons Stages of Psychosocial Development. In: StatPearls [Internet], *Treasure Island (FL).* StatPearls Publishing. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK556096/

Schwartz, K. D., Bukowski, W. M., & Aoki, W. T. (2006). Mentors, Friends and Gurus: Peer and Non-Parent Influences on Spiritual Development. In E. C. Roehlkepartain, P. E. King, L. Wagener, & P. L. Benson (Eds.), *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* (pp. 310-323). SAGE Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412976657.n22

Spahr, P. (2015). *What Is Situational Leadership? How Flexibility Leads to Success.* Forbes WSJ. https://www.scribd.com

Strong, P. (2014). Effective Youth Ministry: Embracing a Family-Oriented Approach. *Die Skrifliq, 48,* 1-8. https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v48i1.1715

Thompson, N. (2017). *Young People and Church Since 1900: Engagement and Exclusion.*

Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315113012

Vroom, V., & Jago, A. (2008). The Role of the Situation in Leadership. *American Psychologist, 62,* 17-23. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.1.17

Whitney, S. D., Hendricker, E. N., & Offutt, C. A. (2011). Moderating Factors in Natural Mentoring Relationships, Problem Behaviors, and Emotional Well-Being. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 19,* 83-105. https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2011.543573

Widstrom, B. J. (2011). A View from Inside the Fishbowl: A Cultural Description of Evangelical Free Church Youth Ministry. *Journal of Youth Ministry, 9,* 7-33.