

TEACHING THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT: YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMME IN

ECWA NIGERIA AND CONTEMPORARY HIP HOP CULTURE

by

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Declaration

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Dedication

I dedicate this research study to God Almighty who has called me from being a quantity surveyor to become His co-worker in His vineyard as a soul surveyor. It is also dedicated to all youth ministry labourers who are passionately, painfully and sacrificially equipping youth to be heavenly minded and earthly relevant to society.

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Abstract

Theological discernment as discussed in this study is the normative process of reflection, decision-making, thinking, and the judgement of right and wrong in relation to the elements and outlets of hip hop culture. The study pleads for a normative process of theological discernment as an ethical, theological and practiced response to the learned behaviour of hip hop culture through the praxis of the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry as a guiding lens in situations of life. Theological discernment is synonymous with thinking theologically and biblically about daily issues and questions of concerns.

This research study investigated, “How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within hip hop culture?” as its primary research question and “How can the faith community equip youth to engage HHC in cosmopolitan cities?” To investigate these research questions, I engaged the research design of qualitative study. I made use of the research methodology of theoretical (literature) and empirical study, and a practical theological framework as promoted by Richard R Osmer. This framework consists of an investigative structure of four theological tasks: the descriptive-empirical task (What is going on?); the interpretive task (Why is this happening?); the normative task (What ought to be happening from God’s perspective?); and the pragmatic task (What action should be taken henceforth?). With the aid of these tasks, I investigated thoughts, experiences of lifestyles and behaviours through engagement of primary and secondary data of literature, and primary data of participants in Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA).

The findings from the literature and empirical study reveal and propose how practical theology through youth ministry program (and beyond program) can practically and missionally equip the youth as social actors through a theology of youth ministry and theological models such as you[theology], theology of *genetivus subjectivus*, deliberative theology, theology of listening and equipping young people as lay theologian. It is Bible studies, prayers, discipleship and mentorship, symbiotic networking of youth ministry and cultural gatekeepers (academician, practitioners, administrators, and parents), reception history theory, enculturation, acculturation and a hip hop church that can equip ECWA youth with the theological discernment to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities of the lifestyle and behaviours of contemporary hip hop culture. The equipping will not eradicate the challenges nor maximise the opportunities of hip hop culture in society, but it will enable the equipped youth to discern theologically how to navigate this phenomenon in society using a normative lens.

Opsomming

Teologiese onderskeiding soos in hierdie studie bespreek, is die normatiewe proses van refleksie, besluitneming, denke en die oordeel van reg en verkeerd in verhouding tot die elemente en afsetpunte van hiphopkultuur. Die studie pleit vir 'n normatiewe proses van teologiese onderskeiding as 'n etiese, teologiese en geoefende reaksie op die geleerde gedrag van hiphopkultuur deur die praktyk van die Christelike geloof, Christelike lewe en Christelike bediening as 'n leidende lens in lewensituasies. Teologiese onderskeiding is sinoniem met die teologiese en Bybelse denke oor daaglikse kwessies en vrae van kommer.

Hierdie navorsingstudie het ondersoek: "Hoe stel die ECWA-jeugbedieningprogram sy jeug toe met die teologiese onderskeid om die uitdagings en geleenthede binne hiphopkultuur te identifiseer en aan te pak?" As die primêre navorsingsvraag en "Hoe kan die geloofsgemeenskap die jeug toerus om betrek HHC in kosmopolitiese stede?" Om hierdie navorsingsvrae te ondersoek, het ek die navorsingsontwerp van kwalitatiewe studie verrig. Ek het gebruik gemaak van die navorsingsmetodologie van teoretiese (literatuur-) en empiriese studie, en 'n praktiese teologiese raamwerk soos bevorder deur Richard R Osmer. Hierdie raamwerk bestaan uit 'n ondersoekende struktuur van vier teologiese take: die beskrywende empiriese taak (Wat gaan aan?); die interpretatiewe taak (waarom gebeur dit?); die normatiewe taak (Wat behoort van God se perspektief te gebeur?); en die pragmatiese taak (Watter aksie moet voortaan geneem word?). Met behulp van hierdie take het ek gedagtes, ervarings van lewenstyl en gedrag ondersoek deur middel van betrokkenheid van primêre en sekondêre literatuurdata, en primêre data van deelnemers aan die Evangeliese Kerkwennende Allen (ECWA).

Die bevindings uit die literatuur en empiriese studie onthul en stel voor hoe praktiese teologie deur middel van jeugbedieningprogramme (en buite die program) die jeug prakties en mities kan toerus as sosiale akteurs deur 'n teologie van jeugbediening en teologiese modelle soos jou [teologie], teologie van genetivus subjectivus, deliberatiewe teologie, teologie van luister en die voorsiening van jongmense as leke teoloog. Dit is Bybelstudies, gebede, dissipelskap en mentorskap, simbiotiese netwerk van jeugbediening en kulturele poortwagters (akademici, praktisyns, administrateurs en ouers), ontvangsgeskiedenissteorie, enculturatie, akkulturasie en 'n hiphopkerk wat ECWA-jeug kan toerus met die teologiese onderskeid om te identifiseer en betrokke te raak by die uitdagings en geleenthede van die lewenstyl en gedrag van die hedendaagse hiphopkultuur. Die uitrusting sal nie die uitdagings uitwis of die geleenthede van hiphopkultuur in die samelewing maksimeer nie, maar dit sal die toegeruste jeug in staat stel om teologies te onderskei hoe om hierdie verskynsel in die samelewing te navigeer deur gebruik te maak van 'n normatiewe lens

Abbreviations

AD	After Death of Christ
AKA	Also Known As
ATC	African Traditional Culture
CC	Classical Conditioning
CCN	Christian Council of Nigeria
CEO	Christian Education Officer
CED	Christian Education Department
Chron.	Chronicles
COED	Concise Oxford English Dictionary
Col.	Colossians
CPFN	Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
CR	Conditional Response
CS	Conditioned Stimulus
CSN	Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria
DCC	District Church Council
DJ	Deejaying
ECWA	Evangelical Church Winning All

EE	ECWA Executive
Eph.	Ephesians
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
Gal.	Galatians
GCC	Garki Church Council
HH	Hip hop
HHC	Hip hop culture
Hr	Hour
Jam.	James
JETS	Jos ECWA Theological Seminary
Km	Kilometre
LCB	Local Church Board
LCC	Local Church Council
LGA	Local Government Area
Matt.	Matthew
Min.	Minute
NIV	New International Version
No.	Number
NYP	National Youth Policy

NYPSPA	Nigerian National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of Action
OAIC	Organisation of African Instituted Churches
OMT	Oratio, Meditatio, and Tentatio
PFN	Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
Ps.	Psalms
Rom.	Romans
SAYWA	South African Youth Worker Association
SIM	Serving In Mission
SOED	Shorter Oxford English Dictionary
Thess	Thessalonians
UCR	Unconditional Response
UCS	Unconditional Stimuli
USA	United States of America
WOFBI	Word of Faith Bible Institute

KEY CONCEPTS

- ✓ Youth
- ✓ Youth ministry
- ✓ Programme
- ✓ Hip hop culture
- ✓ Hip hop church
- ✓ You[theology]
- ✓ Gatekeeper
- ✓ Theological discernment

List of Figures and Addenda

Figure (fig.)	Addendum	Label	Page
2.1		Models of education for Christian ministry	46
2.2		Gatekeepers of youth ministry	56
3.1		Pavlov's experiment	121
5.1		Inductive coding	162
5.2		The ECWA culture	189
5.3		Challenges of HHC	197
5.4		Opportunities of HHC	204
6.1		Suggestive feedback mechanism	227
6.2		Theological challenges of HHC	241
6.3		Theological opportunities of HHC	243
6.4		Celebrity Neymar transmitting God's message through stylisation	250
6.5		HHC artefacts	250
6.6		Examples of graffiti	251
6.7		Examples of rap elements	252
6.8		Acculturation	253

	A	ECWA organogram	304
	B	Request letter to ECWA	305
	C	ECWA approvald letter	307
	D	Ethical clearance approval	308
	E	Interviewed participants and their region	311
	F	Questionnaires to youth leaders (Category YL)	312
	G	Questionnaires to youth pastors, Christian education department (Category YPCED)	314
	H	Questionnaires to youth (Category Y)	316
	I	Turnitin receipt	318
	J	Similarity index report	319

Table of Contents

Declaration	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Abstract.....	vi
Opsomming.....	vii
Abbreviations	viii
List of Figures and Addenda	xi
Table of Contents	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background and Motivation.....	1
1.3 Prior Literature Study	4
1.4 Research Problem and Research Question	8
1.4.1 Research problem	8
1.4.2 Research question	9
1.5 Research Aims and Objectives.....	9
1.6 Research Design and Methodology.....	10

1.6.1 Research design	10
1.6.2 Research Methodology	11
1.6.2.1 Theoretical (literature) study.....	11
1.6.2.2 Empirical study	12
1.6.3 Data collection	12
1.6.3.1 In-depth interview	13
1.6.3.2 Sampling	13
1.6.3.3 Pilot study	15
1.6.3.4 Data analysis	15
1.7 Practical Theological Framework.....	16
1.7.1 Descriptive-empirical task	17
1.7.2 Interpretive task	17
1.7.3 Normative task.....	18
1.7.4 Pragmatic task.....	19
1.8 Practical Theological Significance.....	21
1.9 Limitations of the Study.....	22
1.10 Ethical Considerations.....	23
1.11 Conceptual Understanding of Key Terms.....	24
1.11.1 Youth	24
1.11.2 Youth leader.....	25
1.11.3 Youth pastors	25
1.11.4 Youth ministry	25

1.11.5 Hip hop culture	26
1.11.6 Theological discernment.....	26
1.12 Chapter Overview/Outline	27
1.12.1 Chapter One: Introduction to research study	27
1.12.2 Chapter Two: Conceptualisation of theological discernment, youth ministry and youth within ECWA.....	27
1.12.3 Chapter Three: Theoretical investigation of hip hop culture.....	27
1.12.4 Chapter Four: Research design and methodology	28
1.12.5 Chapter Five: Empirical study conducted within the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) 28	
1.12.6 Chapter Six: Practical implications for ECWA youth ministry.....	29
1.12.7 Chapter Seven: Conclusion to the study	29
1.13 Conclusion	29
CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUALISATION OF THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT, YOUTH MINISTRY AND THE YOUTH WITHIN ECWA	31
2.1 Introduction.....	31
2.2 Overview of Theological Discernment.....	32
2.2.1 Aptitude for theological discernment	34
2.2.2 The appropriation of theology in praxis	35
2.3 Models of Theological Discernment.....	36
2.4 Theological Discernment along Denominational Divides.....	38
2.5 Overview of Christian Youth Ministry	41

2.6 Models of Education for Christian Youth Ministry	45
2.6.1 Education in Christian faith	46
2.6.2 Education about Christian life	47
2.6.3 Education in ministry	49
2.6.4 Education in schools of theology	51
2.7 Overview of Youth Ministry	52
2.7.1 Gatekeepers of youth ministry	55
2.7.1.1 Academician	56
2.7.1.2 Practitioners	57
2.7.1.3 Administrators	58
2.8 Theology of Youth Ministry	60
2.8.1 Theology of listening	65
2.8.2 Theology of you[theology]	68
2.8.2.1 You[theology] and programmes	68
2.8.2.1.1 Equipping young people as lay or ordinary theologians	71
2.8.2.1.2 Training for theological perspicacity in relationship with God	74
2.9 Interdisciplinary Understanding of Youth	76
2.9.1 Anthropological understanding of youth	78
2.9.2 Cultural understanding of youth	79
2.9.3 Theological understanding of youth	81
2.10 Conclusion	84
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL INVESTIGATION OF HIP HOP CULTURE	85

3.1 Introduction	85
3.2 Culture	86
3.2.1 Nigerian cultural dilemma	89
3.2.2 Youth culture	91
3.3 Overview of Hip Hop Culture	97
3.3.1 Formation of hip hop culture	101
3.3.2 Hip hop culture glocalisation – Nigeria.....	103
3.4 Elements of HHC.....	105
3.4.1 Graffiti art	105
3.4.2 Rap music	105
3.4.3 Deejaying.....	110
3.5 Cultural Outlets of Hip Hop Culture	110
3.5.1 Language.....	110
3.5.2 Slanguage	111
3.5.3 Fashion.....	112
3.6 Theological Challenges of Hip Hop Culture	112
3.7 Theological Opportunities of Hip Hop Culture	116
3.8 Hip Hop Culture: Learned Behaviour	119
3.8.1 The Pavlov experiment process	120
3.8.2 Components of classical conditioning (CC).....	122

3.8.3 Behavioural patterns associated with classical conditioning.....	123
3.8.4 Classical conditioning and hip hop culture.....	123
3.9 Towards a Practical Theological Response to Hip Hop Culture.....	126
3.10 Impetus for Theological Discernment in Hip Hop Culture.....	127
3.10.1 Oratio – Prayer.....	131
3.10.2 Meditatio – Meditation	132
3.10.3 Tentatio – Testing	132
3.11 Conclusion	134
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	136
4.1 Introduction	136
4.2. Research Design and Methodology.....	136
4.2.1 Research Design	136
4.2.2 Methodology.....	139
4.2.2.1 Theoretical (literature) study.....	139
4.2.2.2 Empirical study	141
4.3 Data Collection	142
4.3.1 In-depth interview.....	142
4.3.2 Sampling.....	145
4.3.2.1 River State.....	147
4.3.2.2 Abia State.....	148
4.3.2.3 Lagos State.....	148
4.3.2.4 Federal Capital Territory (Abuja)	149

4.3.2.5 Kano State	149
4.5 Unit of Analysis/Evaluation.....	149
4.6 Method of Data Analysis.....	150
4.6.1 Thematic analysis	150
4.7 Ethical Implications.....	151
4.8 Reflections from the Field	152
4.8.1 Challenges of empirical study	152
4.8.2 Distance covered.....	153
4.8.3 Quality of transcription process.....	153
4.8.4 Change in sample size	154
4.8.5 Gained experience from pilot study.....	154
4.8.5.1 Feasibility of the study.....	155
4.8.5.2 Suitability of the interview process.....	155
4.9 Theological Significance and Limitations of Study.....	155
4.10 Conclusion	156
CHAPTER FIVE: EMPIRICAL STUDY CONDUCTED WITHIN THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH WINNING ALL (ECWA).....	158
5.1 Introduction.....	158
5.1.1 Reflection on the research Question	158
5.1.2 Categorisation of interviewed questions and participants	159
5.1.3 Generating themes for this research study.....	159

5.1.4 Reporting the findings	162
5.2 Participants Understanding of Some Concepts.....	164
5.2.1 Understanding of youth	164
5.2.2 Understanding of theological discernment	167
5.2.3 Understanding of HHC	170
CATEGORY A: Programmes	171
5.3 Drafting of Programmes.....	172
5.3.1 Adult (spiritual leaders) drafting programmes for the youth.....	173
5.3.2 Youth drafting programmes for themselves	174
5.3.3 Hip Hop culture not discussed at youth programmes	176
5.3.4 Youth pastors are designated by senior pastors of local churches.....	176
5.3.5 Programme for Cosmopolitan cities and rural areas.....	179
CATEGORY B: HIP HOP CULTURE	180
5.4 Prevalence of Hip Hop Culture in Nigeria	180
5.4.1 Prevalence of HHC through the traditional and social media.....	182
5.4.2 The conflict of cultures: Traditional and hip hop culture	184
5.5 The Influence of Hip Hop Culture	185
5.5.1 Negative influence of hip hop culture.....	186
5.5.2 Positive influence of hip hop culture	186
5.6 The ECWA Culture.....	188
5.6.1 Culture as an ideological belief	188

5.6.2 Culture of repetitive programmes	189
5.6.3 Culture as a way of life	189
5.6.4 Culture of denial	191
5.6.5 Tension of family culture and ECWA culture	193
5.6.6 Commendable values in ECWA culture	194
5.7 Theological Challenges of HHC	195
5.7.1 Sexual saturation through seductive and inappropriate explicit dress	196
5.7.2 Enthronement of self and the dethronement of God	198
5.7.3 Vulgar language and statements	199
5.7.4 Arrogance and pride: Way of life	199
5.7.5 Sexual exposure	199
5.7.6 Double-standard life	201
5.7.7 Culture of violence, drugs, and gangsterism	202
5.8 Theological Opportunities of HHC	202
5.8.1 HHC as a platform for evangelism	203
5.8.2 HHC as a culture of revival	204
5.8.3 HHC gives a sense of belonging and identity	205
5.8.4 Projecting godly youth	206
5.8.5 Freedom of expression in worship	206
5.8.6 Promotes professionalism in gospel music	208
5.8.7 Creates wealth	208

CATEGORY C: THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT	209
5.9 Equipping for Theological Discernment.....	209
5.9.1 Equipping of Christian faith as insurance model.....	210
5.9.2 Tools of equipping for theological discernment.....	212
5.9.2.1 Church Bible studies	213
5.8.2.2 Prayer meetings and the gift of the Holy Spirit	213
5.9.2.3 Living testaments	214
5.9.2.4 Jesus’s model of discipleship and mentorship	215
5.9.2.5 Personal spiritual journey.....	216
5.10 Conclusion	217
CHAPTER SIX: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ECWA YOUTH MINISTRY.....	219
6.1 Introduction.....	219
6.1.1 Summary of findings.....	220
6.1.2 The contextual implications for ECWA	223
6.1.3 Practical implications of this research study	223
6.2 Programme of Youth Ministry in ECWA	224
6.2.1 Programme feedback mechanism	224
6.2.2 Suggested feedback mechanism	226
6.3 ECWA culture.....	226
6.3.1 Culture is created and can be recreated	231
6.3.2 Gatekeepers in ECWA Youth Ministry	233
6.3.2.1 Academician (theologians)	234

6.3.2.2 Practitioners (youth leaders, youth pastors, youth workers).....	235
6.3.2.3 Administrators (CEDs & CEOs).....	235
6.3.2.4 Theological training for youth ministry	236
6.4 Hip Hop Culture as a Phenomenon.....	236
6.4.1 Hip hop culture as a phenomenon	236
6.4.2 Discernment of hip hop culture	237
6.5 Challenges and Opportunities of Hip Hop Culture	239
6.5.1 Theological challenges of hip hop culture	239
6.5.1.1 Sexism/masculine dominance	240
6.5.1.2 Explicit sexual exposure in content	241
6.5.1.3 Gangsterism and drugs.....	241
6.5.1.4 Violence	242
6.5.2 Theological opportunities of hip hop culture.....	242
6.5.2.1 Soul winning	242
6.5.2.2 Expression in worship.....	244
6.5.2.3 Wealth creation	244
6.5.2.4 Voice to the voiceless	245
6.6 Hip hop church	245
6.6.1 Graffiti	249
6.6.2 Rapping/ rap music	250
6.6.3 Deejaying.....	251
6.7 Acculturation.....	251
6.8 Enculturation.....	256

6.9 Theological Engagement	257
6.9.1 General equipping for theological discernment.....	260
6.9.2 Specific equipping on hip hop culture	260
6.9.3 Theology of incarnation.....	261
6.9.4 Gift of discernment	261
6.9.5 Reception history theory.....	262
6.10 Conclusion	266
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE STUDY	268
7.1 Introduction	268
7.2 Reflection on the Research Question	268
7.3 Reflection on Findings	269
7.3.1 Reflection on findings from literature	269
7.3.2 Reflection on findings from empirical study	271
7.4 General Conclusion on Research Study	273
7.4.1 Limitations of the current study.....	275
7.4.2 Recommendations.....	276
7.5 Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Studies	277
Bibliography	279
ADDENDUMS	304

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Theological discernment is a necessary part of spiritual growth and maturity in the faith community. Spiritual growth and maturity informs theological response to concerns of interest. The theological models and practice of theological discernment equip the youth to discern how to engage theologically with hip hop culture (HHC), and how HHC can be used in youth ministry to equip youth regarding their lifestyle and behaviour as they engage in society. The proposed study critically examines the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) youth ministry programmes as drafted by the Christian education department at ECWA headquarters and investigates the way in which the latter hope to train the ECWA youth, youth leaders and youth pastors towards better theological discernment concerning HHC.

The essence of arguing for youth ministry programmes that equip youth for theological discernment is based on the goals ECWA has set out for itself. Among the goals of ECWA are theological training and equipping of ECWA members to live out their faith in the ‘world’ (ECWA, 2010b:37; 2007:3). This goal – to equip ECWA members – is achieved through the establishment of various ministries, departments and agencies, of which youth fellowship (ministry) is one (ECWA, 2010b:53). The youth ministry policy, handbook and programmes are drafted by the Christian Education Department (CED) at ECWA headquarters and handed to all youth leaders and pastors (ECWA, 2010b:2, 40-43).

1.2 Background and Motivation

ECWA is an indigenous church with its headquarters in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. Although ECWA is an indigenous church (located in all four geographical zones in Nigeria: Northern, Southern, Western and Eastern region), it was established by an international affiliate called Serving In Mission (SIM) – formally known as Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). ECWA has branches and members in different countries of the world, with a total membership of seven million (Chiroma, 2008:23).

The ECWA organogram¹ reflects a church functioning through different strata in a hierarchy of leadership and ministry. According to the different strata in the hierarchy, the General Church Council (GCC) at ECWA headquarters is the highest decision-making and programme-drafting body in the ECWA. It comprises the GCC executives, namely the ECWA Executive (EE), all District Church Council (DCC) chairmen and the secretary. The DCC is the second highest decision-making and policy-drafting body in the ECWA. It comprises the DCC executives and all local overseers of local church councils. The latter form the third highest decision-making body in the ECWA. This is followed by the Local Church Councils (LCCs), the fourth highest decision-making and policy-drafting body, which include an executive and all pastors in the Local Church Board (LCB). These different hierarchical strata co-ordinate the youth, women's and men's ministry through the Christian Education Department (CED) of the different strata (ECWA, 2010a:10-11; 2010b:7, 53; 1997:11).

In terms of the ECWA organogram, the youth fellowship (ministry) policy and handbook are drafted at the CED at ECWA headquarters and sent to all LCBs through the DCC, which sends them to the LCC through the Christian Education Officer (CEO) for further delivery to the LCB. Each LCB then drafts a youth programme that confirms and implements the youth ministry programmes and policies in their youth fellowship. The youth policy in ECWA is provided in the ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook. This handbook informs the content of all ECWA youth ministry programmes. It depicts the objectives, goals and foci of the ECWA youth ministries (ECWA, 2010b:8).

In the ECWA structure, the EE at the ECWA headquarters determines the annual themes for the denomination (church). The EE's chosen theme for each year informs the topic and subject of discussion at programmes in all churches and ministries. The EE takes the spiritual lead, deciding on a theme which is communicated to all churches and ministries with the expectation that every church and ministry will follow the themes in all their programmes – whether at DCC, LCC, or LCB level. That is, all programmes in ECWA are designed to discuss the theological content on the theme as decided by the EE. The theme is decided and disseminated to all churches and ministries irrespective of geographical locations (cosmopolitan cities and rural locations). The theology in the themes are meant to be the equipping tools for theological discernment in cosmopolitan and rural locations

¹ Addendum A

irrespective of their concerns of interest. ECWA also has an annual week programme for its ministries (youth, women and men), for which the CED sends a programme with topics and theological content to be discussed and implemented by all its youth ministries. This programme is drafted with guiding questions as to whether or not the theological content of the programme equips the youth with theological discernment in terms of presenting opportunities and challenges posed by their (youth) concerns of interest such as HHC.

With regard to the motivation to undertake this study, it is both academic and personal. In terms of academic motivation, the desire to undertake this research stems from a recommendation in my master's thesis (MTh), which was attained at Stellenbosch University in December 2015. In my master's research study, I recommended that it is the responsibility of the faith community (through its youth ministry) to equip the youth with theological discernment in relation to their self-identity crisis so that they can potentially navigate the boundless digital continent of social media (Ogidi, 2015:100, 120). The point is that equipping the youth with sound theological understanding is relevant and influential to shaping how they use social media. The reason for this is that, if the youth are to be theologically equipped to navigate different aspects and concerns of interest to youth culture,² the faith community and youth ministry has to deliberately train and equip the youth with a theological lens for theological discernment.

Further engagement with the literature at the time of and after my MTh graduation suggested that there is an actual need for theological discernment in the faith community through various arms of youth ministry (Aragon, 2015:6, Strong, 2015:3; Schweitzer, 2014:184; Senter, 2014:57; Root and Dean, 2011:46; Nel, 2005:17; Dean, 2001:15; Nel, 2003:73). However, the gap discovered in this literature relates to the relevance of theological discernment concerning questions and concerns of interest to the youth, such as how they navigate the influence of hip hop youth culture. This is because, as a subculture of youth culture, hip hop culture (HHC) influences the behaviour, experiences, ideology, identity and way of life of the youth (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243-248). In this research, I will be building on my MTh research by investigating another aspect of youth culture (hip hop culture) further to understand how hip hop culture influences the lifestyle

² Youth culture is the commonality of shared behaviour, ideology, experience, custom, language (slanguage), lifestyle or way of life and perception that is constructed through different social processes (Ogidi, 2015:28; Cloete, 2012:2). Youth culture can also be a subculture of societal structures that can be expressed, observed, learned and shared (Cloete 2012:1-2). In this study, youth culture is understood as a way of life that is predominant among the youth. This way of life informs their understanding of themselves and how they are viewed and understood in society.

and behaviour of youth and youth leaders. The study investigates whether the ECWA youth programmes, as offered by the ECWA, equip or undermine the youth and youth leaders, and also investigates how else the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors can be equipped with theological discernment in relation to opportunities and challenges associated with hip hop youth culture.

The quest to discover the relevance of theological discernment in relation to hip hop culture aroused in me the curiosity to investigate what the youth are saying about theological discernment as a valuable praxis in terms of their daily opportunities and challenges of HHC. I agree with Dodrill (2013:7) when he argues that a lot has been written about and argued for theological discernment in youth ministry, but not much has been said about evaluating the current theological content concerning youth ministry programmes to ascertain whether they are contemporary or relevant to the youth concerns of interest in relation to the opportunities and challenges posed by hip hop youth culture.

My personal motivation arose from my experience as a youth pastor and youth worker in a variety of locations and settings³ in Nigeria, amongst others equipping and training the youth in Nigeria with biblical and theological discernment in terms of their (youth) concerns of interest. I have been engaged in youth ministry for over a decade.

1.3 Prior Literature Study

It is important to highlight that the concept of theological discernment in youth ministry is described in literature using various terminologies. Some scholars term this theological foundations, while others make reference to theological grounding, theological education, theological teaching, theological turn, or theological discernment of youth ministry (Strong, 2015:3; Hendriks 2014:61; Shepherd and Nash 2014:5; Dean, 2001:15; Root and Dean, 2011).

All these terms support the idea that youth ministry in the faith community needs a level of theological discernment and teaching that will enable the youth to articulate their faith in different situations and contexts (Höring, 2013:46; Nel, 2005:17). In this regard, theological discernment can be understood in terms of responding to questions and challenges,

³ In different institutions such as secondary (high) schools, polytechnics, universities, communities and churches in cosmopolitan cities and rural areas.

including questions of interest and concern, through a normative understanding of who God is and what God's grace to humanity entails.

One general consensus among theologians is that there is a need for theological discernment of the content of faith-based youth ministry programmes (Aragon, 2015:6; Strong, 2015:3; Schweitzer, 2014:184; Senter, 2014:57; Nel, 2005:17; Roebben 2005:24; Dean, 2001:1, 15). Dean (2001:15) submits that the survival of youth ministry programmes lies in their being rooted in theological reflection. Therefore, the theological content of youth ministry programmes is critical for equipping the youth with theological discernment, and also important for the sustenance of youth ministry programmes. This means that the theological content of youth ministry programmes can equip the youth with a normative perspective of their questions of concern.

Dean (2001:15), commenting on the relevance of theological discernment in youth ministry programmes, argues that youth ministry that is not built on theological teaching, is sure to collapse. Thus, she believes that youth ministry that builds its programmes on theological reflection, is the normal practice in this era of youth ministry. Schweitzer (2014:184) shares Dean's view, but argues for theological reflection that is not just a confession or dogma handed over to the youth by the faith community. He clarifies his opinion by arguing that theological reflection should be built into conversation with the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors if it is going to survive for years and not collapse (Schweitzer, 2014:184). Therefore, the youth should be treated as 'lay theologians' who are trying to make sense of the ultimate questions of who God is and what God really means to them. In the light of this understanding, Schweitzer (2014:184) and Tanis (2016:101) call for the youth to be engaged as 'lay theologians' whose questions and challenges make them ask, think, seek answers and innovate theological practices.

Similarly, Senter (2014:57) and Aragon (2015:6) argue for theological reflection that understands and discusses the past and present realities of the youth. Aragon (2015:6) argues for theological reflection in youth ministry that addresses specific questions and challenges faced by the youth in their own contexts and societies. This suggests that youth ministry programmes may have theological content, but this may not be relevant to the youth in their particular contexts or societies. One possible explanation for this is the fact that, more often than not, youth programmes are drafted by the faith community, who may or may not understand the questions of interest to, and the challenges of, the youth in that

context (for instance, the Nigerian context may differ from the South African one due to different worldviews and experiences).

In responding to the possibility of this reality, as identified by Aragon, Senter (2014:57) calls for the need to rethink the theological education of and reflection on youth ministry. The need for this rethink, he argues, is to ascertain whether the theological education and reflection offered by the faith community to its youth are relevant to the present realities of the youth. In this regard, this study is set to examine the phenomenon of hip hop youth culture as one such reality confronting the youth.

For some, HHC is understood as music produced and released within a specific genre by musical artists called hip hop artists (Vito, 2015:396; Terkourafi, 2010:333; Perry, 2004:202). Although hip hop music is an integral part of hip hop culture, this culture is more than the music. Kelley (1994:52) argues that HHC is conceptualised as a way of life through which the youth share their experiences, grievances and dreams. Vito (2015:397) concurs that HHC is an outlet of expression. In this study, HHC is conceptualised as an outlet of expression through which the youth show behaviours, patterns of lifestyle, languages (slanguage) and styles of which the identity is a departure from those of their parents and the dominant traditional culture in the society. HHC is also conceptualised as a culture that informs how the youth see themselves, or their sense of self-understanding and dignity that serves to construct their way of life.

The literature shows that HHC provides opportunities to negotiate between tradition and modernity (Shonekan, 2010:4). Hip hop youth culture affords the youth an opportunity to define their own human dignity in consonance with present modernisation. The hip hop youth culture provides the opportunity to communicate powerful oratorical, didactic messages, and expressions of frustration (Shonekan, 2010:5, Degbovie, 2005:307). This connotes that the youth can use HHC as a communicative means to express their frustrations with the problems and injustices within their society, or in the global world. It also supports the argument that, through hip hop music, HHC can be instrumental in conveying didactic messages that teach good morals and lessons about liberation from addiction or bondage.

Hip hop youth culture brings happiness (Shonekan, 2010:8). The youth derive happiness from doing what they like to do, for which HHC affords them opportunities. However, what brings the youth happiness (hip hop youth culture), could cause anger and anxiety among their parents or other members of the society. The youth can reinvent their identities through

stylistic (Alim, 2009:105). This denotes that hip hop youth culture affords the youth the opportunity to fashion or create their own style of doing things. The youth can represent themselves in the way they want society to see and address them. The hip hop culture breeds brotherhood⁴ (Motley and Henderson, 2008:245).

Furthermore, young people who share the same or similar identity or behaviour in dressing and language, relate to each other with a sense of solidarity (fraternity). However, this sense of fraternity can become a fraternity of reckless behaviour and intimidation in society if the goals of the fraternity are not constructive for human dignity. Moreover, HHC promotes history and the presentation of the historiography of a race or cause (Degbovie, 2005:310). The hip hop culture can be used to tell and retell the stories and history of a society and culture in an attempt to preserve the historicity of that society and culture.

HHC poses challenges such as gangsterism among the youth (Price, 2006:8, 21). Gangsterism is a racket among youth that leads to involvement in acts reminiscent of crime, particularly organised crime. Hip hop youth culture can influence youth to participate in illegal conduct and crime in a quest to be respected or to create an identity. Hip hop youth culture can ignite a 'foreign' culture within traditional culture (Price, 2006:17), causing "cultural interpellation where Nigerian youth assume the identities of popular hip-hop stars", leading to unproductivity in the lives of the Nigerian youth who are influenced by hip hop youth culture (Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470).

Moreover, HHC promotes sexual saturation in the community and society⁵ (Shonekan, 2010:9; Akpan, 2006:95). The direct effect is the dehumanisation of the images of women as mere sex objects for the sensual gratification of the 'men' (Shonekan, 2010:9). These challenges posed by the global HHC influence the human dignity of the youth in terms of their self-image, the way they dress, their identity and the respect they receive in society⁶ (Abraham, 2015:n.p.; Liadi & Omobowale, 2011:470; Shonekan, 2010:9; Akpan 2006:95; Price, 2006:1, 8).

⁴ Brotherhood for male and Sisterhood for female. I will use the word fraternity to represent brotherhood and sisterhood.

⁵ One of the trademarks of hip hop youth culture is the saturation of sexual messages in the society. This saturation comes through hip hop music as a genre of music, and also in advertisements, movies, etc.

⁶ This implies that some people in the society have little regard for hip hop youth culture because these challenges posed by hip hop culture present the youth as irresponsible, unmannered and not deserving of respect. For example, the HHC of dress can portray the youth as irresponsible people whose dignity is dehumanised by their style and fashion of dress.

Therefore, HHC presents the youth with opportunities and poses challenges that can inform and influence their way of life and behaviour. These opportunities and challenges beg programmes and models of equipping the youth (ECWA) with theological discernment to address the challenges and respond to the opportunities, because Nigerian youth are active participants in HHC (Liadi and Omobowale 2011:470; Shonekan, 2010:1; Akpan, 2006:95).

1.4 Research Problem and Research Question

1.4.1 Research problem

The youth ministry programme⁷ of the ECWA is not drafted by the youth, youth pastors or youth leaders.⁸ As noted above, the ministry organogram is such that the annual ministry programme is drafted by the CED and the theme by the EE at the ECWA headquarters.

The youth programmes are drafted to be implemented by the youth ministry in cosmopolitan and rural locations, not taking cognisance of the fact that different locations could have different concerns that pose different challenges and provide different opportunities. The present ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook is purposed to “instruct, guide, and direct the activities of the youth fellowship, their elections and other endeavours for the glory of God” (ECWA, 2010b:5, 39). However, concerns can be raised about how the ECWA youth should be theologically guided, instructed and directed through the youth programme. Other concerns could be what theological discernment is as it pertains to youth, whether the programme takes into account the divergent challenges and opportunities facing youth culture in cosmopolitan cities,⁹ and whether this programme can be used by youth ministry to guide and equip ECWA youth in cosmopolitan cities for theological discernment on the challenges and opportunities presented by HHC.

⁷ This ECWA youth ministry programme consists of annual themes and youth fellowship weeks of prayer which are an annual programme in the ECWA structure.

⁸ In the ECWA, youth ministry is practised as youth fellowship, and the guide (programme) is written in the ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook.

⁹ HHC is glocalised. Glocalised is a concept that depicts how HHC, though global influence, takes on different patterns and influences in different social contexts. This implies that hip hop youth culture is a global phenomenon that is contextualised in different localities. The hip hop influence in cosmopolitan cities is not the same as in rural areas. In cosmopolitan cities, hip hop is embedded in the way of life of the youth, and in less tension with traditional African culture. In rural areas, the HHC has more to do with music than a lifestyle (way of life), and it is sometimes in tension with the traditional African culture that dominates the rural areas.

Theological discernment is an indispensable part of the grounding of the youth that could help them face the challenges and opportunities of contemporary youth culture. By designing the youth handbook and annual youth week programmes without the involvement of the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors may create programmes that are not contemporary with the concerns of the youth and do not equip the youth with theological discernment to address the challenges and opportunities provided by the hip hop youth culture in cosmopolitan cities.

1.4.2 Research question

In the light of the above-mentioned research problem, the primary research question this study will address is: How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within the contemporary hip hop youth culture?

The secondary research question is: How can the faith community equip youth to engage HHC in cosmopolitan cities?

1.5 Research Aims and Objectives

The research aims and objectives of this research study are the following:

- 1 To explore a conceptual and contextual understanding of theological discernment among the youth and youth leaders. (This is investigated in Chapter Two and Five using the practical theological framework of descriptive-empirical and normative tasks).
- 2 To understand and extend different models and tools of equipping for theological discernment within the faith community. (This is investigated in Chapter Two and Six using the practical theological framework of normative and pragmatic tasks).
- 3 To conceptualise the ideology and learned behaviour of HHC and its impact (challenges and opportunities) on the youth with regard to their lifestyle and behaviour. (This is investigated in Chapter Three and Five using the practical theological framework of descriptive and interpretive tasks).
- 4 To find out how the ECWA youth ministry programmes (annual themes and youth fellowship weeks of prayer) equip the ECWA youth with the necessary theological discernment to address the impact of the challenges and opportunities posed by

HHC. (This is investigated in Chapter Five using the practical theological framework of descriptive-empirical, and interpretive tasks).

- 5 To propose to the faith community (youth ministry and church) possible practical theological approaches to equipping the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with HHC. (This is investigated in Chapter Six and Seven using the practical theological framework of normative and pragmatic tasks).

1.6 Research Design and Methodology

The research problem and question (primary and secondary research question) posed above necessitate an engagement with both theoretical and empirical study as its methodology and qualitative research study as its research design. The theoretical study entails engaging literature to investigate the research question. While empirical study entails the investigation of the research question through seeking opinions, understanding and experiences in the words of participants within a real life context.

1.6.1 Research design

Mouton (2001:55) submits that “a research design is a plan or blueprint of how you intend conducting the research”. A research design provides a research map, plan and blueprint for a research study. The research map, the blueprint for this research study, is a qualitative study. As a qualitative study, Walliman (2006:3) argues that it is based on encouraging participants to express their experiences by themselves in their own right and understanding. Lending voice to the significance of qualitative research, Mouton (2001:194) submits that qualitative research study affords a researcher the opportunity to attempt to understand people according to their worldview in their own words. It does not involve counting and dealing with numbers like quantitative research, but rather it is used to generate data from people’s words, experiences and opinions.

The reason for engaging with a qualitative research study and not quantitative research study is that this study seeks to investigate people’s opinions, thoughts and experiences. The research design of qualitative study is engaged in this study because this research study generates data in words regarding the opinions and experiences of HHC of participants. I agree with Saldaña (2011:5), who argues that culture and its impact are understood through individuals expressing their own opinions, experiences and attitudes in words. This study seeks to discover the exact situation and experience of the ECWA youth, youth leaders,

pastors and Christian education staff, and their perceptions (opinions, ideas, concepts, practices, and experiences) of hip hop youth culture. Therefore, adopting a qualitative research design will aid this study in seeking to achieve the research aims and objectives, and, in seeking to achieve these objectives, it will answer the research question of this study, namely: “How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment to engage with the challenges and opportunities within the contemporary hip hop youth culture?”.

1.6.2 Research Methodology

This research was conducted by using a theoretical and an empirical study to investigate the primary and secondary research question of this study.

1.6.2.1 Theoretical (literature) study

Engaging in a theoretical study of the literature, aids the researcher in evaluating the existing literature related to the research subject (Alston and Bowles, 2003:64). This research drew from extant interdisciplinary literature by academic writers, authors and experts, documents and archival sources, and researchers who have been interacting with youth ministry programmes, the hip hop culture, and practical theological discernment in journals, books, articles, conferences and the internet.

The theoretical study of the literature (primary and secondary data) can be reviewed by deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning – what another author, Bak, refers to as working from the ‘outside in’ or working from the ‘inside out’ (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport, 2005:47; Bak, 2004:19). Deductive reasoning (or an ‘outside in’ approach) entails studying a subject or phenomenon from a broader framework to a smaller unit or core, while inductive reasoning (working from the ‘inside out’) works from a specific and smaller unit or core to a general subject (Vos et al., 2005:47).

In terms of the primary and secondary data, this research study used deductive reasoning to analyse literature. That is, this research study works from a general understanding of culture and youth culture to the specific subject of HHC.

This study engages with the ECWA archival sources in its literature review. These archival sources include documents, minutes of meetings, diaries and narratives that show the historicity and context of reasoning and why participants behave the way they do (Salmon,

2016:7). Smith (2007:43) argues that such documents are beneficial to a research project in practical theology. The documents that this research refer to, include ECWA documents and other documents relevant to church-based ministry and HHC.

1.6.2.2 Empirical study

Weber (2015:6) argues that one cogent reason for conducting empirical research is to give the opportunity to express opinions in their voice. That is, empirical study aids that the voice of the youth can be heard regarding issues that concern them. In this research I examine the thoughts/perceptions (opinions, ideas, concepts, practices, experience) of the ECWA youth, youth leaders and pastors in relation to the hip hop youth culture. The researcher serves as the primary data-gathering instrument in qualitative research, while the respondent is the source of the data.

Empirical study is essential in aiding the study of humanity in its context and understanding how humanity defines and expresses its situation and phenomenon in its own words. Clives (2002: 789) argues that, “if people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences”. De Vos et al. (2005: 270) add that it is pertinent to generate knowledge about humanity by asking the people whose real lives are being researched, to express their real lives in their own words and understanding because the experience of this humanity constitutes their reality.

To understand the real life of the participants, this research engages empirical study to generate knowledge about the reality of people’s experiences, understanding and opinions in their own words.

1.6.3 Data collection

As a qualitative study, the research involves gathering information from participants about their experiences, behaviours, feelings and opinions in their words (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006:482). The qualitative methods are in-depth interviews. These methods enable this research to achieve its aim and objective in order to answer the research question posed above. This research study engaged the data collection of in-depth interviews to gain knowledge from the participants about their own real life contexts in an attempt to answer the research question of this study.

1.6.3.1 In-depth interview

This study employed semi-structured interviews, which allowed the researcher to be flexible in adhering to the questions, as well as allowing open-ended questions to surface in the course of the interview (Mason, 2010:7). An interview question can be either open-ended or close-ended, or a combination of both (Picardi and Masick, 2014:150; Hansen, 2013:51). This study used open-ended interview questions so that the respondents could express their thoughts and experiences in their own words (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014:74).

In-depth interviews involve one-on-one and face-to-face interactions between the researcher (interviewer) and the participant (informant), and seek to build a level of intimacy and conditions for mutual self-disclosure (Johnson, 2001:3). They tend to involve a greater expression of the interviewer's self than some other types of interviews. Salmon (2016:7) is of the opinion that the researcher should either record the discussion or take notes during the interview. However, before recording or taking notes, I assured the interviewees of the confidentiality of their responses. After conducting the interviews, transcribers of the data were sought to transcribe the recordings with confidentiality.

1.6.3.2 Sampling

A purposeful sampling of participants was done for this qualitative research (Picardi and Masick, 2014:154; Salkind, 2012:72; Mason, 2010:7). Mason (2010:2) argues that, when undertaking purposeful sampling, the qualitative sample should be large enough to ensure that most of the ideas, perceptions and experiences that might be important to the subject of discussion, are uncovered, but it is also important to avoid a sample that is too large, which can lead to superfluous words and ideas. A purposive sampling of the youth, youth fellowship leaders (youth and youth leaders who are 18 to 35 years old, male and female), youth pastors and the CED at ECWA headquarters was employed to sample from all possible segments of the ECWA who satisfy certain criteria of interest to this study, criteria such as involvement in the drafting of the ECWA youth ministry annual programmes and themes.

Since a qualitative sample should be large enough to ensure resourceful information, but not too large to avoid a superfluity of ideas, there is a need to gauge saturation (Mason, 2010:2). The criteria for sampling that can achieve saturation was that the participants are

ECWA youth fellowship members, LCB members located in cosmopolitan cities¹⁰ in the DCCs.¹¹ The youth fellowship members and youth leaders were between ages 18 and 35 years old¹². The sample selection of the youth and youth leaders was done by the CEO at each DCC.

This research study sampled the opinions, understandings and experiences of forty (40) participants. Of these participants, sixteen (16) were youth (category Y), eleven (11) were youth leaders (category YL), and a combination of thirteen (13) youth pastors¹³, CEDs and CEOs (category YPCED). These participants were coded into three categories with separate sets of questions.

The participants were from the ECWA headquarters CED and four DCCs in cosmopolitan cities (each DCC has at least one LCB in a cosmopolitan city). The four DCCs superintend five cosmopolitan LCBs in five geographic zones in Nigeria (North, South, West and East) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT – Abuja). The four DCCs are Ebute Metta DCC Lagos (West), Kano DCC – Kano State (North), Garki DCC – Abuja (FCT) and Aba DCC – Abia State (East)¹⁴.

At Jos two participants were chosen at the CED of ECWA headquarters and two youth pastors were selected by the CED as the head of the department. At Ebute Metta DCC, seven participants were chosen (three youth, two youth leaders, one youth pastor, and one CEO). At Kano DCC, five participants were selected by the church pastor (two youth, two youth leaders and one CEO). At Garki DCC, five participants were selected (two youth, two youth leaders, two CEOs and one youth pastor¹⁵). At Umuahia, five participants were

¹⁰ The choice of cosmopolitan cities is because HHC is an urban/cosmopolitan culture that is globalised through films, community art, music companies, the internet, print media, musicians, music magazines, TV and radio shows, night clubs and music stores (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245; Condry, 2001:374), and also because cosmopolitan cities embrace multicultural demographics.

¹¹ DCCs are areas (zones) that superintend ECWA churches and ministries. There are ECWA DCCs that superintend in all zones (North, South, West and East) in Nigeria.

¹² In Nigeria, the youth is a category of persons in the age bracket of 18 to 35 years (Adeogun, 2015:213, Badejo, Stephens and Anyanwu, 2011:284, NYPSA – National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of Action, 2001:6, 2009:6).

¹³ Youth pastors in the ECWA are often associate pastors without training or equipping in youth ministry. They are posted to the LCBs by the DCCs as associate pastors, but designated by the LCBs as their youth pastors.

¹⁴ The Aba DCC in Abia state which is in the Eastern geopolitical zone in Nigeria, superintends the cosmopolitan LCB in the Southern geopolitical zone. Thus, Aba DCC had participants in Aba (East) and Port-Harcourt (South), because the cosmopolitan churches in both Aba and Port-Harcourt are superintended by Aba DCC.

¹⁵ More often than not, youth pastors in ECWA are associate pastors without training and equipping in youth ministry. They are posted to the LCBs by the DCCs as associate pastors but designated by the LCB as their youth pastor.

chosen by the pastor (three youth, one youth leader, and one CEO). At Aba DCC, 14 participants were selected because Aba DCC superintends two cosmopolitan cities located in two different geopolitical zones in Nigeria (Port Harcourt, River State in the Southern region and Aba, Abia State in the Eastern region). The 14 participants are six youths, five youth leaders, two youth pastors, and one CEO.

1.6.3.3 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to examine the data collection research instruments. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014:49), a pilot study constitutes part of the preliminary stage in which the research instruments are tested among people similar to the actual participants in the main study. For this study, I conducted the pilot test among Nigerian evangelical youth between the ages of 18 and 35 who are either studying at Stellenbosch University (SU) or wives of students at SU. At SU Nigerian students participate in a student association called the Association of Nigerian Students at Stellenbosch University (ANSSU)¹⁶, where all Nigerians studying at the university are eligible members, and their wives associate members. Three participants were engaged to test the research instrument (two male, one female).

I contacted one ECWA youth pastor and one CED in Jos by phone. Miller (2012:33) argues that a researcher can use a mobile phone to conduct a pilot test for time management purposes. Since I could not travel to Nigeria to conduct the pilot test due to the financial costs and time constraint, and for want of ECWA youth pastors in ANSSU, I telephonically interviewed one ECWA youth pastor in a cosmopolitan DCC, and one DEC staff member in Nigeria to test the feasibility of the instrument used to collect data for this research study.

1.6.3.4 Data analysis

Data that was collected from the sampled population was analysed using the thematic approach¹⁷ of analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001:388). Data analysis is the process of translating the collected data into structured and meaningful information (De Vos et al., 2005:333). The information gathered from the in-depth interviews was transcribed, and the

¹⁶ ANSSU is an association for all Nigerian students at Stellenbosch University, and family members of students.

¹⁷ A thematic approach to data analysis aims at exploring the understanding of an issue, case and people. It examines the significance of people's opinions.

computer software, ATLAS.ti, was used to analyse the generated data using inductive coding (De Vos et al., 2005:336-337). This approach enabled this research to achieve its aim and objective in order to answer the research question posed above.

1.7 Practical Theological Framework

Nel (2013:75) argues that there are several developed practical theological methodologies that aid empirical research in youth ministry as discipline. Van der Ven (1993:42) enunciates a hermeneutical-communicative praxis that is concerned with the hermeneutical circle of (1) knowing, (2) interpreting, and (3) acting. Nel (2013:73) phrases it differently when he explains that hermeneutical process is concerned with (1) understanding (comprehending), (2) elucidating (explaining), (3) arriving at an understanding (assimilation). Similarly, Louw (1998:97) argues that the theological task is hermeneutical by nature because it entails a dialogical interaction between God and humanity. In the hermeneutical process of interpreting the dialogue between God and humanity, Root (2007:20) proposes a three-step process from (1) experience in the lives of the youth, to (2) reflection, to (3) new action.

Hansen (2013:45), teaching in a workshop on practical theological methodology, argued that the goals of practical theological research are to examine the world to (1) understand the real-life problem, (2) examine the Bible to see what God's ideal is, and then (3) develop an action plan to transform what it into what should be. According to Hansen (2013:45), these three goals provide the backbone of a working model for research in practical theology.

Similarly, Robert Osmer promotes four theological tasks that can aid in the hermeneutical process of understanding and interpreting a social context. This research employs the four theological hermeneutical tasks as its practical theological framework (as promoted by Osmer) to critically analyse the real-life opportunities and challenges posed by the hip hop youth culture among the ECWA youth and youth leaders. The four theological tasks as promoted by Osmer serve as a framework structure for theological argument. These theological tasks and their guiding questions are: (1) Descriptive-empirical (What is happening in the context?), in relation to which Louw (1998:98) notes that the descriptive-

empirical phase (task) entails description or observation¹⁸; (2) Interpretive (Why is this happening in the context?); (3) Normative (What ought to be happening in the context?); and (4) Pragmatic (What action should the faith community do in that context henceforth?).

These four theological tasks served as the structure for practical theological argument for this research study. These tasks aid researchers to investigate thoughts, experiences, behaviours and ways of life in a particular context with theological discernment to guide the approach and action (Osmer, 2012:319; 2008:4; 2005: xv).

1.7.1 Descriptive-empirical task

The descriptive-empirical task (What is happening?) of practical theology entails gathering information that can potentially guide a researcher to understand and discern patterns of thoughts, episodes, behaviour and contemporary lives and practices in a particular context and situation (Osmer, 2008:32; 2005:xv). It seeks to find out what is happening in the lives of individual people, families and congregations in a particular context, in what Osmer (2008:33) calls “a spiritual presence”. Osmer (2008:34) argues that a spiritual presence adopts a priestly listening approach to understand a phenomenon and context.

1.7.2 Interpretive task

The interpretive task asks the question: Why is this happening? Osmer (2008:83) argues that the interpretive task uses existing theories or literature and interdisciplinary literature to explain the ‘whys’ of a phenomenon and reality in the society. The interpretive task attempts to understand the reasons why a phenomenon is prevailing in a context. The thrust of the interpretive task is using this task to find out why a phenomenon is occurring; that is, generating facts about ‘why’ a phenomenon is prevalent in the society or context.

Osmer (2008:98) adds that the interpretive task adopts sage wisdom. Sage wisdom connotes that a practical theologian gleans from interdisciplinary engagement by learning from existing scientific, biblical and theological theories in literature. Engaging the interpretive task denotes that the researcher acquires pre-understanding of a phenomenon and context by learning how different researchers have undertaken research on the research subject. Another sage wisdom that a practical theologian can learn from, is the wisdom of Jesus

¹⁸ Louw explains that the descriptive investigation of concerns entails enquiring to identify the problem and the reality of the situation in the field. Just like Osmer’s task, it asks:, What is going on?.

Christ. Jesus is epitomised as wisdom incarnate who reveals God's secret wisdom, and the fountain of God's wisdom (Osmer 2008:98). Osmer (2008:98) says that "Jesus provides a radical, counter-cultural framework within which Christians must interpret wisdom literature. As sage, Jesus qualifies our reliance on experiential, creation wisdom alone". On how to glean wisdom from Jesus as the fountain of God's wisdom, see section 2.6.2.

1.7.3 Normative task

The normative task asks, what ought to be happening? Osmer (2008:133) argues that the normative task uses the theological paradigm and concepts to understand and possibly interpret events and contexts by developing theological content and theological ethical norms to guide the approach and responses to the event and context.

The normative task entails guiding people to see God in the broader picture of an event, situation and context. It also entails deducing from history how Christianity has been shaped and moulded over decades through different phenomena and cultures, which could be pleasant or unpleasant. It can therefore be used to guide people to know and interpret happenings in their lives through the lens of God's ultimate will. As promoted by Osmer, the normative task must be theological, ethical and born from good practice.

The normative task should be theological in the sense that it must be done through theological interpretation. Theological interpretation draws on theological concepts as informed by biblical and systematic theology. Theological interpretation focuses on the understanding and interpretation of events, situations and contexts from within the theological paradigm and concepts (Osmer, 2008:139). Thus, the youth and youth leaders can be equipped with theological interpretation to empower them for theological discernment, as discussed in section 2.6.4.

Osmer (2008:161) explains that a normative task should be ethical, in the sense that it is a practice that uses ethical guidelines, principles and precepts to guide actions and inactions towards moral ends. It connotes that actions are guided by certain ethical norms. Thus, the youth are equipped with ethical guidelines and principles on how to engage with HHC.

Good practice entails that the normative task generates primary data of a new understanding of God, the Christian faith, Christian life, social experience of the Christian ministry, and social values beyond those provided by the received tradition (Osmer, 2008:153).

Moreover, the normative task is a prophetic discernment that seeks to discern God's will amidst a phenomenon and lived realities of people, families and contexts. A prophetic discernment connotes that realities are understood from God's will and human reality. That is, the normative task entails understanding life through divine disclosure and the human shaping of God's Word (Osmer, 2008:135). This suggests that the normative task can only be effective when a person is conversant with the divine disclosure of God, the biblical narrative and the historicity of people – both ancient and modern – with an experiential knowledge of God

1.7.4 Pragmatic task

The pragmatic task asks: How might we respond henceforth? This task aids to investigate thoughts, experiences, behaviours and ways of life in a particular context, using theological discernment to guide the approach and action (Osmer, 2012:319; 2008:4; 2005: xv). The pragmatic task involves determining strategies of action models that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and applicable to a phenomenon and context. This implies that, in the pragmatic task, the Christian educator needs to be skilful in appropriating strategies, approaches and models that are effective and contextual to youth. The pragmatic task focuses on the development of action-guiding models and rules of art (open-ended guidelines about how to carry out some form of Christian praxis).

The objective of this chapter is to provide congregational leaders with guidance for leading congregations through the process of change. It seeks to answer the question: How might we respond? Osmer explores various aspects of leadership (e.g. task competence, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership), but frames the overall task as servant leadership''.

The first salient reason for choosing Osmer's theoretical framework was because it facilitates the development of a tool to understand human beings in relation to their experiences in the community. On the idea of understanding human beings in relation to their experiences in the community, sociologist Merriam (2009:23) argues that meanings should be constructed by interpreting human beings' experiences as lived in the world. That is, the epistemology of knowledge requires tools that facilitate the construction of knowledge from the viewpoint of human beings in society. Thus, Merriam (2009:23) says that qualitative researchers conducting a basic qualitative study should be interested in (1)

how people interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their worlds, and (3) what meaning they attribute to their experiences.

These three points as argued by Merriam suggest that the purpose of engaging in a qualitative research study is to understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences. As promoted by Osmer, this theological framework is a qualitative research tool or technique that seeks to understand the reality of the society (world) from the viewpoints of human beings whose ways of life inform the culture in society. This theological framework seeks to generate data from human beings regarding their experiences, and what meaning should be attributed to people's experiences and ways of life.

The second salient reason for choosing this theological framework was its consonance with social science research. Arguing from a social science paradigm, the iconic sociologist Silverman (2014:18) argues for the significance of engaging in qualitative research that has the ability to study phenomena and generate recurring data that aids to find sequences ('how') in which participants' meanings and practices ('what') are deployed. Silverman (2014:18) adds that such a research design methodology should also have the character to understand the phenomenon among the participants. It further moves to seeking an answer to the 'why' question by examining the broader context in which the phenomenon is practised and lived by particular participants.

The four theological tasks as promoted by Osmer's practical theological framework for theological argument are in consonance with Silverman's argument (social science). Silverman (2014:18) argues for the significance of a technique that describes a phenomenon by seeking to find out the 'what', 'why' and 'how'. Likewise, Osmer's theological framework is a technique that seeks to investigate a phenomenon within a context by employing a technique that asks questions on the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of a phenomenon that is lived within a given context.

The third salient reason for choosing Osmer's practical theological framework is to achieve the research aims and objective of this research study. The research aims and objectives of this research study necessitate the need to investigate: What is happening?, Why is it happening?, What ought to be happening?, and How might we respond? In terms of this study, this requires research that

- (1) Explores a conceptual and contextual understanding of theological discernment among the youth and youth leaders (this is investigated in Chapter Two and Six using the practical theological framework of interpretive and normative tasks);
- (2) Understands and extends different models and tools of equipment for theological discernment within the faith community (this is investigated in Chapter Two, Five and Six using the practical theological methodology of descriptive-empirical and normative tasks);
- (3) Conceptualise the ideology and learned behaviour of HHC and its impact (challenges and opportunities) on the youth with regard to their way of life and behaviour (this is investigated in Chapter Three and Five using the practical theological methodology of descriptive and interpretive tasks);
- (4) Determines how the ECWA youth ministry programmes (annual themes and youth fellowship weeks of prayer) equip the ECWA youth with the necessary theological discernment to address the impact of the challenges and opportunities posed by hip hop youth culture (this is investigated in Chapter Five, Six and Seven using the practical theological methodology of interpretive and pragmatic tasks);
- (5) Propose to the faith community (youth ministry and church) possible theological approaches to equipping the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with HHC (this is investigated in Chapter Three and Six using the practical theological methodology of pragmatic task).

1.8 Practical Theological Significance

The contribution of this research study is twofold –academic and practical. The academic contribution will attempt to fill the gap in knowledge of practical theology as a Christian mediation discipline that can bring understanding of the opportunities and challenges posed by the hip hop youth culture. According to Heitink (1999:8) practical theology concerns, firstly, the mediation of the Christian faith in God’s coming to humanity in the world He created so that humankind may experience Him daily through others. Secondly, practical theology is concerned with how the Christian faith can influence society through God’s normative perspective on the questions of concern. This study attempts to enlighten the academic discipline of practical theology on the impact of drafting youth ministry programmes that equip the youth with theological discernment to maximise the opportunities and confront the challenges posed by the hip hop culture.

The practical contribution, on the other hand, is firstly to determine the significance of drafting the ECWA youth ministry programmes by getting the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors involved in the process through a system that gives feedback from the youth and youth leaders to the CED of ECWA. Dean and Foster (1998:26), in arguing for the importance of getting the voice of the youth involved in planning and drafting its own programmes, say that “God needs their [young people’s] prophetic voices in the church, in the culture, and in the families they call their own”. Secondly, this study discovers that a context-based (e.g. location: cosmopolitan and rural areas) approach to developing youth programmes is important and pertinent for improving the theological discernment and reflection of the youth.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The hip hop culture is a global culture that is glocalised in different contexts and geographical localities among the youth (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245; Condry, 2001:374). This research focuses on a practical theological investigation of the impact of HHC and how the ECWA youth ministry programmes can equip its youth in Nigeria to maximise the opportunities and face the challenges of hip hop culture in cosmopolitan cities. This investigation was done among the youth in cosmopolitan cities because the HHC is a cosmopolitan urban culture that is (1) glocalised and also (2) embraces multicultural demographics that create different cultures within the same locality (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245).

Research from a theological perspective on HHC in Nigeria is limited, and therefore this research looks further afield for youth ministry in other contexts, and also engaged interdisciplinary discourse to aid understanding. Although this research study focuses on the ECWA and is limited to Nigeria, it contextualises the research findings on HHC in the Nigerian context by engaging in an interdisciplinary study of HHC. I chose the particular social context of HHC because, as Osmer (2008:4) argues, a good practice in practical theology entails in-depth study regarding “particular episodes, situations, or contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide our responses”. The normative task of the practical theological investigation obtains “norms of good practice, by exploring models of such practice in the present and past or by engaging reflexively in transforming practice in the present” (Osmer, 2008:161).

1.10 Ethical Considerations

This research study adheres to the ethical policy of SU. Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee (REC) states its purpose as “to contribute to safeguarding the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of all actual or potential participants in social, behavioural, economic and educational research conducted at Stellenbosch University”¹⁹. Mouton elucidates the essentiality of ethical clearance by arguing that scientific research is a form of human conduct, hence it follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values (2001:238). As in any sphere of human life, certain forms of conduct are morally acceptable, whereas others are not. Considering this, I wrote a request letter to ECWA and got approval²⁰ as a requisite for obtaining ethical clearance from the REC before proceeding with the research study²¹. Accordingly, a deliberate effort was made to uphold the academic standards pertaining to the above ethical codes. A letter of permission was obtained from the selected church denomination in Nigeria to allow the researcher to interview ECWA youths, youth leaders, youth pastors and Christian Education staff with the help of the church pastors as the gatekeepers. I gave the gatekeepers the criteria for selecting the participants: For the youth category (Y), the participant must be a youth member between the age brackets of 18 and 35 years; for the youth leaders category (YL), the participant must be a serving youth leader of the youth fellowship; for the youth pastors, CEOs and CEDs category (YPCED), the participant must be a youth pastor in an LCB or a staff member of the CED at the ECWA headquarters, or a CEO of a DCC.

The participants were informed about the goals and benefits of the study to youth, youth leaders, and youth ministry in ECWA, their protection and confidentiality, and that they would be informed of the results of this research (Rubin and Babbie, 2007:38). Participation was voluntary and the participants retained their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any pressure or coercion.

¹⁹ REC is a Stellenbosch University unit that provides a “framework for the promotion of scientific integrity and ethically responsible research at the University. <http://www0.sun.ac.za/research/research-integrity-and-ethics/human-research-humanities-ethics-1.html>. Accessed: July 2, 2016.

²⁰ The request letter to ECWA is in Addendum B, while approval letter from ECWA is attached as Addendum C.

²¹ The approval letter from Stellenbosch University is attached as Addendum D.

1.11 Conceptual Understanding of Key Terms

In this section, I conceptualise key terms that guide this research study. In Chapter Five, I contextualise the key terms that I generated from the participants' opinions. The conceptualization of key terms from literature influenced both the categorization of participants and the nature of questionnaires administered during indepth interview. That is, the conceptualization of key terms gave this research pre-knowledge of existing understanding on the key terms before drafting the questionnaire that were administered to participants. Also, the conceptualisation (from literature) and contextualisation (participants viewpoint) aid the understanding of how the key terms are globally understood in literature and how they are understood in Nigeria glocalised context.

1.11.1 Youth

Descriptively, youth is a phase of life that varies from continent to continent, because the transition from childhood to youth varies between continents and cultures. These variances categorise the youth into different age brackets on different continents and in different countries (Weber, 2015:3; Cloete, 2012:2; Badejo, Stephens and Anyanwu, 2011:284). In Nigeria, the youth is categorised as young people between the ages of 18 and 35 years (Badejo et al., 2011:284).

In this research study, youth are understood as human beings in God-relationships, and equipped as social actors²² in society (Ellis, 2015:121; Hunsinger, 2015:152; Noval, 2014:44). The youth as social actors connote that youth are active participants in society. Perullo (2005:76) understands the youth as social actors in terms of the youth not being a marginal age group of which the opinions are aired or represented by other social actors and institutions. Youth are social actors who are proactive in society through different available or created youth culture platforms like the hip hop culture, human beings who, as social actors, could be equipped for theological discernment as they navigate their concerns of interest in church and society.

²² Social actors are active participants who undertakes actions that addresses the social realities in the society. Social actors pragmatically respond to social, political, spiritual and economic issues in the society. Youth as social actors entails that youth engages and addresses realities in the society.

1.11.2 Youth leader

Youth leaders are elected into leadership of youth fellowship and are mandated to serve for three years as a first tenure. They are eligible to be re-elected for another three years for a second tenure. After serving for either a first or second tenure, they return back to the fellowship as youth fellowship members. So youth leaders are youth who are elected to serve in youth ministry for a duration of tenure(s), not exceeding two tenures or a period of six years (ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook, 2010b:18). So the youth leaders are members of the youth in themselves.

1.11.3 Youth pastors

The National Youth Development Agency (2008:8) describes youth pastors as, “any person who is involved in work that primarily aims at addressing the needs of the youth and society that seeks active participation, liberation, and empowerment of young people”. Another viewpoint of youth pastor as a career discipline is presented by Swartz (2013:14), citing the South African Youth Worker Association (SAYWA), which defines youth pastors as “practitioners and volunteers who work either as the cutting edge of society with young people...[or are] managers of youth-based organizations... [Developing young people’s personal, social and economic livelihoods]”. Black (1991:29) describes a youth pastor as a person who by virtue of God’s calling and theological training is involved in holistic ministry to the youth.

In ECWA, the youth pastor is not theologically trained in youth ministry, rather it is a designated office by the senior pastor to the associate pastor. That is, the associate pastor is normally designated by the Senior Pastor to serve as the Church youth pastor. Except in recent times where one of ECWA’s Seminary called Jos ECWA Theological Seminary is now offering first degree training in youth ministry.

Youth pastors in ECWA are designated

1.11.4 Youth ministry

Youth ministry in ECWA takes place amongst the youth at youth fellowship. The youth fellowship of ECWA is the hub of youth ministry. The youth ministry is the arm of Christian ministry within the Church that reaches out to the youth who are not members of the Christian faith community. Youth fellowship focuses on building, discipling and mentoring

youth members to grow in their faith formation and spiritual maturity. But, youth ministry is pre-occupied with the desire and passion to share their Christian faith and Christian life with non-youth fellowship members.

In ECWA, the youth ministry programme are programmes that are executed at LCB's youth fellowships. There are other arms of Christian ministry that target specific audiences such as women and men. For the youth of ECWA, the youth ministry is presented at the youth fellowships of the various LCBs.

1.11.5 Hip hop culture

Hip hop culture is conceptualised as a way of life and learned behaviour in which the youth share their experiences, grievances, dreams and expressions (Vito, 2015:396; Terkourafi, 2010:333; Perry, 2004:202). It is also an outlet of expression through which the youth show behaviours, patterns of lifestyle, languages (slanguage) and styles of which the identity is a departure from that of their parents and the dominant traditional culture in the society (Vito, 2015:397; Alim, 2022:121; Shonekan, 2010:4). In this study, hip hop culture is defined as a culture that informs how the youth see themselves through their way of life and how HHC impacts their learned behaviour.

1.11.6 Theological discernment

Theological discernment is the normative process of thinking, making decisions and displaying an authentic faith response in relation to good and evil, truth and falsehood, using a biblical (Word of God) lens in each situation of life (Hendriks, 2014:62; 2004:19; Reese, 2013:24; Paver, 2006:8; Lienhard, 2003:505). The apostle Paul admonished the faith community to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21-22). Theological discernment is synonymous with thinking theologically and biblically about issues and questions of concern. Nel (2003:75) elucidates that theological discernment is guiding the youth to understand how God works in them and through them to the world. In this research study, theological discernment is understood to intersect with faith in every sphere of youth life. It proposes that biblical narrative provides the needed discernment for the faith community.

1.12 Chapter Overview/Outline

1.12.1 Chapter One: Introduction to research study

Chapter One gives the general background and motivation to the research study. It narrates a prior engagement of literature study and the problem discovered before investigating the research question. This chapter also highlights the research aims and objectives for this research study, and the tools used to conduct the investigation. The tools used to address the research aims and objective of this research study are the research design of theoretical (literature) and empirical approach, and the methodology of qualitative research with four theological tasks as framework.

This chapter further includes the practical theological significance of this research study, the limitations of the study, ethical considerations, conceptualisation of key terms, and an overview of each chapter.

1.12.2 Chapter Two: Conceptualisation of theological discernment, youth ministry and youth within ECWA

(Practical theological framework of descriptive-empirical task: What is going on?; Interpretive task: Why is it going on?; and normative task: What ought to be going on?)

Chapter Two, using the descriptive-empirical, Interpretive task and normative tasks, focuses on a conceptual overview and models of theological discernment. This comprises of an overview of how ECWA Christian ministry can theologically educate the youth and youth leaders on Christian faith, Christian life, and Christian ministry, and the theological equipping of the youth in the auspices of youth ministry, serving as gatekeepers in the formation of an engagement with culture as social actors. This chapter also focuses on the theology of youth ministry, and how youth ministry programmes can be used to equip the youth to serve as lay theologians who, through the approach of you[theology], that is theological postulation from personal reflection on God as revealed in engagement with issues of concern in the society. This entails equipping youth to develop relationships with God and an aptitude for theological discernment as they interface with HHC.

1.12.3 Chapter Three: Theoretical investigation of hip hop culture

(Practical theological framework of interpretive task: Why is this going on?)

Chapter Three engages the practical theological framework of the interpretive task to investigate HHC by deductively understanding culture, youth culture, and the interpretation of HHC formation, elements of hip hop culture and the cultural outlets of hip hop culture. This chapter further discusses the theological challenges of HHC and its theological opportunities. Engaging Ivan Pavlov's theory of classical conditioning to HHC, this chapter discusses how some components of Pavlov's theory show the influences HHC nurturing has on youth behaviours and lifestyle. It also argues for a practical theological response to the phenomenon of HHC among the youth.

1.12.4 Chapter Four: Research design and methodology

(Interpretive task: Why is it going on?)

Chapter Four uses the interpretive task to explain the research design and methodology of this research study. This chapter explains why theoretical (literature) and empirical study inform the research methodology. It also justifies why this research is situated in qualitative research as its design. This chapter narrates the four theological tasks as promoted by Richard Robert Osmer and why they aid the investigation of the aims and objectives. In an attempt to answer the research question of this research study from the viewpoints of the participants (empirical), this chapter narrates the process of generating saturated data from participants and a reflection on the experience gained in the process of conducting an empirical study among category Y (youth), YL (youth leaders), and YPCED (youth pastors and CEOs).

This chapter further includes a reflection on the practical theological significance of this research study for youth ministry programmes in ECWA and other faith communities.

1.12.5 Chapter Five: Empirical study conducted within the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA)

(Descriptive-empirical task: What is going on? Interpretive task: Why is it going on?; and Normative task: What ought to be going on?)

This chapter reports the findings from participants. These findings depict what is going on in ECWA youth ministry and what ought to be going on from the viewpoints of the youth and youth leaders in four regions and the Federal Capital City, Abuja. This chapter reports

the findings as themes generated from the interview data in three categories: programmes, HHC and theological discernment.

This chapter further reports on the theological challenges and opportunities posed by HHC in the words and experiences of the participants. This is reported in descriptive engagement with literature.

1.12.6 Chapter Six: Practical implications for ECWA youth ministry

(Practical theological framework of pragmatic task: What proactive steps can be taken?)

Chapter Six focuses on the practical implications of this research study for ECWA youth ministry. It engages the pragmatic task of engaging proactive steps that can aid ECWA to develop programmes and other approaches that can equip the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with HHC.

1.12.7 Chapter Seven: Conclusion to the study

(Practical theological framework of pragmatic task: What proactive steps can be taken?)

This chapter concludes the main argument of this research study through reflecting on the research findings. The findings are categorised as reflection on findings from literature and findings from empirical study. In this chapter, I also make certain recommendations to ECWA that could help the youth ministry gatekeepers to equip the youth and youth leaders for theological discernment as they navigate the theological challenges of HHC and maximise theologically the opportunities of HHC. This chapter further highlights recommendations for further research study. The limitations of this study are acknowledged and discussed.

1.13 Conclusion

Chapter One was the guide of this dissertation by introducing the research theme of this research study and contextualising it within ECWA church denomination as a faith community in Nigeria. This chapter discussed the motivations for conducting this research study (personal and academic). It described the research problem of this dissertation and stated the research question intended to be answered in this research study. The theoretical framework of practical theological methodology as promoted by Richard Robert Osmer was

adopted for this research study. These tasks guided the researcher in stipulating the purpose of the research study under five core aims and objectives.

To understand the theological discernment of HHC of the ECWA youth and youth leaders, this research study adopted the research design of qualitative study so as to engage the experiences, opinions and viewpoints of participants through an interview approach. Interviews within this unit of analysis are proposed as the methodology used within this design. The theological nature of this research study and also the delimitations of this research study have been discussed.

Chapter Two focuses on the conceptualisation of theological discernment, youth ministry and the youth who are involved as participants in this research study. The chapter investigates an overview and different models of theological discernment and youth ministry.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUALISATION OF THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT, YOUTH MINISTRY AND THE YOUTH WITHIN ECWA

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a conceptualised understanding of theological discernment among the youth and the theology of youth ministry that can equip the youth for theological discernment. In order to understand theological discernment and the models of theological discernment as informed by denominational divide (church), this chapter seeks to explore the first two aims and objectives of this dissertation, namely to explore a conceptual understanding of theological discernment among the youth and youth leaders, and to understand and extend different models and tools of equipping for theological discernment within the faith community.

In order to understand theological discernment, this chapter employs the interpretive task by focusing on interdisciplinary understanding of the youth as human beings and not just people defined by age categorisation. Literature on youth, youth ministry and theological discernment are analysed and conceptualised.

Youth ministry in ECWA is structured along academic, practice, and administrative gatekeepers as divides. Each of these structures and models are responsible for informing the theological discernment of the youth. Although, the aptitude for theological discernment among the youth can be informed by the existence of different models, church beliefs and articles of faith (denominational divide) through education for ministry equips the youth with theological aptitude and trains them in appropriate theological discernment for engaging their concerns of interest on HHC.

In regard to youth ministry theology, this chapter concludes that the theology of youth ministry is a theology of *genetivus subjectivus* (Noval, 2013:35), a theology that is deliberative rather than embedded. The theology is not embedded because it is a learning theology that equips the youth with the theological approach of a you[theology] and a theology of story listening.

2.2 Overview of Theological Discernment

There are varieties of terminologies used to conceptualise theological discernment. In the practical theological paradigm, different scholars term it differently (though all have the same meaning). Some scholars refer to it as gaining theological foundations, while others refer to it as getting theologically grounded, gaining theological education, aptitude for theological disposition, negotiating theological turns, having theological ability, or aptitude for theological discernment (Strong, 2015:3; Hendriks, 2014:61; Shepherd and Nash, 2014:5; Dean, 2001:15; Root and Dean, 2011:46; Wood, 1994:15, 16).

All these terms are unified in the idea that youth ministry in the faith community needs a level of theological discernment and teaching that will enable young people to articulate their faith in different situations and contexts (Höring, 2013:46; Nel, 2005:17). In this regard, theological discernment can be understood in terms of responding to questions and challenges, including questions of interest and concern through a normative understanding of who God is and what God's grace to humanity entails.

In this study, I adopt the term theological discernment because it largely determines the quality of judgement of Christians who are responsible for the nurturing and guidance of the rest of the faith community (Wood, 1994:16). Theological discernment in the youth will determine the quality of their judgement with regards to engaging youth culture. The disposition of the youth towards the challenges and opportunities of youth culture, such as HHC, is informed by their ability to theologically discern the levels of their engagement with HHC.

One general consensus among theologians is that there is a need for theological discernment of the content of faith-based youth ministry programmes (Aragon, 2015:6; Strong, 2015:3; Schweitzer, 2014:184; Senter, 2014:57; Nel, 2005:17; Roebben, 2005:24; Dean, 2001:1,15). Dean (2001:15) submits that the survival of youth ministry programmes lies in their being rooted in theological reflection. Therefore, the theological content of youth ministry programmes is critical for equipping the youth with theological discernment, and is also important for the sustenance of youth ministry programmes. This means that the theological content of youth ministry programmes can equip the youth with a normative perspective of their questions of concern.

Paramount to this research study is understanding the meaning of theological discernment. Theological discernment is the normative process of thinking, making decisions and displaying an authentic faith response in relation to good and evil, truth and falsehood, using a biblical (Word of God) lens in each situation of life and interface with their concerns of interest (Hendriks, 2014:62; 2004:19; Reese, 2013:24; Paver, 2006:8; Lienhard, 2003:505). The apostle Paul admonished the faith community to “examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21-22).

Theological discernment is synonymous with thinking theologically and biblically about issues and questions regarding concerns of interest. Nel (2003:75) elucidates that theological discernment is guiding youth to understand how God works in them and through them to the world. In this research study, theological discernment is understood to intersect with Christian faith and Christian life in every sphere of youth life, and the biblical narrative provides the needed discernment for the faith community.

Dean (2001:15), commenting on the relevance of theological discernment in youth ministry programmes, argues that youth ministry that is not built on theological teaching, is sure to collapse. Thus, she believes that youth ministry that builds its programmes on theological reflection, is the normal practice in this era of youth ministry.

Schweitzer (2014:184) shares Dean’s view, but argues for theological reflection that is not just a confession or dogma handed over to the youth by the faith community. He clarifies his opinion by arguing that theological reflection should be built into conversation with the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors if it is going to survive (Schweitzer, 2014:184). Therefore, the youth should be treated as ‘lay theologians’ who are trying to make sense of the ultimate questions of who God is and what God really means to them. In the light of this understanding, Schweitzer (2014:184) and Tanis (2016:101) call for the youth to be engaged as ‘lay theologians’ whose questions and challenges make them ask, think, seek answers and innovate theological practices.

Similarly, Senter (2014:57) and Aragon (2015:6) argue for theological reflection that understands and discusses the past and present realities of the youth. Aragon (2015:6) argues for theological reflection in youth ministry that addresses specific questions and challenges faced by the youth in their own contexts and societies. This suggests that youth ministry programmes may have theological content, but may not be relevant to the youth in their particular context or society. One possible explanation could be that, more often than

not, youth programmes are drafted by the faith community, who may or may not understand the questions of interest to, and the challenges of, the youth in that context.

Commenting on the essentiality of theological discernment that discusses and addresses the challenges of the youth in their contexts, White (2005:54) argues that theology taught among young people should address the reality of young people's participation with God in the reconciliation of the world. White's argument, in consonance with Senter (2014:57) and Aragon (2015:6), suggests that the relevance of theological content for the youth is when it equips them for discernment and praxis. In order for youth ministry to equip the youth with theology that is relevant for them, the theology must equip the youth with (1) the aptitude for theological discernment through their participation and relationship with God, and (2) the appropriation of the theology in praxis.

2.2.1 Aptitude for theological discernment

In arguing for the significance of aptitude for theological discernment, White (2005:29) argues for a provocative critique of returning to Christian practices of discernment that enable young people to claim their unique callings as youth, in all their prophetic and theological potential. This, White (2005:29) insists, should be the primary curriculum for youth ministry's work with the youth. For White (2005:54), the hope of discernment is in its capacity to help ministers and educators reclaim "a means of connecting young people to their own powers, and the power of God, restoring their influence within the community for the sake of the reign of God". In other words, the hope of discernment is that both field ministers and academic educators equip young people to be committed and faithful witnesses within their various societies, global spaces and engagement with youth culture.

What does it mean to discern the situation theologically? Conceptualising what it means to discern theologically, Stone and Duke (1996:39) elucidate that it means to identify, correlate and assess meaning to situations in the light of the Christian message and Christian faith. Discerning theologically is having embedded viewpoints about situations, challenges and opportunities that are informed by cooperative and personal experience of and reflection about God. To this, Stone and Duke (1996:38) buttress that the individual and collective experience of God in their lives, in the church and in the world, causes them to reflect on experiences from a normative viewpoint.

2.2.2 The appropriation of theology in praxis

The faith community should train and equip the youth with theological aptitude that empowers them to develop theological reflection, enables them in discerning their approaches, and responds to situations of interest in the society. Such theological aptitude will inform their praxis towards concerns of interest in society (Len, 2017:36).

By praxis, I mean the enacting of theological lessons, approaches, ideologies and models that can be practiced and lived out as a way of life (lifestyle)²³. It implies the appropriation of theological lessons, approaches, ideologies and models into practice. To answer the secondary research question of this study, "How could the faith community equip youth to engage HHC in cosmopolitan cities?", this study argues for equipping by the faith community and parent. That is, the faith community (youth ministry) equipping the youth to engage the concerns of interest in society as social actors in a God-relationship that engages challenges and explores opportunities within society.

Another member of the faith community who could practically equip youth are parents of youth who serves as social actors in the nurturing of their children.. Parents are vital social actors in helping the youth to appropriate theology in praxis. Parents are social actors who can nurture Christian values and faith formation in youth. They (parents) can equip their children to develop a God-relationship that can equip them (children) with an understanding of Christian life, Christian faith and Christian ministry which will enhance their aptitude for theological discernment (the praxis of Christian life, Christian faith and Christian ministry is further explained in section 2.6). Weber (2014:122) lending voice to parents being active participants of young people's equipping, argues that parents together with the faith community are responsible for nurturing faith formation and Christian traditions in its youth as exemplified in the Catholic traditions.

However, not without a challenge. Weber (2014:122) notes one of the challenges as busyness. She argues, the busyness of parents (and also youth) affects the pivotal role of parents as social actors in the lives of young people. More so, O'Keefe (2008:46) added

²³ Praxis is described as a combination of theological reflection and action that aids the youth to apply theological discernment, reflections from their theological template as they engage society – hip hop culture. This implies that the Christian youth engage and respond to youth culture using the equipment of its theological reflection according to theological templates. Actions, therefore, are realised in the light of their understanding as human beings who engage their challenges and opportunities as social actors in society.

another challenge by arguing that due to the challenge of the market-driven world, parents rarely have the time to spend quality and quantity time with their children and family. Regardless of the reasons, it is true that family members today spend less unstructured free time together than they did in generations past. O’Keefe (2008:46) buttresses this challenge when he laments that even in middle and upper middle-class families both parents work long hours outside the home. Commitments to outside employment and the immediate household leave less time for involvement in civic, church, and social commitments and even children’s schools. Each family is concerned with its own survival and less likely to interact in any meaningful way with those outside.

Thus, there are fewer occasions for physical conversation and interaction that is not interrupted by, or mediated through, calls, smart phones, MP3 players, computers, video games, television, social media and other media that could be distracting. This leaves fewer occasions for free-flowing conversations between youth and parents (and other caring adults) by which adults share with adolescents their values and insights for navigating life. This reality in the lives of the youth informs their own praxis in the sense that they could model their own parenthood after their parents who were unavailable for them.

2.3 Models of Theological Discernment²⁴

According to White (2005:2), discernment is the art of making decisions, listening to or hearing God. He adds that discernment is a spiritual practice of the church that is a central component of ministry with youth who wrestle with decisions that tend to shape the trajectory of the rest of their lives – either for good or evil (2005:2). Thus, discernment connotes making good choices, making a decision by considering the question, "What does God want me to do?"

The second aim and objective of this research study is “to understand and extend different models and tools of equipping for theological discernment within the faith community”. To achieve this aim and objective, I submit to White’s (2005:63) four modes of discernment

²⁴ This model of theological discernment is propounded by David White. White is renowned for his conversation on and contribution to questions of concern to the youth and propounding different theological models that can be instrumental to youth ministry equipping the youth to discern theologically. Other books written by White are *Dreamcare: A Theology of Youth, Spirit, and Vocation*; *Awakening Youth Discipleship in a Consumer Culture* (co-authored with Brian Mahan and Michael Warren).

that can guide the youth in the prevailing youth culture. The aim of these models is to heal youth fragmented by the prevailing youth culture and equip them to be social actors who, in partnership with God, can discern to maximise the opportunities and conquer the challenges in youth cultures. In terms of this study, these four models can equip young people for theological discernment and not fall prey or be gullible as creators and consumers of various elements and outlets of the HHC.

The four models are: (1) Listening: listening to God with one's heart. Listening is about developing intuition and prayer practices. (2) Understanding: engaging one's mind in loving God. Understanding connotes a model of critical and integrative reflection. (3) Remembering/dreaming: loving God with one's soul. Remembering is "attending through prayer and contemplation to the yearnings of our hearts and those of a broken world" while dreaming is bringing to bear the full resources of the Christian tradition as depicted in Scriptures, liturgy, doctrine (White, 2005:63-85, 88, 152, 162). (4) Acting: loving God with all one's strength (White, 2005:63-85, 88, 152, 162).

Eklund's (2009:3) viewpoint resonates with these models in that she agrees the four models are a helpful guide to appropriate theological discernment, but concedes that dreaming and acting are more appropriate in her context, that bringing to bear the full resources of Christian tradition and showing people how to engage in communal discernment, is most pertinent to her Kenyan context. In Eklund's context, the discernment model of dreaming, and acting (response) based on the dream, is a common phenomenon in Kenya.

Discernment is also about learning to decipher God and God's character rightly. To discern God's character, is to reflect on God's character, and allow that character to shape lives and patterns (Eklund, 2009:3). This model of theological discernment as argued by Eklund calls for equipping the youth with the perception to be able to decipher God's character in regard to their approach to dealing with issues of concern and humanity. Some of God's characteristics are: God is love, as exemplified in John 3:16 where God gave Jesus for the redemption of humanity as a token of love (loving the undeserving); God is relational, as exemplified in the Garden of Eden and the God-relationship²⁵ as argued by Hunsinger (2015:140).

²⁵ The God-relationship is discussed in section 2.9.3.

However, in my Nigerian ECWA context, the second and fourth models of theological discernment as argued by White, and Eklund's model of theological discernment, are most relevant. Firstly, for the Nigerian Christian, engaging one's mind in loving God, is fundamental. This is because Christianity as a faith community could be a religious practice that is imposed on the youth as heritage religious faith from their parents. From a South African paradigm, Weber (2014:84) engages the need for the faith community not to impose Christianity on young people, rather that the faith community should equip youth for spiritual growth through developing an experiential relationship with God that can change their life's.

White's fourth model is another pertinent need in the Nigerian context. Nigeria boasts a mass population of Christians, yet is one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Nigeria boasts the largest church auditorium in the world that seats 50,400 church members weekly, yet Nigeria is stricken with physical starvation and poverty of the mind. Christianity in Nigeria has not transcended into action in all spheres of society.

Moreover, Eklund (2009:3), engaging these four models proposed by White, gives four underlying questions as litmus to adducing discernment when the youth encounter challenges and opportunities posed by the youth culture. She argues that these four underlying questions should influence how the youth respond to opportunities and challenges in the youth culture. Firstly, how might the decision lead to love of God and neighbour? Secondly, how might this decision lead to greater justice and mercy? Thirdly, does this decision conform to the way of the cross? Fourthly, how might this decision enable my life to produce fruit? Responding to these questions could aid the spiritual maturity in Christ of the youth, which is the main aim of ECWA youth ministry (ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook, 2010b:6).

2.4 Theological Discernment along Denominational Divides

Engaging in theological discernment can be influenced by denomination divides. Denominational divides are the different churches (denominations) within the faith community. Each denomination has its own articles of faith, creed, traditions, doctrine, and cultures that reflect its beliefs and praxis as a faith community. Hendriks (2004:31) narrates that, "a faith community's tradition, creeds and confessions, likewise are important witnesses of their quest to understand God's will, and they always play a significant role".

Every church member who is part of the membership of that church, is expected to abide and live by these denominational creeds, traditions, doctrines, and cultures.

Thus, the youth are under an obligation to obey the denominational traditions as acts of obedience and service to God. They are also expected to participate in Christian activities and programmes even when they do not understand who God is and how the denominational tradition equips the youth for discernment in their concerns of interest. These traditions rather dictate that the denominational Christian activities and programmes are meant to be obeyed and adhered to. One thing that could account for this, is the fact that the Christian traditions, creed, and doctrines of the denomination are not subject to deliberation. They are embedded as theological postulation that are not deliberated. Thus, the youth participates in Christian tradition as rituals without understanding the origin of the Christian tradition and doctrines. The worst is that it would be considered disrespectful of the youth to the church if they (the youth) question these denominational traditions and doctrines. These explanations depict the realities in ECWA as a denomination.

Maimela (1982:1:7) notes that authors differ with regard to the existence of denominational divides. For some scholars, having theology divided along denominational lines is a negative development as disobedient to God's will and purpose for the church. For others, it is a welcome idea as different denominations supply different understandings of Scriptures and are engaged in different mission activities for conquering territory (Kalu, 2008:6, Maimela, 1982:1, 7).

Maimela (1982:1) argues that the church of Jesus is not a single entity, but a body called the body of Christ. The church, as understood by Maimela, consists of numerous fragments, of entities called church denominations. For Maimela, denominationalism thrives on the reality of the church, which is the fellowship of all believers in Jesus Christ (as one body of Christ), and regrettably fails to unify (1982:1).

The disciples, after the death of Christ (referred to as AD), were later called Christians, who were unified as a body (Acts 2:42-47, 11:26) until divisiveness surfaced in Acts 6:1-7. "In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food" (Acts 6:1). Two factors caused the division, (1) increase, as in the numerical increase of the disciple, and (2) accusations of uneven distribution of food. No denomination was created from this divisive reality among them, but the argument here

is that the tendency of divisiveness among Christians, is a reality. This reality has the propensity for denominationalism²⁶. Maimela elucidates on Acts 6 when he argues that this Scripture shows that throughout history, different crises have led to different approaches. In some situations, the disagreement led to the founding of a new denomination, while in other situations, it was resolved without fragmentation of the body (1982:5).

Denominationalism is caused by different tendencies in terms of reason, realities, doctrinal positions, cultural dispositions, different understandings of the Gospel and theological differences about the Word of God (Maimela, 1982:2). I will expatiate the tendencies for denominationalism by engaging Maimela's argument on the subject of tendencies for denominationalism.

Firstly, denominations create an alternative amidst divisive tendencies. That is, instead of Christians being forced into unity for the sake of unity or a unity that endangers the truth which can be lost or distorted, it is understandable to found a different denomination from the present denomination (Maimela, 1982:2). Secondly, sociologists of religions like Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch refer to the socio-cultural conditions and problems of their age and time. This supposes that there are potential dynamics and dialectical relationships between the human situation and the Gospel and the mutual influencing of each other (Maimela, 1982:3-6). A third source of denominationalism is socio-economic deprivation, cultural and nationalistic resentment, ethnic factors, colonial and social conflict, emotional imbalance, and the personal struggle for power of prestige and theological differences (Maimela, 1982:5, 6, Stark, 1965:5).

For Maimela (1982:5), the narrative of Acts 6 suggests that the brethren had a crisis caused by nationalistic resentment and personal struggles for power and prestige. For him, the Grecian complaint against the Hebrew Jews suggests nationalistic resentment and the Grecian personal struggle for human equality (Maimela, 1982:5).

Bank (1999:79) argues that in church ministry, the entity of Christian witness and Christian identity is mostly not the training. Each church denomination trains its members as an entity to suit its denominational divide. Bank (1999:5) argues that ecclesiastically, some members

²⁶ Denominationalism is defined as the tendency towards fragmentation of the church into religious 'seats' or 'denominations' and the maintenance of those divisions on the basis of an adherence to separate religious principles and organisations (Maimela, 1982:1).

belong to mainline or confessional denominations, while others are of evangelical, ethnic, and Pentecostal denominations.

The Nigerian churches support this argument of Bank, except that the denominational divide in Nigeria is quite different from Bank's context of denominational divide²⁷. The Nigerian church is divided along denominational lines as registered by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). CAN writes that the Nigerian churches differ with "distinct identities, recognisable church structures and a system of worship of one God in the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (2004:8). Kemi and Chijioke (2017:147), from a Nigerian perspective, postulate that the postcolonial and contemporary African society is characterised by an unprecedented rise in the level of religious movements of different denominations with diverse contradicting beliefs championed by so-called spiritual and religious leaders.

The distinctive identities cluster the church structures in terms of systems of worship. The system of worship is informed by theological divide. Different denominations acknowledge oneness in God in the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but differ in doctrines, church traditions and reflections. The denominations that are members of CAN in Nigeria are: Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (CPFN) / Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), TEKAN and ECWA Fellowship (2004:8). Each of these denominations maintain some difference in theological understanding that equips their members for theological discernment.

2.5 Overview of Christian Youth Ministry

Christian youth ministry is an agency within a church denomination that is a Christ-focussed faith journey with the youth that attempts to reach out, help the youth to find their stories in God's story, and shares the pulse of youth concerns of interest using a theological lens to equip the youth for a life of theological discernment (Norheim, 2016:88; Webber, Singleton, Joyce and Dorissa, 2010:204; Selvam, 2006:65, 73). A Christian ministry template educates the youth and guides the youth ministry regarding the Christian faith, the Christian life, the Christian ministry and the Christian schools of theology.

²⁷ Bank is an Australian biblical scholar and practical theologian. His context of ministry is Australia.

Christian ministry trains and equips Christians to cultivate a horizontal relationship with God and a vertical relationship of service to humanity. The emphasis in this discussion is on the vertical relationship of service to humanity because, the essence of a horizontal relationship with God (who is unseen), is to understand from God's normative paradigm how to cultivate a vertical relationship of service to humanity. The epistemology of Christian ministry is human reflection on God's normative revelation and how that revelation can be understood in the light of present-day opportunities and challenges.

Christian ministry pertains to human beings who model their lives after Jesus Christ by getting involved in serving, helping, and guiding other human beings in understanding of who God is and what their human responsibilities are to other human beings and creatures, and developing the youth into the kind of Christian adulthood that the youth minister wants or expects them to become.

Christian ministry is rendering services to humanity through the Christian templates as understood from God's normative perspective. This service is cultivated because of normative understanding of God through Jesus Christ. Wood²⁸ (1994:11) conceptualises Christian ministry as a clarion call to Christians (Christ followers) as human beings to participate in the service that human creatures are called for and enabling them to render it to God and fellow creatures (human and otherwise).

Though Christian ministry is a service enabled by God, it is pertinent to note, as argued by Wood (1994:11), that it is performed by human beings. In a dialogue with Ellis (2015:121), who argues for a conceptualisation of youth ministry as a ministry that takes into cognisance the lived lives of the youth as human beings who are prone to failure, impossibilities, challenges, opportunities and progress, I argue for a Christian ministry like youth ministry that understands the frailty and vulnerability of human beings. For example, if youth ministers understand that, as human beings, they (youth ministers) themselves are exposed to the possibility of experiencing frailty and being vulnerable to success or failure, it will inform their youth ministry to guide the youth to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the youth culture.

²⁸ Charles Monroe Wood is a theology educator who is renowned for his arguments on thinking theologically about Christian ministry. He strongly promotes the understanding and significance of Christian ministry as the responsibility of Christianity (faith community).

A synergy of Wood (1994:11) and Ellis's (2015:121) argument suggests that a Christian ministry such as youth ministry in ECWA will be relevant to young people who are growing into maturity and those who are not growing into maturity. Thus, an approach of engaging the youth as human beings will contextually make youth ministry in ECWA effective youth as a Christian ministry among youth, because it will make Christian ministry relevant to youth who are regular, and youth who are not regular to Church program and activities. That is because the focus will not be on the program, but rather on the human being growing into maturity by God's grace.

Christian ministry is a service to human beings by fellow human beings. Besides Christian ministry being a service to fellow human beings, Christian ministry is also a service to God's creatures. Thus, Christian ministry is a service to fellow human beings and other God's creatures. Wood (1994:11) sums the practice of Christian ministry up as a ministry to human beings and to God's creation when he argues that Christian ministry is a clarion call for Christians as human beings to participate in the service (that human creatures) are called for and enabled by God to render to God and to fellow God's creatures (human and otherwise). God, therefore enables Christian ministry to serve fellow human beings and the rest of God's creation as depicted in Phil. 2:13. This passage reads, "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose". It is in consonance with Wood's submission on Christian ministry as a service rendered to God and all creatures by God's enablement (1994:13). ECWA accedes to the practice of Christian ministry to human beings in its Men's Fellowship Guide where it posits that fellowship²⁹ with other human beings is the true sense of fellowship with God (2010a:iii). ECWA accedes to the services rendered to human beings, either members or non-members of the denomination (2010a:iii, 3). Services including other creations like plants and animals are rarely practiced in ECWA, except in the Women Fellowship Guide to Christian ministry that encourages women "to plant trees that bear fruit or can be used as fire wood" (1997:14).

The enablement for Christian ministry is affected through an encounter with God and church traditions (Wood, 1994:11). These church traditions are influenced by the theological discernment of each church denomination³⁰. Christian ministry is a church

²⁹ In ECWA, the essence of fellowship is to serve one another (Men's Fellowship Handbook 2010a:iv, 8; Youth Fellowship Handbook 2010b:6). The youth, women and men are the three Christian ministries under the supervision of the Christian Education Officer (CEO).

³⁰ The denominational divide and how it informs the theological discernment of parishioners and Christian ministry will be discussed later in this chapter.

ministry that enables others to receive, understand and be able to appropriate the Christian tradition and experience (way of life) as God's grace for their own lives, and to in turn, join in telling the stories and enabling others to receive, understand and appropriate the Christian traditions. However, some may receive and understand the Christian tradition but not be willing to appropriate it in their experiences. Such people are the reason why Ellis's (2015:121) argument of engaging youth ministry with an approach that accommodates people who are maturing and people who are not in that sphere, becomes a vital approach to Christian ministry.

Christian ministry can either be part- or full-time, official or unofficial, lay or professional, and done by an individual or cooperate (Wood 1994:12). As argued by Wood, in ECWA, Christian ministry is done either by full-time people like CEOs at the ECWA headquarters and youth pastors in different LCBs or part-time like youth leaders who serves as volunteers. In ECWA, some of the Christian ministries in practice are youth ministry under the auspices of youth fellowship, men's ministry under the auspices of men's fellowship, women's ministry under the auspices of women's fellowship. Youth ministry, just like men's and women's ministries, is a Christian ministry that offers services to humanity. Part-time Christian ministry workers are youth fellowship leaders, women's fellowship leaders and men's fellowship leaders who are elected into the Christian ministry in different LCBs (Men's Fellowship Handbook 2010a:8, Youth Fellowship Handbook 2010b:18, ECWA Women's Guide 1997:29).

These part-time Christian ministers in different LCB's are with or without theological training as lay people, yet saddled with ministry responsibility to conduct the administrative affairs of the LCBs and guide members of the fellowship to receive understanding and appropriate the Christian tradition with discernment. I will cite some goals/aims of each of these Christian ministries and engage them in conversation with Wood's understanding of Christian ministry to argue for some sort of education (theological) for Christian ministry. For the Christian ministry among the youth, the aim and objective is to present every man/woman as perfect in Christ and matured in Christ by teaching the youth the foundation of the Christian life and witnessing through evangelism (Youth Fellowship Handbook 2010b:6). For the Christian ministry among women, the goal is "bringing women in ECWA together in fellowship so that they might have one mind, one hope, one goal, and the same discipline, for the growth of each individual woman and the kingdom of Christ" (ECWA Women's Guide 1997:10). For the Christian ministry among men, the aim and objective are

to provide steadfast fellowship and continue the apostles' doctrine of breaking bread, prayers and witnessing as depicted in Acts 2 (Men's Fellowship Handbook 2010a:8).

Christian ministry in ECWA is engaged in the task of teaching the youth the foundation of the Christian life. The essence of teaching the youth the foundation of Christian life is to provide them with templates for discernment. These templates are the education for Christian ministry that guides theological discernment on how to respond to opportunities and challenges in youth culture and different spheres of life.

2.6 Models of Education for Christian Youth Ministry

This section discusses different models of Christian education for youth ministry as practiced in ECWA by engaging in discussion with Wood's (1994:12) concept of ministry education. The idea of education for Christian ministry is to train and equip the youth with education for theological discernment. It premises as a reservoir from which the Christian youth draws for discernment on issues within and around their daily lives. Speaking of educating for discernment, Wood argues for three areas of education³¹ for ministry (1994:1). To answer the secondary research question of this study, I will engage Wood's three equipping models for educating young people in youth ministry. These three models will aid the faith community through the youth ministry to equipped youth on how to engage the HHC.

I adopt Wood's three areas of education for ministry and use it to understand the different structures of youth ministry in ECWA. Wood (1994:1) buttresses that these three areas of education for ministry are applicable to all sorts of ministry in the faith community and involves several things. The reason for adopting Wood's argument is that I find it contextual to the structure of youth ministry in ECWA.

The three models of education for ministry as argued by Wood (1994:1-3) are:

³¹ Wood argues education for ministry is the process of equipping people in a particular way with the intention that the ministry be executed (1994:13). The content of education for ministry differs from the equipping for ministry. This different content entails equipping for individual life as opposed to cooperate living in society.

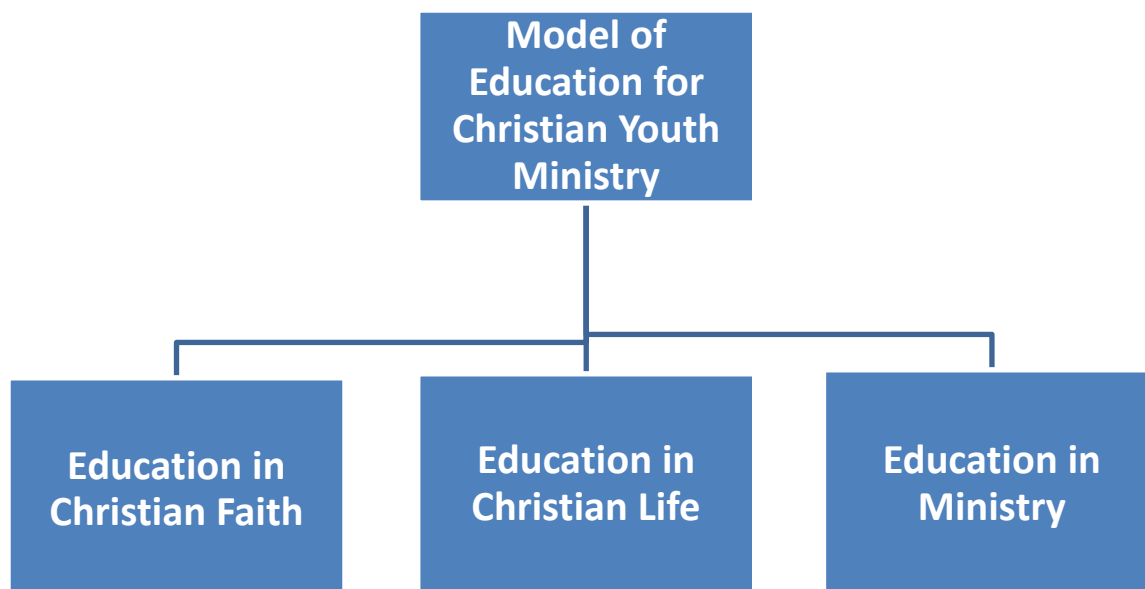


Figure 2:1 Model of education for christian ministry

2.6.1 Education in Christian faith

One of the things that education for Christian ministry involves, is education in Christian faith. Education in Christian faith entails a person growing to understand the Christian witness. The Christian witness encompasses the Gospel of Jesus, the tradition, and what the tradition means when it speaks of God, God’s creation, the fall of humanity in the garden of Eden, the lived life of Jesus Christ, the incarnation of Jesus³², atonement and resurrection.

In ECWA, the Christian witness is one of the main practiced church traditions. The ECWA youth fellowship (2010b:7) documents witnessing through evangelism as a core objective of youth ministry. It adds that witnessing through evangelism is a cogent invitation to people to become members of God’s family. The Men’s Fellowship Guide records one of its objects as equipping men for evangelism through teaching ministry (2010a:10), suggesting that men be taught soul winning and free will offering as depicted in 2 Corinthians 9:7 and Ephesians 6:18. It adds that evangelism is the mandate of the church. The Men’s Guide also notes that

³² Karl Barth understands the incarnation of Jesus Christ as the “theology of humanity of God in Jesus Christ” (Wood, 1994:8).

men should understand and teach the Christian faith to children in church Sunday school (2010a:9).

From the foregoing ECWA document, it is clear that ECWA is concerned that the Christian ministry of the church needs to understand the Christian faith and appropriate it by witnessing through evangelism. To understand the Christian faith as epitomised in Jesus, there is a need to teach it and enlighten the Christian ministry about the stories and biblical accounts of the narratives in the Scriptures. Therefore, it is pertinent for all ECWA Christian ministry to understand this practice and appropriate it in experience.

Another paradigm to understanding the Christian faith is that it entails grasping the interjectory of experience between God and humanity so that a person can give an account of it to the self and to others (Wood, 1994:2). Understudying how God interjects with humanity in guidance, strengthening and comfort is vital to the Christian faith. The Christian faith entails understanding how God and humanity synergise in the Christian experience. This understanding helps humanity to fathom and tell their stories of how God intervenes in issues and life circumstances that concern them.

2.6.2 Education about Christian life

One of the other things that education for ministry entails, is education in Christian life. Education in Christian life involves a person learning to trust in God and to be loyal to God in terms of life-long tasks in various endeavours of life. It is helpful to quote Wood (1994:1) at length here:

“Education in Christian life involves coming to understand ourselves in ways appropriate to the Christian message, with its concepts of creation and fall, sin and grace, judgement to the hard of heart and good news to the poor, thanksgiving, joy, patience, and all the rest. All this pertains to education for ministry.”

Understanding one’s self in ways appropriate to the Christian message³³ can be problematic in the sense that different denominations have their own understandings of the Christian message. In ECWA, the Christian message is subservient to the Scriptures as God’s

³³ A Christian message is salvation and redemption in grace. This redemption is made possible through Jesus’s death and resurrection. Besides the Christian message entailing the death and resurrection of Jesus, it also entails Christian responsibility to non-Christian, God’s creation, civic right and lived lives of Christians in society.

compendium. This Christian message is informed by an understanding of the Christian faith. Understanding of the Christian life is pre-informed by an understanding of the Christian faith.

The Christian life is an emulation of the Christian faith. That is, the Christian life is an appropriation of the Christian faith (way of life) as lived and demonstrated by Jesus. In ECWA youth ministry and some other youth ministries in Nigeria, there is a slogan: “What would Jesus do?”. This question is a driving pragmatic task that connotes that a young person knows the narratives of Jesus’s lived life and responds to issues in the society.

“*What would Jesus do?*” connotes gleaning discernment from how Jesus responded to temptation (Matt. 4:1-11)³⁴, Jesus expressing his anger at those selling doves and money changers in the temple (Matt. 21:12-17)³⁵, how Jesus wept and expressed emotion when a dear friend died (John 11:17-37), and Jesus talking with a Samaritan woman at the well, though it was against the culture of the day for a Jewish person to engage with a Samaritan, especially if that Samaritan was a woman (John 4:1-26). Verse 9 of the text reads, “The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?’ For Jews do not associate with Samaritans”. Jesus had a meal at the house of Zacchaeus, the tax collector, and was accused of eating with a sinner (v 7), yet he identified himself with someone society labelled a ‘sinner’ (Luke 19:1-10)³⁶. Jesus defended His disciples when they plucked some heads of grain and ate on the Sabbath day because they were hungry (against the Jewish custom of keeping the Sabbath day holy), explaining to them in Mark 2 verse 23-28, the value of human beings over other creatures they preserve. These empirical-pragmatic actions suggest that the youth must be educated about the life of

³⁴ Morris (1992:69) argues that the essence of this narrative in Matt. 4:1-11 was to show how Jesus responded and overcame temptation. Osborne in his exegetical commentary on the Matt 4:1-11 text elucidates that, in this text, Jesus provided a Christian life model for victory in a time of testing and temptation. Also, this passage gives theological aptitude on the Christian life as a life of dependence on God. This dependence is necessary for a triumphant Christian life (2010:137). Talbert (2010:61) adds that this Scripture passage infers that Christians can act as Jesus did in His three tests. Christians can respond to temptations by theologically understanding the significance of scriptures for responding to live events, challenges and opportunities alike. To this, Morris buttresses that Jesus’s rejection of Satan’s offer (temptation) suggests that we (Christians) must learn from Jesus how to reject what is not in line with our Christian life and identity (1992:70). However, Morris (1992:78) cautions that this does not suggest that the Christian life is free of temptations once a Christian recites Scriptures. Verse 11 of the passage narrates that the devil left Jesus until another suitable time. Thus, the Christian life entails a continuous challenge of temptation. But in this passage, Jesus provided a model for victory over temptation.

³⁵ Morris (1992:526) submits that Jesus objected to the tradition of selling and buying on the temple precincts. According to Talbert (2010:248), Jesus’s objection to the tradition of selling and buying in the temple was that it was bad behaviour.

³⁶ Edwards (2015:528) writes that Jesus’s encounter with Zacchaeus, the tax collector, is a thematic capstone with the outcast, a thematic capstone that demonstrate that the Christian life is a life of grace.

Jesus as the bedrock for their Christian life (especially on Jesus's way of life and his responses to the customs and culture of His day).

Furthermore, Eklund (2009:4) elucidate that the pattern of Christ's life provides the pattern for us: Why love one another? Because Jesus first loved us; we love because God first loved us in Jesus (Matt. 22:40). Therefore, to know God's character of love, is to imitate that character as faithfully as we can Eklund (2009:4). Another salient question to ask in terms of building theological discernment patterned after Christ's life is: Does the way I am living conform to the pattern of God's life, especially as revealed in Jesus? How might my story fit into God's story? Eklund (2009:3) argues that the Christian life is a lived enactment of God's story. It is a life oriented towards a certain kind of action that is shaped by the Scriptures and Christian tradition. The shaping is experience as people learn how to live out or perform God's story in their various contexts.

However, since God is the object of trust in education in Christian life, a person is guided to understand and gradually grow in loyalty to God and acquire theological perspicacity that makes loyalty and trust of God its subject, thus informing lifestyle that entails acquiring an attitude perception that is appropriate to such trust and loyalty to God.

Wood (1994:13) further explained that education in Christian life is not just the quest to understand God and allowing that understanding of God to inform a person's way of life. Understanding God is a lifelong process, likewise the process of allowing the understanding of God in a manner appropriate to the Christian message to inform and infiltrate a person's way of life, reasoning and approach to opportunities and challenges in the world (society, culture). In the context of youth culture like hip hop youth culture as regards to ECWA youth, the youth need to be guided in their understanding of God and how their approach to HHC should be subservient to the Christian message as understood by evangelicals³⁷.

2.6.3 Education in ministry

Another area where Christian ministry needs to be educated and trained, is education in ministry. Explaining the concept of education in ministry, Wood (1994:2, 14) argues that education for ministry involves education for "the particular way in which the individual

³⁷ Christian messages in Nigeria are determined by the denominational divide. The core denominational divide in Nigeria is Evangelical, Catholic, and Pentecostal

shares the church's task of bearing witness in the world". This entails education in a particular way of doing a certain ministry. There can be similarities in approaches to ministry but approaches are also particular. For example, youth ministry has particular ways of bearing witness in the world that may differ from men's or women's ministry.

People involved in Christian ministry need to understand the Christian faith, the Christian life and the particular task of their ministry. This Christian education aids people to undertake the dynamics of Christian ministry. These three processes of education for ministry as argued by Wood begins when a person becomes a member of the church or faith community. For some the Christian education begins at home with parents. For others it begins in childhood when they start attending Sunday school, for others as they attend different programmes in the youth, men's and women's ministry. For some education in ministry comes from a sermon on the pulpit or Bible studies in church. For some education for ministry could be through mentorship as mode of teaching for theological discernment. For some it could also be a combination of these different methods of Christian education.

In ECWA, the process for this education for ministry as nurtured in the life of the church ministry or faith community would mean being raised in the church and society, actively participating and gradually taking responsibilities for leadership in one capacity or another. These participatory engagements of ECWA members facilitates equipping with the understanding of education for Christian faith, education for Christian life and education for ministry.

Of course, there are other members who did not grow up in the church. They are people who never had the experience of growing up in church and engaging methods for Christian education listed above. Wood (1994:3) argues that such people come into Christianity as adults. Coming to Christianity as an adult entails becoming a Christian without growing up in the church and gaining exposure to Christian traditions and practice. Such Christians may not have had the process through Sunday school or parental equipping, but could have had Christian education through either the education for Christian faith or the education for Christian life. However, whatever the process, every Christian arrives in Christian ministry with some sort of formation as a human being (Wood, 1994:3).

While I concur with Wood's (1994:13) three processes of education for ministry because its common in all their forms is to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" as depicted in Eph. 4:12", I will also add one more model of education

for Christian ministry that is relevant to the Nigerian context of education in Christian ministry.

2.6.4 Education in schools of theology

In addition to Wood's propounded three models of education for Christian education, Czövet (2014:8) and Wood (1994:3) elucidate that a school of theology provides opportunity for education that prepares and equips Christians in four-fold areas: spiritual growth, faith formation, understanding of the faith, and equipping for ministry. In a school of theology, spiritual formation reflects the denominational doctrine and articles of faith, giving attention through structural opportunities and occasions like organising theological classes, internship practice in churches, cooperate worship, workshops, small groups engagement, tutoring, and coaching between the younger and the older. Schools of theology involve equipping Christians into a disciplined reflection on their Christian existence, on their personal understanding of the Christian faith, Christian life and the practice of ministry.

Schools of theology prepare youth, women and men by involving them in the discipline reflection on the church's historicity and mission in the world. Schools of ministry prepare Christians for leadership in the church and society. In Nigeria, Pentecostal churches like Living Faith Church run a school of ministry, Word of Faith Bible Institute (WOFBI). Roman Catholic churches and Evangelical churches prepare Christians for church leadership (as lay theologians and practical ministry as practitioners) and leadership in society, government and non-government institutions. Students of these institutions are prepared for ministry in their churches and for being ministers in their various professions and disciplines. But for Charismatic churches like Catholic Charismatic Church, the schools of ministry prepare their parishioners for ministry within churches alone.

In addition to schools of ministry that can be planned at the discretion of an LCB in ECWA, ECWA headquarters has a denominational school of theology called the Seminary and Bible College³⁸. The difference between the school of ministry as discussed above and this ECWA Seminary and Bible College is that the latter is more involved in theological education that entails complex and academic theological enquiry. Unlike the former, which strengthen theological reflection of the Christian witness, the latter encompasses a critical theological

³⁸ ECWA has eight seminaries and Bible colleges, and 15 theological training institutes. <http://www.sim.org/index.php/country/ng>. Accessed November 16, 2016.

inquiry that involves several distinct academic disciplines and families of disciplines such as historical approaches and methodology, social-scientific concepts and methods, sociological, psychological and anthropological perspectives on subjects of inquiry, and engage various sorts of philosophical inquiry to investigate a subject or a phenomenon (Wood, 1994:6).

Each denomination runs its own school of theology in accordance with its own theology and church tradition. Moreover, whether it is a school of theology that equips for reflection on Christian witness or critical theological education, the students in schools of theology are trained and equipped to become competent participants in theological enquiry. It can be argued from Wood's reasoning above that schools of theology aid in fostering a person's aptitude³⁹ for theological discernment.

Speaking of aptitude for theological discernment, students (Christians) who arrive at schools of theology, arrive with some sort of theological aptitude. This could be due to their participation in Christian traditions of their denomination or personal undertakings in the Christian faith. Wood (1994:4) argues students arrive at the schools of theology as theologians in that they have certain ways of thinking about Christian faith, Christian life and Christian practice, certain ways of forming judgement and certain ways of reflection.

However, I argue that because a student arrives at the schools of theology with certain ways of judgement and reflection, does not make them academic theologians. Nevertheless, one can be regarded a lay or ordinary theologian having attended a school of theology for the reason that a school of theology broadens aptitude for theological discernment that equips the youth and youth ministry with a good sense of theological judgement and reflection. Theological education facilitates and helps to improve theological discernment.

2.7 Overview of Youth Ministry

Youth ministry is a faith-based Christian ministry that disciplines the Christian youths into becoming mature Christians through processes of growth. These processes of growth have led to different authors conceptualising youth ministry differently. Robbins, a practical

³⁹ Aptitude is a combination of capacity and disposition, capacity in terms of having the ability to do something and disposition in terms of having the willingness to do something (Wood, 1994:4). Thus, aptitude is having the ability and willingness to do something. Aptitude for theological discernment means having the ability and willingness to engage theological judgement in decisions, allowing theological understanding to inform judgement.

theologian, conceptualises youth ministry as a ministry that disciplines adolescents into maturing Christian adulthood (1990:17). Closely related to Robbin's understanding, Bergler conceptualises youth ministry as equipping Christian youths into spiritual maturity (2010:21).

To equip Christian youth into spiritual maturity and a relationship with God, some youth ministries or denominations impose their agendas and ideology on the youth. For example, in ECWA, the CEOs draft the programmes, handbooks and policies for the youth expect that the youth will become what the end-result of the policy or programme expects them to become. ECWA Youth Fellowship adds that the goal of youth ministry “is to present every man/woman perfect in Christ” (2010b:6). Maturing the youth into perfection is the developmental goal that drives youth ministry in ECWA.

There is nothing wrong with the concept of drafting programmes that facilitate youth development into maturity, but these definitions fail to provide a response to questions like: What if a young person is not maturing into adulthood? What if the template for maturity is not effective for a particular youth majority or minority? Do such developmental programmes take into cognisance that some young people who do not develop according to the youth ministry programme may feel frustrated and out of place within the youth ministry? This research study by no means argues that there are youth programmes that fit and equip all youth for theological discernment. For example, in ECWA, some young people could find the youth ministry concept of setting expectant goals helpful, while other young people could find it frustrating because it reveals its ineffectiveness to meet their needs and present struggles, and thus either opt out of the youth fellowship or opt out of the denomination, or worse still, opt out of the faith. The aims and objectives of the ECWA youth ministry is that the youth attains maturity in adulthood, but growing into maturity may not happen to all young people (ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook 2010b:6). While the ultimate goal is for the youth to attain maturity into adulthood, this may not happen for some youth, as the current model of rigid structures and expectations may need to be reshaped to accommodate all eventualities

However, this study does not reject developmental models through programmes. But if the essence of the programme is to develop young people who in the future will become mature adults without taking into cognisance their lived lives of today's struggles, challenges, failures and opportunities, then other youth ministry concepts should be propounded,

because as human beings, we are gullible and vulnerable to human frailty. It is noteworthy that maturity into adulthood if appropriately defined is significant to the youth, but the process of maturity should recognise God's normative action in the lives of the youth through the thick and thin of challenges, failures, and opportunities. Nel resonates with this line of thought when he argues that running programmes for the sake of programmes in youth ministry, raises the question as to the relevance and effectiveness of youth ministry among the youth (2005:9). Thus, Nel argues that youth ministry programmes should be theologically oriented in such a way that they equips the youth with a personal theological understanding of God and experience of God's care.

So, the concern of youth ministry should not be to fashion the youth into whom the youth ministers think God wants them to become. For if they do not conform to such moulds, the youth ministry will seemingly fail (Ellis, 2015:123). The concern for youth ministry should be the individual youth experience of God that is individual young people experience God in their daily lives. Therefore, this study argues for a youth ministry that empowers the youth to understand God's working for themselves and equip them with theological discernment to locate God's plan in their lives of struggles, failures, vulnerability, frailty, challenges and opportunities. In empowering the youth to understand God's working and theological understanding to locate God's plan in their lives, it is helpful to quote Ellis: "What is necessary for youth ministry is an approach which values adolescents not for their potentiality but for their actual lived experience and is able to hope and locate God's action not in progress but in brokenness and impossibility" (2015:121).

In equipping the youth to understand God's working plan amidst their struggles, opportunities and challenges, I concur with Stone and Duke (1996:40), who suggest the essentiality of a theological template in equipping Christians for life and ministry. Stone and Duke (1996:41) argue for considering the emphasis within a particular Christian environment. They argue that what is going on in a Christian environment, is typified in what is emphasised. The emphasis by the theological educators informs how the (Christians) interpret, correlate and assess their challenges and opportunities (1996:41). Similarly, Osmer's theological descriptive-empirical hermeneutical task that seek to ask: 'What is going on?' becomes helpful in understanding the templates used to equip Christians for Christian ministry (2008:4).

Taking the argument of Stone and Duke (1996:40) into dialogue with Osmer (2008:4), I submit that the education that is emphasised within a Christian environment, informs what is going on in that environment. Christians take their bearing on interpretation, correlation and assessment on navigating opportunities and challenges in society from what is emphasised in education. This education forms the template that can be questioned and reflected upon by the youth. The youth need to internalise these interpretations by reflecting on how these interpretations speak to their realities. To journey alongside the youth, to guide them in understanding and internalising these educational forms and interpretations that speak to their realities, Selvam (2006:65, 71) argues for an African approach to youth ministry. She argues that youth ministry in Africa has a relational responsibility to the youth and should be structured to journey alongside the youth as they discover God's plan for their lives, and as they (the youth) navigate the different concerns of interest in society.

2.7.1 Gatekeepers of youth ministry

The different structures of youth ministry below educate how youth ministry can be equipped in a tri-relational engagement of gatekeepers who are engaged in creating and promoters of cultures among the youth. O'Keefe (2008:42) opines for the faith community to be actively involved in assisting the youth through the process of navigating the complex social world of different cultural elements and cultural outlets. This assistance of different gatekeepers helping the youth to navigate cultural elements and outlets of HHC can come through different structures in Nigerian youth ministry.



Figure 2.2: Gatekeepers of youth ministry

2.7.1.1 Academician

Youth ministry academician entail youth ministry workers who are equipped with critical and scientific skills for theological inquiry through seminary or university training. The academia who are critically equipped at universities and seminaries are cultural gatekeepers in youth ministry. Bergler (2010:21) states that gatekeepers are participants of culture who create, co-create and promote cultural elements and traditions in society. Youth ministry academician are theologians in youth ministry who are cultural gatekeepers who understand the cultural context in the society from an academic perspective due to their daily involvement in and engagement with interdisciplinary academic exploration. Examples of youth ministry academics are youth pastors who are theologically trained, youth ministry lecturers at universities and seminaries, and theologians pioneering youth ministry.

Academician are involved in cultivating theological postulations, doctrines and values for the church. Gottlieb (1973:144) argues that values define the nature of reality to people. That is, values are the standards by which a person, society, and actions are judged.

More so, the values that a person affirms, are tantamount to what they understand and accept as reality. Gottlieb (1973:144) adds that values mediate the relation of a person to society. The Christian values are the standard by which Christianity is understood and judged. Youth ministry academician critically inquire into historical and contemporary issues, opportunities and challenges through the lens of Christian values, thus critically judging historical and contemporary issues from the paradigm of Christian values.

Relatively, Bergler (2010:21), who calls youth ministry academician, youth ministry educators, argues that one pertinent role of youth ministry educators is to convince youth ministers of their role as ‘cultural gatekeepers’ to equip youth ministry practitioners for creating an intergenerational culture of spiritual maturity. Cultural gatekeepers connote that youth ministry practitioners understand the cultural context in society from a practical perspective due to their daily involvement and engagement with the youth.

However, though youth ministry practitioners are cultural gatekeepers, they are also equipped by youth ministry academics with theories and approaches as to how to engage the youth and the youth culture. Academic youth ministers formulate these approaches and theories through empirical research among the youth and youth ministry practitioners. Elucidating this argument, Wood (1994:5) argues that it is through active participation in a

community of theological inquiry that the academic acquires practical theological education to propound theories and approaches for the ministry. This implies that youth ministry academician are theologically equipped as theologians who propound theories, approaches and models for engaging culture.

Youth ministry academician are theologians in the academia who seeks to speak of the engagement of an infinite God who encounters finite human beings. Root and Dean (2011: 96) argue that practical theology begins with a crisis and reflection on theology by giving attention to God (normative) in relation to the crisis of reality and human existence as social beings. Root and Dean (2011: 96) further elucidate that this theological reflection can be in the form of questions about time and eternity, and questions revolving around humans and their social life. This suggests that practical theology is a field of study that understands and responds to the questions of life from God's epistemological paradigm.

Dean (2010:29) furthermore argues that practical theology engages Christian adults, congregations and the youth themselves in an active and dynamic theological orientation that teaches any youth ministry that can help the young people mature. Therefore, ministries like youth ministry that engage the field of practical theology, embrace approaches towards human existence as social beings in conversation with God's epistemological paradigm.

Root & Dean (2011:64), in situating youth ministry in practical theology, argue that practical theology is a potent approach to youth ministry, engaging the youth in the practice of faith, enabling the faith community and church to guide the youth in how to integrate their own experiences and stories into conforming to the image of Christ, thus, becoming acquainted with Jesus's life, death, and resurrection, and integrating it into their own approaches to and engagement with situations and circumstances.

2.7.1.2 Practitioners

Youth ministry practitioners are youth ministers who practically engage with the youth in the field (foot soldiers). They are Christian ministry workers who as lay theologians seek to know and guide the youth in understanding of the Christian faith, the Christian life and Christian practical ministry. Youth ministry practitioners are foot soldiers (practitioners) in youth ministry who are cultural gatekeepers who understand the cultural context in society from their engagement with the youth due to their daily involvement and engagement with

society and the youth in the youth ministry folds. Examples of practitioners as gatekeepers are youth pastors, youth leaders and lay youth workers.

Wood (1994:3) elucidates that youth ministry practitioners in the church are equipped through the school of theology. The school of theology in their church denominations trains youth ministry practitioners to become lay ministers or theologians.

The school of theology trains youth ministry practitioners by youth ministry academician to develop theological discernment through inquiring about the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry. Theological schooling can be fostered through different routes of process such as attending a theological course in their church, theological seminars and courses, life experiences, personal and cooperate relationships with God, worship, reading and reflection on the Bible.

In ECWA, this pool of youth ministers is from the youth fellowship. Those who are elected as church youth leaders and anyone who is concerned about the youth are commissioned and inaugurated by the church as youth ministry practitioners. Youth ministry practitioners do not necessarily attend seminaries, Bible colleges or universities to be trained as theologians, but they are trained and equipped by theologians in understanding ministry as (1) education in Christian faith, (2) education in Christian life (3), education in ministry, and (4) education in a particular way of doing the ministry task.

2.7.1.3 Administrators

Youth ministry administrators are youth ministers who play administrative roles that draft youth ministry policies, programmes and documents for implementation. Youth ministry administrators are cultural gatekeepers in youth ministry who understand the cultural context in society from an administrative perspective due to their engagement study and implementation of policies and programmes.

In ECWA, the CEOs and CEDs are the administrators who draft and formulate ministry policies and handbooks for the youth, women's and men's fellowships to execute (ECWA Men's Fellowship Guide 2010:10a; ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook 2010b:7; ECWA Women's Fellowship Guide 1997:11). These three ministries are under the supervision of the CEOs at different leadership structures. Administratively there are CEOs at the LCBs, LCCs, DCCs and GCCs (ECWA Men's Fellowship Guide 2010:10a; ECWA Youth

Fellowship Handbook 2010b:8; ECWA Women's Fellowship Guide 1997:11). As custodians of these ECWA ministries, the ECWA headquarter CEOs office drafts the yearly ECWA youth ministry programmes (including the Bible study for the youth week). The CEOs at DCCs, LCCs, and LCBs supervise these programmes. Concerning the supervision of the programmes, there could be tension between LCB CEOs and church youth pastors. Where do the LCB youth pastor fit in? What duties regarding these programme do the youth pastor have since the programmes are drafted by the ECWA headquarter CEOs and supervised by the LCB CEOs? (ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook 2010b:9). This tension occurs in LCBs where there are youth pastors. Supervision is less tense in LCBs where there are no youth pastors, but very tense at LCBs with youth pastors.

Another concern with the structure of administrators in youth ministry is that some are neither trained as theologians nor educated in youth ministry. Wood (1994:2) argues, as discussed earlier, that engagement in ministry requires education (equipment) in the ministry task. If the CEOs who draft youth programmes for ECWA youth week, youth policies and handbooks, are not educated (equipped) in youth ministry, how can they draft programmes that are relevant to the youth? If those who draft the youth programmes, including Bible studies, are not theologians in the field of practical theology (youth ministry), how can there be expectations of equipping the youth with theological discernment?

This concern amplifies the significance of the primary research question of this research study: 'How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment required for them to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within the contemporary hip hop youth culture?'. How effective can a programme be if it is drafted by a novice who may not understand the context of the youth? O'Keefe (2008:41) responds to these kinds of questions by arguing that those involved in ministering to the youth or interacting with teens need to understand their realities and culture – those elements of social life that are unique to adolescents – before they can effectively minister to that population group.

Conclusively, these three gatekeepers can and should work together in youth ministry structures through collaborative learning between themselves (academician, practitioners and administrators). The academician who engage in interdisciplinary academic discussions and propound theological approaches for youth ministry, will be more effective in presenting theological approaches that are relevant and contextual to the questions and

concerns of interest if they have working relationships with the youth pastors, youth leaders and youth workers who are practitioners. Also, youth pastors can also be practitioners who are involved in academia and with foot soldiers (practitioners). For example, an academician in youth ministry can be a part-time lecturer in a university or seminary, and a part-time youth pastor in a church, or a full-time youth pastor in the church can be a part-time youth ministry lecturer.

Administrators can also be involved with practitioners in that their policies and programmes should be informed by an adequate understanding of the cultural realities in the society. For this to happen, administrators can and should be in relationship with academician and practitioners, or administrators will develop youth ministry policies and programmes that are irrelevant to the questions and concerns of interest in youth ministry and the youth's lifestyle.

2.8 Theology of Youth Ministry

Wood (1994:4) understands theology as an inquiry (critical) into the validity of Christian witness. That is, it is the activity of examining the life and message of the Christian church and of the making of judgements as to whether they are what they purport to be, namely authentic, true and fitting representations of church traditions and the Scriptures. If theology is about inquiry, then the theology of youth ministry is engaging in an inquiry (critical) about youth ministry in the light of Christian witness paradigm.

Theology of youth ministry also involves how inquiry prepares youth ministry to understand the Christian tradition and Scriptures. According to Pearson and Gapes (2002:11), the preparation of youth ministry is an invitation to academic theologians to apply their theological expertise to youth ministry in formulating a theology of youth ministry. The reason for this invitation can be understood by Ward's concept of what the theology of youth ministry means. He argues that "a theology of youth ministry... seeks to demonstrate how our understanding of God shapes and influences the practice of youth ministry" (Ward, 1997:25). Though Pearson and Gapes (2002:11) invite academic theologians to apply their theological expertise for developing a theology of youth ministry, it is necessary to understand the discipline of youth ministry and context in order to develop a theology of youth ministry that can be effective and relevant to the youth. The reason for this line of thought is that if an academic theologian does not understand the discipline of youth ministry and the context of youth ministry, he or she may end up propounding embedded

theology that is theoretical and can be memorised, but not practical for youth ministry and the youth's questions of interest in their context.

Gleaning from Ward's conceptualisation of a theology that shapes the practice of youth ministry, theology of youth ministry should be applicable to the youth in their contexts. It should be a theology that speaks to the challenges and opportunities of the youth within their spheres of interest. Theology of youth ministry may be universal in principles and approaches, but it should be contextualised so as to be relevant to informing the praxis of the youth so as to be able to shape their practice (Pearson and Gapes, 2002:10). To this, two theological understandings are proposed by Stone and Duke (1996:38).

According to Stone and Duke (1996:38) an embedded theology is a formulated theology that is rooted in people's thoughts but is not practical to their situations and contexts. Embedded theology can be recited and chanted, but is not practical. It is a theology that is abstract to a contextual reality of opportunities and challenges. Instead of an embedded theology that cannot be practiced in youth ministry, Stone and Duke (1996:38) argue for a deliberative theology that is engaging and can be applied to people in their context, a theology that can be questioned and re-examined by particular people in their context. It is a theology that is practical and riveting. I add to Stone and Duke's (1996:38) argument that a deliberative theology can become embedded in a person. The argument against embedded theology is that it is abstract to a person's reality, though recited. However, a deliberative theology can become embedded in a person's reasoning and ideology; a theological understanding can become ingrained in the sense of making the theological decision based on a theology that was deliberative, which after some time of practice becomes embedded in the person's theological disposition.

Pearson and Gapes (2002:10) reason for theology of youth ministry as a contextual theology⁴⁰ that is practical and embedded within context, and, furthermore, argue for a theological shift in youth ministry in different regions. Contextualised theology developed from a European university may not be relevant to other contexts because of the challenges posed by pluralistic, multi-faith and differences in cultures. Pearson and Gapes (2002:10)

⁴⁰ Contextual theology is a theology that is developed in relevance to the concern of interest within a particular context. Developing a contextual theology for youth ministry entails developing theological postulations and approaches that addresses challenges and proffer opportunities for youth ministry's engagement with youth within a particular context. The context informs the youth ministry approaches.

and Schreiter (1986:1) argue for the development of relevant theology of youth ministry in the light of youth circumstances because theology informs and transforms the lives of the youth in specific contexts. That is, a theology that resonates with the youth's challenges and opportunities.

Moreover, one should understand that the theology of youth ministry is about theology that seeks to study God's revelation as regards to the significance of the youth. I engage in dialogue with Wood's (1994:16) argument that people's understanding and quality of theological judgement is predicated upon their theological discernment, and this research study's primary research question of how the ECWA youth programmes equip the youths with theological discernment to engage the challenges and opportunities of hip hop culture. I find Wood's argument a helpful response to this study's research question. Wood (1994:16) says:

“Depending on how the faith community is taught and equipped, they learn to judge well or poorly, reluctantly or willingly, haphazardly or with deliberation. They acquire some sort of theological aptitude, which plays an important role in determining the sort of Christian identity they take on, the way they understand the faith, the quality of the witness they bear. A Christian community has no choice as to whether theological education for all its members will be an element of its educational work; it only has a choice as to what kind of theological education it will be.”

Therefore, depending on how the youth are taught and equipped, they will respond to challenges and opportunities of HHC according to the way they understand faith and how they are theologically equipped to discern. Theological discernment should not be assumed, but rather taught and learned for a lifetime.

Teaching theological education that equips youth theological discernment is not an option for the faith community because it helps young people to understand their Christian faith, Christian life and their particular task of ministry. The concern, thus, becomes how the faith community is equipping their youth with theological discernment. Different theological equipping approaches can be appropriated for equipping youth with theological discernment that can guide them to relate their own experiences within the broader context of their Christian faith and Christian life as they experience youth cultures, such as HHC.

The different theological approaches should equip youth theology that enables integration of theology and significant contemporary issues (Banks 1999:9). According to Banks (1999:56), the reason why theology should be significant to contemporary issues, is that central to theology, is addressing important and contemporary issues in society in the light of past, present and future forms of Christian praxis. This entails a theology of ‘doing’ and ‘learning’. Therefore, theology for youth ministry is more than a set of beliefs requiring practical application; it is a holistic enterprise that integrally touches all aspects of faith-directed life in contemporary society and culture (Banks, 1999:59).

With regards to doing theology, Bank (1999:59) argues that practising theology is dual in nature. Theology involves a critical reflection on a seminal text and the exercise of personal dispositions that are formative for thinking and acting. Doing theology necessitates a theoretical understanding of a text (Scriptures), and a formation of different theological approaches for thinking about and acting with the youth. Thinking and acting with the youth needs to be synonymous with seminal text as revealed in the Scriptures. That is, doing theology among the youth entails equipping the youth to understand the text in Scriptures, and how the text influences their thoughts and gives them a Christian template to appropriate to their contexts and aids them in discerning right from wrong using normative lense.

According to Bank (1999:63), doing theology in dualism entails God’s revelation of God’s self and not humanity’s discovery of who God is. The challenge of this argument is that humanity will need to discover the revelation of God’s self, otherwise humanity may not be capable of developing formation of theological approaches in thinking about God or acting on how God is revealed. A discovery of God’s revelation of self, will inform pertinently on how Christian ministry thinks about God and what approaches can be adopted in relation with the youth.

Furthermore, theology of youth ministry can also be understood as the theology of youth. Noval (2013:35) argues that theology of youth ministry is the theology of youth in the sense of *genetivus subjectivus*. He explains *genetivus subjectivus* as a study within practical theology that studies the youth as central to theology of youth ministry, whereas within the field of systematic theology youth ministry can be studied as theology for youth, which he calls *genetivus objectivus*.

The difference between *genetivus subjectivus* and *genetivus objectivus* is that the latter propounds theology for the youth, that is a theological reflection that projects the youth as the topic of discussion, while the former is a theology of youth that understudies the youth as the centre of discussion. The latter, Noval (2013:35) elucidates, is a theology of youth ministry that focuses on the “practical side of working with youth and has youth ministry and religious education as its topic”. Theology of youth ministry is theological discernment that premises on revelation to explore the nature and significance of the youth, implying that in *genetivus subjectivus*, any theology that is formulated, must be relevant and contextual to the youth’s questions of interest.

This study understands theology of youth ministry as a theology that is *genetivus subjectivus*, a theology that seeks God’s revelation and how it appropriates to the youth’s daily lives and realities, a theology that addresses the challenges and opportunities posed by the youth culture, either global or glocalised⁴¹. This study argues for a theology of youth ministry that makes a critical inquiry of the contexts of the youth and propounds theology that reflects their realities.

In noting their realities, the theology should correspond with and juxtapose God’s revelation as revealed in the Scriptures, church tradition and doctrinal dogma, and the questions of interest to the youth. These questions of interest unveil youth realities as they depict their challenges and opportunities within society. Therefore, theology of youth ministry should explicate and give inference as to how young people can navigate society in responding to the challenges and opportunities of youth culture.

For *genetivus subjectivus* to be relevant and contextual, a theological practice of story listening and you[theology] to form theology of youth ministry praxis, will be helpful. Ellis (2015:121) argues that what is necessary for youth ministry, is an approach that places a premium on the youth, not only for their potential, but also for their lived experiences. In placing value on their actual lived experiences, it should equip them to hope and locate

⁴¹ ‘Glocalised’ is a concept that depicts how youth culture though global influence takes different patterns and influences in different societies and local (social) contexts. This implies that youth culture like hip hop culture is a global phenomenon that is contextualised in different localities. Glocalisation is achieved through film, arts communities, music companies, internet, print media, musicians, music magazines, TV and radio shows, night clubs and music stores (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245; Condry, 2001:374).

God's action in their progress and brokenness (Ellis, 2015:121). The theology of story listening and you[Theology] in youth ministry praxis is pertinent to guiding the youth to locate God's plan and understanding the concept of theology of youth ministry as *genetivus subjectivus*.

2.8.1 Theology of listening

Story listening is a practice where youth ministry theologians listen to the stories of the youth in an attempt to understand them. Eklund (2009:2) argues that as youth ministry listens to youth stories, it helps them sort through their decision-making amidst challenges and opportunities. Thus, youth ministers need discernment as they attempt to help the youth. Though I agree with Eklund's argument that listening to the youth tell their stories enables the youth ministry to help young people in their decision-making process, I would add that story listening is good for young people as well as for the youth ministry. It empowers youth ministry to understand the contexts of the youth and empowers the youth to have their stories heard. Hearing young people's stories and opinions accounts for why this study is embarking on empirical research as part of its research design.

Speaking on this, Ellis (2015:120) tells the story of his brother and himself entitled: "A tale of two brothers". He narrates how his brother had stories he told the youth ministry in his church about his opinions and experiences but was not given the enabling environment to tell his stories. His story would have informed the church youth ministry that their programmes were irrelevant and obsolete to his challenges. Ellis's narrative of his brother's stories suggests that there could be young people who long for the youth ministry's attention in order to share their stories. Ellis's narrative of his brother's stories suggests that there could be young people who attends youth ministry programmes year in and year out yet find such programmes either irrelevant to their realities or too judgemental an environment to enable them share their stories. Thus, they attend programmes or profess (or recite) denominational doctrines and theology that are does not equip them for theological discernment.

The youth desires a listening ear to share their stories. Doberstein translated Dietrich Bonhoeffer's (1939:97) book 'Life Together'⁴². In Bonhoeffer's book he argues: "Just as love for God begins with listening to his Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them. It is God's love for us that He not only gives us His Word but also lends us His ear. So, it is His work that we do for our brother when we learn to listen to him". Bonhoeffer argues for the theology of listening as the love of God. He attests that the love of God necessitates listening to God's word. It should be the praxis between brethren (Christians); Christians should be compelled by the love for others to listen to their stories. Listening to other's stories is an act of showing love towards them – Christians and non-Christians alike.

Bonhoeffer's argument suggests that the theology of listening, is of value to God and humanity. The theology is that God is a listener. It is an amazing revelation of God to discover that God is a listener. If anyone knows best, and does not need to listen, it would be God, yet God is a listener. Bonhoeffer (1939:98) buttresses that the theology of listening is a fulfilment of our obligation, and it is certain that our attitude toward humanity reflects our relationship to God.

In view of this, Bonhoeffer (1939:98) further states that: "One who cannot listen long and patiently will presently be talking beside the point and be never really speaking to others, albeit he be not conscious of it". Theology of listening is also particular to pastoral care. It is helpful to quote Bonhoeffer at length on the essentiality of listening in pastoral care because it aids any youth pastor's effectiveness in developing the patience to listen to the youth:

"Brotherly pastoral care is essentially distinguished from preaching by the fact that, added to the task of speaking the Word, there is the obligation of listening. There is a kind of listening with half an ear that presumes to already know what the other person has to say. It is an impatient, inattentive listening, that despises the brother and is only waiting for a chance to speak and thus get rid of the other person. This is no fulfilment of our obligation, and it is certain that here to our attitude

⁴² Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote the book 'Life together' in German, and published in 1939. John W Doberstein translated the book into English in 1954. This research understudies Bonhoeffer's book as translated into English by Doberstein for want of the German language.

toward our brother only reflects our relationship to God. It is little wonder that we are no longer capable of the greatest service of listening that God has committed to us that of hearing our brother's confession, if we refuse to give ear to our brother on lesser subjects.”

(Bonhoeffer, 1939:98).

According to Bonhoeffer, it is a service unto God when a listener cares enough to patiently listen to someone else's story. The listener could be a pastor, a youth minister, a parent or the ministries within the Christian community. Developing the practice of listening adds to the task of pastoral care in the sense that it is an obligation that reflects the listener's relationship with God. Thus, it could be a disservice to God if youth ministry does not listen to the stories of God's youth⁴³.

In addition, Bonhoeffer argues that some people practice what he calls inattentive listening. Inattentive listening is when a listener is presumptuous in their listening, when a listener assumes he or she knows exactly what to say while listening. Inattentive listening is a type of listening that makes assumptions about people's stories and pretends to know their stories so that the listener becomes impatient in listening. Though Bonhoeffer frowns on inattentive listening in ministry, he, however, admits that telling one's story is at the liberty of the Christian (1939:118). Therefore, listening is a twofold conversation: the person with the story needs to be encouraged to tell his or her story willingly and the listener needs to listen patiently to the person's story without being inattentive.

In the context of youth ministry, youth ministry should patiently cultivate the practice of listening to youth stories; it helps them sort through their decision-making amidst challenges and opportunities.

⁴³ It is fundamental for youth ministry to understand that the youth is God's youth in terms of possessiveness and Lordship. This understanding depicts that youth ministry is in partnership with God to guide and facilitate God's wisdom and counsel in the lives of the youth. Therefore, youth ministry should not be possessive or lord over the youth. Every young person could have different stories about God and the society due to their different experiences. For youth ministry to be in the know of their understanding, it must listen and encourage them to tell their stories.

2.8.2 Theology of you[theology]

Globally, churches and denominations are seeking for innovative approaches to youth ministry which will be more relevant to the youth. Ward (1995:93) buttresses this point noting his interaction with his colleagues in various continents of the world, Christian organisations, Bible institutes, pastors and parents. He observes that there is an increasing quest to better understand the youth and how to efficiently train and equip them with sound biblical and theological discernment. Roebben (2009:1), presenting the thrust of International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry (IASYM), posits a similar view that the association was founded against the backdrop of the need for a youth ministry that engages

“radical diversity of contexts, cultures, approaches, ministries and theologies in the field. This diversity is not only enriching for the exchange of ideas between youth ministry representatives internationally, but also deeply refers to the creative and innovative power of young people and their leaders, when they address problems of globalisation on a local scale. On further reflection, this deep diversity could also be theologically relevant.”

A diversity of approaches in different contexts and cultures could be theologically relevant to the study and understanding of youth ministry. Hence, I propound a you[theology] as one such relevant approach that the youth ministry in ECWA can adopt to train the youth in Nigeria.

2.8.2.1 You[theology] and programmes

Ward (1995:93) maintained that in most continents, programmes have been extensively used to train the youth. Young people depend on days of meeting where the Christian organisation or Bible institute organises programmes that will bring them together in training. While I am not in doubt that these programmes methodology are helpful in training the youth for theological discernment, this approach, however, makes the youth dependent on Christian organisations and Bible institutes for their knowledge and understanding of God. The reason for the sole reliance could be that the youth is unable to plan nor design its programmes by themselves to suit their peculiar needs because they depend on Christian organisations and Bible institutes as sources of learning and transmission of information.

Another reason why Ward (1995:96) argues for another approach other than the programmes, is that some young people do not attend church organisation programmes

because they want to receive a message or learn theological skills, but because of their relationships with the convener of the programme or their friends. Should Ward's observation be true, then chances are that some young people attend their church organisation programmes not for the value of the programmes, but because the programmes create an avenue for them to catch up with friends.

An alternate approach to programmes could be mentorship as a mode of teaching for theological discernment. From a Nigerian paradigm, Chiroma (2008:104, 2015:72) suggests mentorship as an approach in youth ministry. Chiroma argues that ECWA's approach of using programmes in youth ministry through the establishment of various youth fellowships could be improved. Therefore, this study suggests you[theology] as another alternative and improved approach to youth ministry in ECWA.

To clearly situate the perception of the delineation of theology which informs the conception of you[theology] as an alternate and improved approach to youth ministry theology, I explore Astley's definition of theology. Astley aptly defined that: "theology is both beliefs and believing, both thoughts and thinking, both the content of what people say about God and that talking in itself (and also their talking about their God-talk), both is something we 'have' and something we do'. In other words, it is both theology and theologising" (2002:56). Astley (2002:97) further states that 'theology' is "frequently employed to cover not only having a theology or doing theology, but also studying other people's theology".

As a result, theology in this research is understood as human quest, understanding, opinion, and experience about God. The study also accentuates theology as people's reflection about God. Explaining theology through the evangelical cultural tool kits⁴⁴ on how doctrine is shaped, Root (2007:69) argues that theology is moulded from the heat and pressure of practical experiences. A you[theology] approach is cognate to Root's understanding of theology. In a you[theology] approach, theology is propounded from the challenges and opportunities within the reality and experiences of the youth.

Moulding theology from the heat and pressure of people's practical experience could be a reason why Vellem's (2016:4) argument that theology is not devoid of prejudice,

⁴⁴ Evangelical cultural tool kits are how evangelical denominations engage the society. Evangelical cultural tool kits represent the 'lived religion' of evangelicals (Root 2007:69).

prejudgements or presuppositions, is important to understanding the youth as ordinary theologian. In this regard, young people could be encouraged to develop a theology that reflects their practical experiences, thus, understanding of God and social prospects and challenges through their practical experience in their relationship with God. Pearson and Gape (2002:12) argue for a theology that speaks to the experience of youths, and at the same time allows that experience to inform some of their theology and disposition towards God and society.

However, Dodrill (2013:7) and Astley (2002:97) go further to caution that the studying of other people's theology should be carried out with critical assessment and not by merely descriptively employing the people's theology. This paradigm of understanding 'theology' as all inclusive of people's theology connotes that before engaging people's theology as a theological statement, a critical appraisal is needed on their perspective of thinking, ideology and experiences. These critical appraisals are requisite of critical theological skill⁴⁵.

To engage critical theological skills in the appraisal of other people's theology, Astley (2002:97) suggests that it is important to employ theological and scholarly discipline to describe, study, criticise, and theologically reflect on their theology, therefore, understanding theology as people's research, understanding, reflection, opinion and experience about God. In this order, this research study defines you[theology] as an individual's understanding of the nature of God from their own research, and experience.

You[theology] is conceptualised as a youth ministry approach that (1) Equips young people to become ordinary theologians, and (2) Trains young people to develop theological perspicacity through their relationship with God. The training and equipping should, however, be done by academic theologians who have gone through (or are undergoing) the rigour of critical inquiry research in a seminary or university.

⁴⁵ Theological skills such as intellectual research and the rigour of academic research.

2.8.2.1.1 Equipping young people as lay or ordinary theologians

In this sense, this study argues for young people as ordinary or lay theologians.⁴⁶ Adding a voice to the approach of the youth becoming lay theologians, Schweitzer (2014:184) elucidates that young people should be viewed as lay or ordinary theologians who formulate theology from their experiences. In his argument for young people as theologians, he calls for young people to be regarded as ‘lay theologians’ or ‘ordinary theologians’. In this way, the youth could be ‘theologians’, who, through their questions and abilities, are able to formulate theology that can be helpful to Christian organisation and Bible institute understanding of the youth (Schweitzer, 2014:184). For a synergy, this study argues for an engaging exercise in which Christian organisations and church denominations gain understanding of young people as ordinary theologians from the young people themselves, while the young people gain understanding of their denominational theology from trained theologians. The preceding is a suggestion that ordinary theologians (youth and youth leaders in our context of discussion) should theologise and enlighten youth ministry academics on what is practicable among peers. It suffices to assert, from the above point of view, that ordinary theologians could be a source of empirical research for academic theologians.

Related to the preceding, Astley defines ‘ordinary theology’ as the theological beliefs and processes of believing that find expression in the God talk of those believers who have received little or no scholarly theological education of a scholarly, academic or systematic kind (2013:1, 2009:808, 2002:56). Astley’s definition of ordinary theology fits the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (COED) and Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (SOED) definitions referring to the term ‘ordinary’ as something that is normal or usual without exceptionality (2009:1007; 2007:2021). Similarly, the dictionary defines ‘lay’ as someone without professional qualification or expert knowledge in a field of endeavour (SOED, 2007:1561).

Ordinary theology is the theology of people who are God’s talkers but do not have academic theological aptitude. Ordinary theology is a theology of which the content, pattern and processes is done by ordinary, non-academic God talkers who articulate their religious understanding due to their own experiences and exposure to theological understanding

⁴⁶ Lay or ordinary theologian denotes the same concept and practice (COED, 2009:1007; SOED, 2007:1561; Astley, 2002:62). This study uses the word interchangeably.

(Astley, 2002:56; Hodgson, 1994:3). It is the theology or theologising of people who have received little (e.g. school of theology, Bible school) or no academic (seminary, university) theological education of a scholarly, academic or systematic critical inquiry. Ordinary theology is a learning theology where the theologian develops theological aptitude through an ongoing process of reflection on God and the world around him or her.

Ordinary theology is the theological formulation of non-theological people, and often dismissed or criticised by academic theologians Astley is of the opinion that intellectual and academic theologians have the tendency to undervalue the ordinary theologian by branding their theology with labels such as as underdeveloped theological argument, uneducated theology, roadside theology, ignorant and ‘ordinary’ theology (2002:49). Macquarrie (1975:82) argues that the name theologian should be reserved for those who are involved in sophisticated, disciplined, systematic and reflective ways of talking about God. In response to this supposition by academic theologians, Farley argues, and I infer, that there is room for a generic concept of reflective God talk or God thought that exists among ordinary believers and faith communities without formal academic theological education, as well as in the lairs of academic theologians (1983:31, 1988:81). Magda (2014:27) argues for an overlapping of tasks in a situation such as this. In Magda’s opinion, the challenges in society needs the reflection of both the scholarly and the practitioners. Academic theologians and ordinary theologians are partners in the overlapping task of engaging and addressing societal challenges and opportunities.

In this study, the point is not to substitute academician and scholarly theology for ordinary theology, but to accommodate, teach and encourage young people to develop theology from their relationship with God because this could engender valuable and relevant theological insights. Academic and scholarly theologians could learn from ordinary theologians for the growth, development, communication and enrichment of the theology of youth ministry (Schweitzer 2014:185, Astley 2002:49). An example of how ordinary theologian’s theology can become a relevant resource for scholarly and academic theology, is exemplified in Calian’s argument. Calian (2002:84) elucidates that the first disciples that Jesus called were mere fishermen and tax collectors and not graduates of any formal institution. Through the experiences of these disciples, academic scholars have propounded academic theology that has become relevant to humanity. Therefore ordinary theologians could enrich the theology of youth ministry that could equip young people and youth leaders to maximise missional

opportunities of telling the stories of their Christian faith and Christian life within society and also engage societal challenges from a normative paradigm.

This can create a synergy between the ordinary theologian and academic or scholarly theologian. Astley (2002:49) buttresses this notion when he argues that “the habitus of theology is no mere cleverness or lust for information therefore, but embraces an orientation towards God that involves, and is an expression of learning how to live before God – and, in this sense, to live theologically.” This synergy connotes an orientation of information dissemination between the academician and ordinary theologian; both become an information resource to the each other. The ordinary theologian apprises the academician of how he or she is learning to live with God, while the academic theologian acquaints the ordinary theologian with how to live with God from a more critical and researched normative perspective.

Astley (2013:2) posits two significances of ordinary theology as (1) pragmatic justification, and (2) theological justification. Pragmatic justification entails that ordinary theology helps the church to understand “beliefs, and patterns and processes of believing, of those who receive its communicative and pastoral ministries.” Theological justification connotes that ordinary theology works for those who own it. It “fits their life, experience and gives meaning to and expresses the meaning they find in their own lives. It is extremely significant for youths because it articulates a faith and a spirituality, and incorporates beliefs and ways of believing, that they find to be salvific-healing, saving, and making them whole. Ordinary theology helps people spiritually and religiously” (Astley, 2013:2).

Furthermore, ordinary theologians are theological resources for the Christian faith community (Armstrong, 2013:65; Christie, 2005: 209; Astley; 2002:56). Astley furthers the approach to ordinary theology stating that ordinary theologians are people who are non-academic non-scholars who are engaged in doing their own theology when they think and speak about God out of their own personal reflections on God, and how God is revealed to them (2002:56). However, Astley projects that ordinary theologians are taken seriously if and only if they are engaged in critical thought about God. Armstrong makes a similar observation when he admits that ordinary theologians’ theology will be taken seriously if their opinion is a by-product of deep thought about God and not just a contemporary social opinion (2013:65). In the same manner, Christie reasons that ordinary theology, which she

calls ordinary Christology, will be taken seriously when the opinions and thoughts expressed are not some emotional and superficial feelings (2005:209).

Astley (2002:138) suggests some congruent criteria for confirming whether or not God thoughts qualify as ordinary theology. He calls the first criteria the ‘objective-cognitive’. Objective-cognitive connotes that ordinary theologians must demonstrate sufficient critical reflection. The ordinary theologian may not be engaged in evaluative, critical reflection to the standard of an academic and scholarly trained theologian, but the ordinary theologian must show a serious attempt to engage with the cognitive issues of faith, beliefs and doctrine. However, caution is needed, their experiences should be sieved to conform to biblical understanding; this where the theologically trained scholar plays the role of equipping and training.

2.8.2.1.2 Training for theological perspicacity⁴⁷ in relationship with God

You[theology] conceives that young people should be trained by academic scholars to practice theology out of their individual relationship with God. This research engages a relational approach to youth ministry as a method for the training. Many scholars have called for a relational approach to youth ministry as an approach that equips young people with theological discernment (Ward 1995:93, Root 2007:14)⁴⁸. Ward (1995:93) says that the relational approach entails building interpersonal relationships in youth ministry. Root (2007:14) buttresses that youth ministry guides the youth to develop a relationship with Jesus. A relational approach is about building relationships (Root 2007:103, 117). Youth ministry, by encouraging developing a relationship with Jesus, can equip the youth with a template for Christian life, Christian faith, and Christian ministry as exemplified in Jesus.

According to Ward and Root’s perspectives, the relational approach is building a relationship between the youth and the youth worker, youth leader and youth pastor. You[theology] is similar to the relational approach in this sense, but the crux of you[theology] is not building a relationship with the youth worker, youth leader or youth pastor. The You[theology] approach is about encouraging and motivating young people to

⁴⁷ Theological perspicacity entails having theological insight into developing a relationship with God.

⁴⁸ Though Ward and Root argue for a relational approach, they however differ in regard to appropriating the approach. For Ward, the essence of relational approach is to influence the youth towards a definite goal, while Root argue for a relational approach whose essence is the relationship in itself.

build a relationship with God which may or may not be mediated. The premise for this stance is that building a relationship with God could be through the help of a mediator (an equipper) or personal reflection that of developing an own understanding of God.

Since theology could be human reflection about God, the young people can develop or be guided to develop, in addition to their taught theology from their denomination, a theological reflection of God. By taught theology, I refer to undergoing training in a school of theology (as discussed in Education for Christian Ministry). At a school of theology, the youth is equipped to become ordinary theologians who use a you[theology] approach to theologise within the purview of their understanding of God. Furthermore, developing a relationship with God could enrich the youth's understanding of the nature of God and the society they live in.

To engage youth through a you[theology] approach, denominations (through youth ministry, pastoral ministry) need to train young people to imbibe the relational approach to youth ministry. The implication is that as young people engage in relationships with God, they generate experiences that inform their theology about God and opportunities and challenges in society. This theology is what this research study refers to as you[theology], that is a theology that evolves from personal encounter and a relationship with God.

However, this research study does not call for an exclusive approach of you[theology] as the source of training and equipping the youth for theological discernment, but posits that formulated theology by church denominations like ECWA should be relevant to young people whose understanding of God could be informed by the denomination's theology. At the same time, youth ministry, in an attempt to build its theology for youth ministry, can engage the you[theology] approach for equipping young people to theologising their understanding of the nature of God, understanding of society, and also develop a participatory relationship with the church denomination, where the youth is invited to share and theologise experiences from their relationship with God. Voas and Crockett propose and I concur that, "It is not enough to find that people accept one statement of belief or another; unless these beliefs make a substantial difference in their lives, religion may consist of little more than opinions to be gathered by pollsters" (Voas and Crockett, 2005:14). Therefore, to postulate a theology to relevant the youth that will make a substantial difference in their theology, the young people themselves will have to be involved as ordinary theologians

whose theology is informed by their relationship with God in what I refer to as a you[theology] approach to youth ministry.

2.9 Interdisciplinary Understanding of Youth

The youth in the age bracket of 18 to 35 years is one of this study's units of analysis. Thus, in this section, I attempt to investigate the conceptual meaning of youth, and what it really means to be a young person? In conceptualising the youth, there is no simple definition that encompasses the entirety of its meaning (Lang 2000:132; Perullo 2005:76; Cloete 2012:2). Cloete (2012:2) argues and I concur that there is no simple definition of youth. The Nigerian National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of Action (NYPSPA 2001:6) and Lang (2000:132) agree with Cloete's reasoning when they write that different nations define the youth in relation to their realities and objective conditions, thus using different variables and parameters such as transitory affiliation, life experiences and socio-economic background to define youth.

Nevertheless, an attempt can be made to conceptualise youth. Griffiths (1996:27) and Perullo (2000:76) argue that conceptualising youth entails categorising them within the boundaries of an age group. According to Griffiths (*ibid*), these boundaries focus on the distinction between a dependent phase of life that he calls childhood, a semi-childhood phase that he calls youth, and an independent phase that he calls adulthood. Alan (2007:6) proposes that these boundaries form the precursor of modern conceptualisation of youth. Alan (2007:6) further elucidates Griffiths's distinction of boundaries when he argues that the boundaries of childhood, youth, and adulthood are informed by 'rites of passage'⁴⁹. Rites of passage vary from culture to culture, society to society, continent to continent, and from country to country within the same continent.

Just as rite of passage vary, so do age categorisation. European countries differ in the age classification of youth. For example, the great philosopher Plato from a Grecian country

⁴⁹ Rite of passage is the changing of phase and transition from childhood to adulthood. Rites of passage are determined by the context of a society, nation, and continent. In Nigeria, the rites of passage from childhood into youth ranges from been a tertiary student to an employed staff member or practical skills practitioner. Within the purview of the Nigerian context, the rites of passage from youth to adulthood is determined by marriage and gainful employment (Oyefusi, 2010:327; Alan, 2007:6; Onuekwusi & Effiong, 2002:95; Nigeria Constitution 1999:19). In the context of the ECWA denomination, adulthood is attained when a young person is married. Thus, unmarried persons are regarded as youth and expected to remain in the youth fellowship of the church until they are married – irrespective of their age.

understood the youth as men and women between 17(18) and 30 years of age (Kaplanek 1999:14). Dutch sociologist of religion, Monique van Dijk-Groeneboer (2015:25), defines the youth as persons between 15 and 25 years of age.

In terms of the African continent, African countries also differ in the rites of passage and age categorisation. For example, in Kenya, rites of passage into youth are at 18 to 35 years (Wamuyu 2013:40). In Nigeria, the youth is between the ages of 18 and 35 years (Adeogun 2015:213, Badejo, Stephens & Anyanwu 2011:284, NYPSA- National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2001:6, 2009:6). Thus, is it possible to conceptualise youth in terms of rites of passage and age alone? I posit that conceptualising youth within the distinction of age boundaries and rites of passage alone may not be sufficient, because the boundaries and rites of passage vary in different societies, countries, and continents. This could explain why there is no simple definition of youth as observed by Cloete (2012:2). However, attempts can be made to conceptualise youth as defined by different scholars.

Some scholars define youth as people within a distinct phase of life. In attempting to define youth, Cloete (2012:2) reasons that youth are at a distinct life phase and are a social cohort in society with a particular lifestyle or cultural identity that distinguishes them. Similarly, Maiko (2007:3) defines youth as persons in their nurturing and developmental phase of life. Cloete and Maiko understand youth as a nurturing phase of life.

Onuekwusi and Effiong (2009:96) and Ubi (2007:2) define youth as the transcending phase from childhood to adulthood. Ellis (2015:124) refers to this transcending phase as moving from immaturity to a maturity phase. Inferring from Onuekwusi and Effiong, and Ubi's definition, youth is a transition period.

Furthermore, youth is defined as a phase of life where a person is no longer a child and not yet an adult. Noval (2014:44) and Ellis (2015:126) argue that the youth are human beings who are in a formative state of their lives. Though they are in a state or phase of life, their phase of life does not define them, rather it suggests the potential challenges and opportunities within and around them.

Although these definitions are helpful as descriptive elements of defining youth because these definitions depict the youth as people in transition within an age group and a developmental phase of life, it does not define who they are as human beings. Human beings

are not defined by their age, though their age could account for who they are, but they are more than who they are in terms of their age.

I submit that young people are at a nurturing, formative and developmental phase of life, but that is not who they are. The weakness of defining youth as a phase of life, is that phases of life have fluid boundaries and are full of uncertainties. Noval (2013:44) reasons that the definition of youth should not be in their potential, or valued based on their phase of life (potentiality). He argues that young people are complete human beings in their actuality, thus their definition should take into cognisance the fact that they are human beings whose conceptualisation should not just be defined within the phase of their lives (Noval 2013:44). Noval's argument suggests that though youths are in a nurturing and developmental phase of life, that is not who they are. The nurturing and developmental phase that is particular to them, does not define who they are as human beings. At best, it defines the stage of life that they are in. Thus, to attempt to conceptualise youth for the purpose of this study, I will study the question of who the youth is from an interdisciplinary perspective.

2.9.1 Anthropological understanding of youth

Qvortrup (1994:4) argues from an anthropological paradigm that young people (the youth) are not just persons who are undergoing a developmental or nurturing phase of life that makes them human, rather young people should be understood primarily as human beings⁵⁰. This concept accentuates that young people are human beings who could have a different descriptive element. The descriptive elements are not who they are, because the descriptive element can be informed or influenced by different contexts and socio-economic factors.

Qvortrup (1994:4), furthering his argument that people should be understood primarily as a human being, argues that people should not be viewed and defined based on who they are becoming or what they do, rather, they based on that they are firstly human beings. Understanding the youth as human beings therefore connotes that they are treated as people with preferences, concerns of interest and the ability to create an own programme contextual

⁵⁰ The pertinent question in anthropology is asking 'what and who is a human being?'. Though arguable within the field of anthropology, theological anthropologists respond to this question by arguing that a human being is a being created in the image of God as depicted in Gen. 1:27. This is a problematic text in terms of the exegetical and teleological nature of the text where man and woman were created 'perfect' without development and evolving into maturity. However, Noval (2015:40-44) strengthens the argument that human beings are made in the image of God, but not in the sense of a teleological nature of a perfect human being, but a human being born with frailty and gullibility as depicted in Job 10:8a, 9a, 11-12 & Prov. 8:22-31; a human being who is born and shaped through different processes of challenges and opportunities.

to their challenges and opportunities. Juxtaposing this anthropological understanding with Nigerian authors like Onuekwusi and Effiong (2009:96) who define youth as a transition phase of life, young people are a human being whose definition should be primarily conceptualised as such rather than as a phase of life between childhood and adulthood.

Anthropologically, young people should be understood as human beings who can be responsible, make their decisions, plan their actions and accept responsibility to draft their own programme, identify their own problems. They should be encouraged to discern solutions to their challenges and opportunities. The opinions and experiences of the youth should inform the nature of programmes drafted in youth ministry as social actors. Since it is called youth ministry, the youth is the object of the ministry. Thus, it should be youth ministry by the youth to the youth in their own contexts and meeting their concerns of interest.

2.9.2 Cultural understanding of youth

The categorisation of youth according to age grouping could be informed by cultural context. Feixa and Nilan (2006:1) argue that culturally, young people are defined by their categorisation into a different age group in different societies. That is to say that, one who is regarded as a youth in one context may not be regarded as a youth in another context. Youth, write Feixa and Nilan (2006:1) “has been expanded to include some who are legally recognised elsewhere as children, and some who are legally recognised elsewhere in society as adults”. This expansion ranges from the age of 12 to 35 in different contexts. In the Nigerian culture, youth is defined by the classification of the age range 18 to 35. This classification is quite different from a European classification like the Dutch context. Monique van Dijk-Groeneboer (2015:25) states that the Dutch categories youth as the age range 15 to 25. Different cultural contexts, different age categorisations.

Culturally, there is no universality in the categorisation of a youth. This connotes that from a cultural paradigm, youth categorisation differs from one cultural context to another. The differences in different cultures are dependent on different factors and social institutions. Suggesting some of the factors and social institutions that determine how youth is categorised, France (2007:6) argues that this cultural classification is premised locally on family, work, and community. According to France, the way a family is structured, the industrialisation of the society, and technological advancement within the community influences the cultural context of the people (2007:9). These factors and social institutions

differ in different cultural contexts. Lang (2000:132) gives an example of some Western contexts like the United States, where a 25 year old student may still be regarded as youth, while an 18 year old woman raising a child and working full-time may not be designated as youth. The same can be said of the Nigerian cultural context. In Nigeria, a person of 35 will be regarded as youth, especially if the person is still living with his or her parents for want of marriage and employment, while a person of 20 with a child may not be regarded as adult in the society.

Like Selvam (2006:66) argued, defining youth is complex. In this study, I prefer to use the word youth academically, rather than young people, because most cultural contexts appropriate the word youth better than usage of the phrase young people. For example, in America, people aged 13 to 18 are regarded as young people because they are young (Barna 1995:10), but in Nigeria, people within that age group are regarded as children in some societies, while in urban centres, they are regarded as teenagers and youth. I concur with the urban definition since urban cities (cosmopolitan) are one of the units of analysis for this study. In Nigeria, teenagers span from age 13 to 19, literally the age range with teens after the numbers, that is age 13, 14, 15 to 19. According to the NYPSA, the youth age in Nigeria overlaps with the teenage age in the last two years of teenagers. So ages 18 and 19 can be regarded as teen or youth. Those in the age range of 18 to 35 are regarded as young people and termed youth in Nigeria (2001:6).

In my African experience, some Nigerian cultures understand youth as persons whose parents, and by extension the elderly in the community and church, are responsible for making their decisions. This could account for why the ECWA ministry organogram, include policies concerning the youth, is drafted at the ECWA headquarters and disseminated to the youth for implementation. This practice could be culturally inclined, since, in most African societies, the youth do not have the authority to engage in planning for their lives.

Feixa and Nilan (2006:1) pose another dimension to this discourse when they note that a person regarded as (a) youth in one context, may be regarded as an adult in another context. In some contexts, different institutions understand youth differently. In ECWA, for example, a person who is married, is regarded as an adult within the church denomination and by extension, society. Therefore, if a young person of 20 is married, that person is regarded and respected as an adult. While if a person of 35 is not married, that person is

regarded as a youth. So, for the denomination, marital status determines who is regarded as a youth and an adult. Though the ECWA reasoning for this distinction of who is a youth and who is an adult may be ecclesologically right within the context of the denomination understanding of ECWA, it poses the challenge of putting avoidable pressure on the youth to get married so as to be regarded and treated as an adults. Imagine a family scenario where the first child aged 34 is not married while the younger child aged 27 is married. Selvam (2006:67), from a Kenyan context, resonates with this argument that marriage defines youth in Africa when she says that youth who live in the rural areas get married earlier than youth who live in cosmopolitan cities. Thus, youth who live in the rural areas and are married, are treated as adults because they are married, while urban youths who are not yet married, are regarded as youth, irrespective of their age. Selvam's Kenyan experience resonates with the ECWA categorisation of youth that implies that the first child who is not married, is still a youth, while the second child who is married, is an adult, irrespective of their ages.

2.9.3 Theological understanding of youth

Understanding youth as a phase of life between childhood and adulthood could have certain unintended implications. An unintended implication of being viewed and treated as young people who lack the understanding of the society and may not have their own independent opinions, means they cannot develop a relationship with God that could inform their self-identity and behaviour. For example, in ECWA the youth fellowship handbook and the annual youth week programmes are drafted for the youth by the Christian Education Department at the ECWA headquarters for implementation at various youth meetings under the umbrella of the Local Youth Board (LYB). Thus, it is pertinent to understand youth beyond age bracket or phase of life. Therefore inviting the understanding of relating with youth as human being in a God-relationship.

In a quest to understand the youth as human beings, Hunsinger engaged Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics III part 2 on what it means to be a human being. Karl Barth argued that to understand what it means to be a human being, is to acknowledge the God relationship. He argued that "fundamental to our being as creatures is that we are bound to God because God our creator has bound Himself to us" (Hunsinger, 2015:140). The God relationship is pivotal to understanding human beings. Hunsinger buttresses that, theologically, this God relationship as propounded by Karl Barth, is the central purpose to understanding human beings irrespective of their phase of life.

The God relationship entails that human being is to “know, love and glorify God forever” (Hunsinger, 2015:140); the human being does not exist apart from the basic God relationship. He argues that, by the same token, God exists in relationship with humanity. As God exists in relationship to humanity, so humanity exists in relationship to God as exemplified in the narratives about Jesus. Jesus in human nature, demonstrated Nigerian National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of Action a life of grace, faced challenges and had a purpose on earth, opportunities to fulfil (Hunsinger, 2015:152). Jesus’s narratives supposed that it is not God’s will to be God without human beings, as it is not His will that we be human beings without God. Thus, the God relationship is an interdependent relationship between God and humanity, including the youth. Noval (2014:44) and Ellis (2015:126) argue that the youth are human beings who are in the process of being formed through God’s action in their lives. God’s action can be seen in their progress, brokenness and impossibility (Ellis 2015:121).

Premising on the anthropological, cultural and theological understandings of youth, I understand youth as human beings who are social actors and partners with God in society. Youths are human beings who are in the process of becoming who God enables them to become through a God relationship. It should thus be understood based on God’s action in their lives and also on the people they have the capacity of becoming. The youth should be seen as social actors and partners with God; God’s action can be seen in their concerns of interest, challenges, insatiable hunger for a relationship with a supreme being, and their modelling of their lives after a societal model, a super star or a hip-hop youth culture star.

The youth as human beings connotes that they are humans in society who are surrounded by challenges and opportunities that could be particular to their life experiences. These experiences have the propensity to impact their understanding, behaviour and lifestyle. The youth are human beings with their own human frailty just like other humans and are confronted with the need to discern how to approach or respond to human frailty. In the light of this, they also need older adults to resonate with their human frailty by providing a support system by equipping and empowering them, giving them an aptitude for discernment. This need is an invitation for youth ministry to provide this necessary support system of equipping the youth with theological education and understanding that can guide them in discernment amidst challenges and opportunities, theological education through different education models for Christian ministry like youth ministry that forms the bedrock of the response to concerns of interest such as youth cultures.

The youth are human beings with God given dignity. De Lange (2013:9) and Mitchell (2013:65) argue that human dignity is an inalienable right of all human beings. Stevenson and Soanes (2009:401) in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary define dignity as “the state or quality of being worthy of honour and respect”. The youth as human beings are worthy of respect and honour because they are human beings in the image of God. Bosman (2013:39, 56) and Koopman (2008:166) argue that human beings in the image of God connote that their way of life gains true meaning, respect, satisfaction and usefulness within the God-given and God-intended life (from creation) of dignity as self-esteem or/and self-worth. The human dignity of the youth entails that the youth’s way of life be respected and their opinions and experiences given credence and rights as human beings. Thus, the human dignity of the youth commends that they are given space to take responsibility in engaging their concerns of interest.

Youths are social actors. The youth as social actors connote that the youth are active participants in society. Perullo (2005:76) understands the youth as social actors in terms of the youth not being seen as a marginal age group whose opinions are aired or represented by other social actors and institutions. The youth are social actors who are proactive in society through different available or created youth culture platforms like the hip hop youth culture. They are social actors whose narratives and lived experiences could help Christian ministries like youth ministry, the church and society at large to understand their opinions, values and perspectives on different spheres in society. The youth are social actors who can inform a programme content and theology of youth ministry that can better address their opportunities and challenges.

Furthermore, the youth as social actors suggests that the youth engage in platforms of youth cultures to express themselves, their stories and perspectives on their challenges and opportunities. As social actors, they air their voices through their social interface with the society. Interfaces like hip hop culture and comedy are potent mediums through which they air their voices. Thus, their actions and inactions will be informed by how they are equipped. If they are equipped with theological understanding (in practice and not just in doctrine) of the love of God as exemplified through Jesus’s death on the cross, it is likely that their response towards society will be that of love as shown to them.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter engaged the design of literature study to conceptualise an understanding of theological discernment in youth ministry. The aptitude for theological discernment is developed through equipping and training through different models as discussed in this chapter. Training conducted by different Christian ministries equips the youth with an aptitude for theological discernment.

Conceptualisation of the youth is not restricted by definitions based on age or phase of life, but as human beings. Although they are, as individuals, at some evident temporal phase of life, they are firstly human beings. Thus, they should not be defined or understood by their phase of life, but rather by their humanness with the propensity of who they can become, and if trained with education for Christian ministry, of which the essence is equipping them with aptitude for theological discernment.

This chapter understood the theology of youth ministry as a theology of *genetivus subjectivus*, a theology that equips the youth with the theology of you[theology]; where young people who are trained at a school of ministry by the faith community are regarded as ordinary theologians. As ordinary theologians they theologise from their relationship with God as God talkers. Also, a theology of story listening which advances this youth ministry, gives attention to the stories of the youth, patiently listening to youth stories and understanding the challenges and opportunities within the contexts of youth culture.

One cogent element of youth ministry is equipping the youth with theological discernment to engage their concerns of interest. This discernment enables them to navigate society with a theological template that guides their decisions and behaviour towards society (in regards to their challenges and opportunities).

Chapter Three will be a conceptual investigation of the hip hop culture as a lived life among the youth. In conceptualising hip-hop youth culture, this study will investigate how hip hop culture poses a challenge and offer opportunities to the youth and their way of life. To conduct this investigation, I will engage literature review to explore the concept and practice of hip hop youth culture among the youth, and how the youth engages hip hop culture as a platform to express their opinions and concerns of interest in society.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL INVESTIGATION OF HIP HOP CULTURE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the third research aim and objective of this research study: “To conceptualise the ideology and learned behaviour of hip hop culture and its influence (challenges and opportunities) on the youth with regard to their lifestyle (way of life) and behaviour”. Engaging the practical theological descriptive-empirical and interpretive tasks, this chapter achieves this aim and objective by exploring a theoretical understanding of culture in its broader sense before narrowing it to the focus on HHC (in a deductive approach of discussing a phenomenon from a larger to a smaller unit). The descriptive-empirical task of practical theology begins with examining episodes, contexts, situations, contemporary life and practices in order to understand what is happening (Osmer, 2005:xv). Knowing what is happening, invites the need for interpretation by asking the question, why is this happening? The interpretive task identifies the reasons embedded within the episodes, contexts, situations, contemporary life and practices by drawing on the interdisciplinary theory of Ivan Pavlov’s classical conditioning to help understand how behaviours can be classically conditioned to a lifestyle and pattern.

Culture is a lifestyle (way of life) that is expressed in feelings, ideas and behaviour within society. Cultures like HHC are learned and practised within the space and place called home. This home could either be a literal home, where biological families and relatives live, or a home as a subgroup of people who engage in interaction, or as a formative community based on areas of interest within a larger field.

Youth culture is a counterculture to an existing traditional culture just as HHC is a subculture of existing youth culture. The creation of youth culture amidst traditional culture and the creation of HHC amidst youth culture is done by human beings. Culture is therefore created by human beings for human beings and practised by human beings. Human beings are the people who create and co-create culture for themselves, their community and their generation. People are the social actors of their own culture. This culture evolves in different norms and ways of life not associated with earlier generations.

Culture is multi-phased and multi-dimensional. Kuhn (1996:66) argues that academics use different epistemological lenses to understand and interpret the behaviour of different groups and their cultural practices. For this research, I investigate the realities of youth in HHC, using the practical theological epistemology of descriptive and interpretive tasks as promoted by Osmer to understand Ivan Pavlov's experiment and application of classical conditioning (CC), which helps to understand learned behaviour. This chapter correlates Pavlov's CC experiment of human behaviour in response to stimuli. It navigates HHC as a learned behaviour and stimuli of which elements have the propensity to influence youth behaviour as expressed through different cultural outlets of HHC.

Furthermore, this chapter discusses the responsibility of youth ministry and the church to equip the youth with theological teachings that could guide and inform their theological discernment process as expressed in their lifestyle.

3.2 Culture

Culture is dynamic, as different people, groups and society invent and re-invent different cultures depending on their philosophy, worldview and value systems. Accordingly, Honigmann (1963:3) conceptualises culture as a lifestyle (way of life) that could designate a particular aggregate set of people. Honigmann adds that these designations are human-made artefacts, activities people perform, ideas, world views and feelings that inform people's way of life. Craith⁵¹ (2004:280) also argues that culture cannot be reduced to a single element. That is, there are different ways of expressing culture.

Therefore, culture is people's lifestyle expressed through different elements, such as ideology, feelings, behaviour, identity, and responses to different phenomena within society. The expression of culture through different elements makes culture a multi-phased and dynamic way of life that is ever-evolving as people create, learn and practise their own culture to inform their own way of life and behaviour.

⁵¹ Máiréad Nic Craith is a scholar whose vested interest is in intercultural culture. She focusses on how two or more cultures can co-exist and intertwine in a cordial relationship. She is a cultural influencer who promotes cultural heritage and cultural diversity within society and researches how local cultures can globalise their own culture within the global culture.

Craith (2004:280) stresses that culture is conceptualised as a way of life that is rooted and domesticated in a place or society. For some people, the rooted and domestic place where a culture is lived, is where they call home (Craith, 2004:287). Home is where their culture is learned and practised. Davaney (2001:5) understands culture as “a multi-textured network of relations or total way of life encompassing the myriad relations, institutions, and practices that define a historical period or specific geographical location or formative community or subgroups within larger fields”. Therefore, culture is a way of life that is lived within a space called home. However, the place called home can be relative in the sense that it can either be a literal home, where biological families and relatives live, or home as a subgroup of people who engage in interaction, or a formative community based on areas of interest within a larger field.

Davaney (2001:5) and Craith (2004:287) are proponents of culture as a way of life that can be learned, practised and lived beyond a place. According to Craith (2004:280), culture (living) is “constantly re-worked, renegotiated and re-defined beyond a particular location. It is an evolving way of life, and different generations have different ideas as to what makes their own culture. Culture evolves and changes”. That is, culture is a way of life that is not static, neither can it be reduced to a single element of lived life within a geographical place.

Rather, culture evolves, changes, and dynamically infiltrates different geographical locations because it can be re-defined and re-worked as it enculturates different generations and transcends generations. Thus, culture evolves in different contexts with different behavioural patterns, ideologies and values.

A related conceptualisation of culture as a process of educating and refining an individual with social practices that create an identity within a social group of people (Grenz, 2000:304). That is, culture is the ongoing practice of human beings educating themselves on their own way of life and patterns of social practices and behaviours that inform their identity (Grenz, 2000:305). Culture is therefore created by human beings for human beings and practised by human beings. Human beings are the people who create and co-create culture for themselves, their community and genealogy. People are the social actors of their own culture.

Culture is produced by people. People are the associates, cultural practitioners, negotiators and re-negotiators of culture. Although some argue that the elite are the producers of

culture,⁵² Davaney (2001:6) and Clifford (1998:45) believe that people are the producers of culture, not the elite, as scholars like Langman (1973:139) argue. Their reason for differing from Langman is that the dynamic and continuously evolving practice of culture is because the people who practise the culture, are the producers, and not just the consumers, of their culture. That is, people are not just passive consumers of ideologies, meaning, values, behaviours, and cultural practices.

Davaney (2001:6) adds that people contribute to the production of meaning, values, behaviour and lifestyle. People are the producers of culture on multiple levels through their resistance to the elite's ideologies of dominance, their creative appropriation and reconfiguration of the cultural production of the powerful, and through the creation of cultural practices and creating an identity that is their own.

Moreover, culture can no longer be conceptualised as static and practised only within a given location (traditional). Davaney (2001:5) argues that culture is now a dynamic, contentious and continuous process of making meaning, and through that meaning producing power that is circulated and negotiated by all who live within that particular cultural milieu. For example, in Nigeria, culture used to be static and practised by all who live within that geographical location, but global influence has changed this reality. Ethnographically, I can say, like Davaney (2001:5), that culture is not static. Some of these Nigerian cultures that were static, are becoming dynamic and deliberative.

Furthermore, Davaney (2001:6) argues for materialist theories of culture. According to Davaney (2001:6), the construction of meaning in culture can be through non-lingual and non-discursive methods.

Devaney's argument suggests that culture creates meaning in non-formal ways beyond ideology. This argument could suggest two practices: firstly, culture creates images in the minds of people; and secondly, people's images can become a cultural practice within the community.

⁵² This argument only takes cognisance of one element of understanding culture, called ideology. This argument says the person whose ideology creates the people's culture, gains power over the people. Those who argue that culture is produced by the elite, are of the view that culture is merely an ideology (Langman, 1973:139). Rightly so, culture is an ideology, but culture is more than an ideology. According to this argument, culture is only a theatre of ideas and symbolic forms. Whereas culture is an ideology and also meaning making, values and a dynamic lifestyle created by people (Clifford, 1998:46; Davaney, 2001:6).

The first suggests that culture constructs images in people's minds with regard to how to respond to events within the community. These images could inform their values, self-esteem and way of life. For example, in terms of youth culture, the youth could have images in their minds with regard to particular ways of life, values and identity.

The second implies that meaning is made through the image of the practitioners of that culture. Individuals create images within the community and can construct cultural practices and a way of life. These arguments depict how individual images can become a phenomenon of which the values become a trending way of life within and outside the community. In other words, individual icons – soccer stars, moguls of the entertainment industry and hip hop music artists – are constructors of the HHC. They are constructors because the youth model their way of life and behaviours after such individual icons. Therefore, the construction of culture is done by the people who negotiate, re-negotiate and evolve cultural practices through their lifestyle and behavioural practices.

However, Amstrong (2014:4) argues that the reasons why some youth construct their lifestyle after certain societal individual icons, could be a depiction of an artificial life or the quest to satisfy a craving which they tend to seek to satisfy constructively in arts, emulating these individual icons, or destructively in doing drugs and/or getting entangled in warfare. This craving grants the youth a sense of satisfaction, fulfilment and ecstatic experience when emulating the individual icons in their 'super-humanity' as heroes. So, the construction of culture through the emulation of these iconic super-humans, impacts their lives and satisfies a craving in the youth. Amstrong (2014:4) further argues that the youth could seek satisfaction by emulating these iconic 'super-humans' because they lack such satisfaction in church. Gleaning from Amstrong's argument, I submit that the youth's craving can be satisfied by youth ministry listening to their stories so as to know what their cravings are and thus, being able to design programmes that are relevant to addressing their concerns of interest based on their stories. Selvam (2006:72) argues for a youth ministry that listens to the stories of the youth and designs programmes that are contextual to the stories of the youth.

3.2.1 Nigerian cultural dilemma

The urban Nigerian community is engaged in a mixed and complex cultural dilemma in the sense that globalisation in cosmopolitan cities is a mixture of different cultural milieus. The

dilemma is between traditional African cultures (ATC), which are predominant in rural areas, and modern evolving cultures, such as the HHC, which is predominantly lived by the youth in cosmopolitan cities. This divergence of cultures requires an intercultural relationship between the traditional cultures and HHC.

The Nigerian nation is a society with a plurality of cultures (Folarin, Olanrewaju, and Ajayi, 2014:81; Ifeanchu and Nwagwu, 2009:1). These cultures are ATC and evolving cultures with material and non-material elements (Udebunu, 2011:3). The material elements are the part of culture that are physical objects (artefacts) that can be seen, while the non-material elements of culture are the cultural elements that cannot be seen, like belief systems and ideologies that inform why they do what they do (way of life). Olanrewaju and Ajayi (2014:81) argue that this cultural dilemma of different cultures co-existing within the same society (cultural pluralism), could be a uniting or divisive factor for the society.

Thus, Olanrewaju and Ajayi (2014:81) and Udebunu, (2011:3) argue for multiculturalism that entails ideological understanding (non-material elements) and behaviours (material elements) that recognise, tolerate, respect and promote the peaceful co-existence of plurality of cultures though divergence. Therefore, in the Nigerian society, there is a need to promote a multicultural approach in engaging divergence of the ATCs and HHC, a multicultural approach that embodies the ATCs and HHC.

Growing up in Nigeria, when the word culture was mentioned, the imaginative mind reflected on the way of life in villages and local communities. The social structures in these villages were structured so that the primitive cultural or village way of life was taught by the elders and older adults in the community to their children and other youth in the community. These cultures were both ideologies and practices; ideologies as expressed in values, beliefs and ideal systems, and laws of respect, and practices as expressed in a way of life, greetings/courtesy, hospitality, fraternity and community togetherness.

The nation Nigeria is in a dilemma as a result of a mixed ideology and behavioural patterns as prescribed by the traditional culture, and differing modern culture. These modern cultural practices like HHC influence rural migrants to the cities and city inhabitants. The youth in Nigeria are revising traditional norms and African patterns, and constructing HHC in their own globalised way of life.

3.2.2 Youth culture

There are many youth cultures that have been lived over the centuries and were necessitated in different contexts and for different essences. Youth culture has assimilated different subcultures with different forms and styles over the decades. Thus, the youth were known in different generations according to the trending youth cultures in their contexts: the beat generation (Allyn, 2000:24; France, 2007:16), the hippies (Allyn, 2000:168-169, 207; Osgerby, 2004:9, 28), youth through digital media (Scharer, 2013:6), cyberculture (1994:519), and social media (Marwick and Ellison, 2012:378; Ogidi, 2015:11; Qualman, 2011:64), and HHC (Malone and Martinez, 2015:2; Rausch, 2011:xiii; Smith, 2013:9).

The youth culture (in other words, youth counterculture) is a subculture of an existing, dominant culture in each community or society (France, 2007:17; Kuhn, 1996:67; Langman, 1973:138). The drive that creates youth culture within a dominant cultural milieu is the quest to confront and create a distinctive lifestyle that is different from the conventional, traditional culture in society (France, 2007:17). Youth culture is a subculture within a given society that counters an existing traditional culture.

France (2007:17) argues for the need to confront existing structures of inequality created (intentionally or non-intentionally) by parents and older adults in society. Confronting the existing culture of parents' and older adults' structures leads to an alternate way of life that is regarded as a subculture of the existing culture, such as an African culture, within the community. This subculture within the existing culture becomes the youth culture of the youth (as created by the youth). Similarly, when youth culture evolves as a way of life, it becomes a popularly lived culture so that even some older adults start practising and living it. The youth, however, in their quest for distinctiveness, will always seek to evolve about another culture called a sub-culture of the existing popular culture.

Thus, any culture coming after a popular culture, is a sub-culture of an existing popular culture. A popular culture reflects the values (and counter-values) of the masses in a technological or urban culture. Youth culture is therefore a sub-culture of an existing popular culture within a community. For example, if it is within the African community, the youth culture becomes a sub-culture in the African community. Likewise, if it is within a European or American community, the youth culture becomes a sub-culture of the existing popular European or American community.

France (2007:16) further argues that, in the 1950s, the ideology and practice of youth culture exploded with the youth's quest to change or bring about change. In France's (2007:16) opinion, this culture exploded with the arrival of 'beatniks', the beat, the 'Rockers', the 'Teds', and the 'hippies'.⁵³ The beatniks was a slanguage⁵⁴ in England for what was named as the beatnik cultural generation. This beatnik generation preceded the beat generation.

France (2007:16) and Allyn (2000:24-26) narrate the history, pointing out that the concept beatnik generation was a cultural movement that was championed by the youth and was adopted after World War II from an underworld slanguage of world hustlers, drug addicts, downtrodden and beaten down young people who needed to express their own opinions through street-wise behaviour. The emergence of this significant youth culture after World War II must be understood through an analysis of the social forces that shaped the experiences of the youthful age group – social forces such as marginalisation, corruption, oppression and materialism.

Another movement evolved after the beatnik generation faded – a new generation called the beat generation. Unlike the beatnik generation, which was street-wise, the beat generation became renowned as a literary movement and youth culture known as beat culture.⁵⁵ Central elements of the beat culture, were their rejection of the standard norm established by the values of the parents' generation (older adults), spiritual quests, exploration of different

⁵³ The hippies, also known as hippie culture, of the 1960s was a youth movement (especially among college students) in the United States. It started as a countercultural movement that rejected the mores of mainstream American life, rejected established institutions, embraced Eastern philosophy, championed sexual liberation, criticised middle-class values and supported divorce, non-marriage, living together, same-sex relationships, multiple relationships, and a back-to-nature philosophy. It was a counterculture to the norms and values of the mainstream society, and a youth-oriented empowerment and entertainment that led to a leisure-driven and television genre culture, especially among the youth (Allyn, 2000:168-169, 207; Osgerby, 2004:9, 28).

⁵⁴ Slanguage is a contemporary youth language used as a medium of communication that distinguishes the youth from older adults and their parents in society. According to the Urban Dictionary, "Slanguage is the extensive use of slang words in written or oral communication". "It is a dialect of standard English believed to have its origins in the neurological changes that evolved in the mind in the post-MTV era". Source: <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=slanguage/> A. Accessed: 5 July 2017.

⁵⁵ One cardinal social factor was the different experiences of the parent (older) generation and the youth (younger) generation. Due to the impact of the world war, the parents' generation experienced the Great Depression fuelled by economic collapse. They survived by learning to work hard. They worked hard after the war and they achieved measurable success. On the other hand, due to the parents' hard work, their children (the younger generation) experienced relative prosperity and growth, with new housing, automobiles, and toys as children. They had a feeling of entitlement. This entitlement was given to them by their parents, and it privileged them to become literate and knowledgeable. They used their knowledge to question the rampant materialism in society and the vices practised by their parents' generation. Another social factor after World War II was social mores which manifested in behavioural patterns of divorce, non-marriage, co-habitation of unmarried men and women, same-sex relationships, and the empowerment of women and youth – these were the choices debated and advanced.

religions, and rejection of materialism and explicit portrayals of the human condition, drugs, and sexual liberation.⁵⁶

Another way of life that characterised the beat culture was the student movement in universities. University students started to question the rampant materialism of their society and the unquestioning consumption of the traditional culture. This suggests why the beat culture generation was known as a questioning generation and a dissatisfied generation, who, in their curiosity, questioned their parents' generation and traditional consumer culture, thus starting to create their own cultural practices with regard to different subjects of interest. These subjects included sexuality, music interest, pseudo-intellectualism, drug use, and cartoon depictions of real-life people.

In its explosion, these youth cultures of the beatniks, the beat, the Rockers and the Teds gained great media and academic attention. Kuhn (1996:67) adds that the evolving of countercultures within the traditional culture attracts the attention of the media and academics because the countercultures affect the lifestyle and how reality is interpreted.

Kuhn (1996:66) argues that academic attention leads to the development of functionalist and behaviourist explanations for human behaviour in the social sciences. This study engages with research on human behaviour in an attempt to understand human behaviour in regard to cultural ideologies and practices.

Kuhn (1996:67) adds that this academic attention also seeks to navigate the conflicts of interest that evolve with a quest for a different understanding of the sociology of knowledge, philosophy of science and epistemology of knowledge. This quest for a different understanding of the sociology of knowledge stresses the paradigm shifts in science and social science, with implications for the way that reality is interpreted by different groups and cultures (Kuhn, 1996:67). The epistemology of knowledge is sourced from different disciplines in order to understand and interpret people's realities. In this research study, practical theology is the epistemology for investigating the aptitude of theological discernment as a paradigm for engaging with HHC.

⁵⁶ For further readings on this historicity, please read <http://www.online-literature.com/periods/beat.php>. Accessed: 11 October 2017.

This discourse resonates with the research question of this research study, namely seeking to understand how equipping the youth for theological discernment can aid their decision-making process as they navigate the HHC. Kuhn's⁵⁷ propounded argument suggests that a group of people's cultural reality can be understood through different sources of knowledge. Thus, the reality of youth culture can be understood and interpreted through different paradigms. In this study, the cultural reality of the youth in HHC is understood by asking the youth about their reality of HHC and interpreting this through practical theological methodology, as promoted by Osmer. Osmer's practical theological methodology of descriptive-empirical task that seeks to find out on what is happening within the cultural reality of HHC among the youth, and the interpretive tasks that seek to find why things happen as they do, are engaged. I conducted an empirical study to investigate the reality of what is happening and why it is happening in regard to the research question of this research study from the youth in their own words. That is, investigating "How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within the contemporary hip hop youth culture?" by asking the youth this question.

Commenting on the how the youth cultures gain greater media attention,⁵⁸ France (2007:16) agrees with Kuhn's reasoning when he argues that in the past media such as cinema and pop music were used by the youth to express their behaviour and to redefine their values in contrast to the traditional culture in the society. The media also provides a medium to express their rejection of traditional conventions, to voice their differences and disapproval of the behaviours and values of the older adults. Thus, their rejection and expression became a concern for traditional culture because it is perceived as causing anxiety about the impact of its consumption, style and leisure, as being disrespectful to the elderly, as lacking manners, and as rejecting traditional convention, leading to social disorder and unease (France, 2007:16; Wulff, 1995:1).

⁵⁷ Kuhn was a physicist, historian and philosopher of science whose thrust in academia was the paradigm shift. He is known for motivating academics to interpret realities in groups of people and cultures, that is, the quest to understand people's realities through different paradigms. Kuhn's argument can be used for intra-disciplinary discourse, which connotes using different lenses to understand people's cultural realities.

⁵⁸ Youth and the media interact are in symbiotically. This symbiotic interaction denotes that the youth and media live in close association in a mutually co-dependent relationship, where the youth patronise the media and, likewise, the media needs the youth to stay afloat. The media needs the youth's economic market for its survival, and the youth, who are in search of their own identity and engagement in globalisation, are provided by the media with aids for the nurturing and constructing their reality of interest. The media offers the youth a space to exercise their curiosity and spend their energies. I also argue that the media meets the youth's quest for relationships (online) or community (fraternity), intimacy and shared experiences.

The youth engaging with each other and the world through the media platform is what informs the dynamics of youth culture, and is how it is easily and quickly spread among the youth, irrespective of geographical location. That is, youth culture is easily learned and practised among the youth because they are readily globalised through the medium of the media. Since the media keeps evolving – as digital media and social media, creating a boundless space – so the globalisation of youth culture is easily shared among the youth. Thus, the values and behavioural patterns of youth culture can easily be learned. Cloete (2012:1-2) supports the argument of youth culture as a learned and shared behaviour when she argues that youth culture can be a subculture of societal structures that can be expressed, observed, learned and shared. Thus youth culture is an expressed, learned and shared behaviour.

Commenting on how youth culture attracts the attention of academics, Kuhn (1996:67) argues that the uprising of the youth culture caught attention because countercultures affect lifestyle and the way reality is interpreted. Youth culture beckons the need to research the youth's opinions and worldviews. Wulff (1995:2), lending voice to the role of academics in addressing youth culture, argues that the trend of academics investigating youth culture started to emerge in the 1950s and was conducted by sociologists and later anthropologists. I concur with Kuhn's argument that academics need to engage with youth culture and how it connotes the youth's reality.

However, I add that, in attempting to understand the youth culture, academics need to study the youth in their own space and investigate how their theology informs their way of life. More so, I concur with Wulff's (1995:1) historical observation that different disciplines have been involved in addressing youth culture in different contexts. This study acknowledges the relevance of other disciplines, like sociology and anthropology, in addressing youth culture, but the focus here is on practical theology in youth culture as a way of life. Craith (2004:280) elucidates that the concept of culture is a complex one that should be approached differently by different disciplines. Different disciplines engage with culture using different epistemologies. This concept of understanding how the theology of the youth influences their way of life concerning how they navigate youth culture, plays second fiddle to the third aim and objective of this research, which is investigate the impact of youth culture (hip hop culture) on youth lifestyle.

Wulff (1995:1, 3) observes that, since the introduction of the term youth culture in the 1940s by Talcott Parsons, most research on youth culture has predictably focused on youth culture's resistance to and deviance from adult society, and its closeness to the market through consumption of popular music like hip hop music. This research study acknowledges hip hop music as an influential element of HHC, but also focusses on the challenges and opportunities of HHC for the youth.

Youth culture is conceptualised as the commonality of shared behaviour, ideology, experiences, customs, slanguage, lifestyle (ways of life) and perceptions constructed through different social processes (Cloete, 2012:2; Poyntz, 2012:111; Ogidi, 2015:28). As argued by Poyntz (2012:111), this commonality of shared behaviour impacts their lived life and informs their imagined life, values and experiences. Borgman (1997:65) adds that culture is a learned behaviour that is acquired socially and includes language (slanguage), values, beliefs, artefacts, technology, music etc., which are learned and passed on from one generation to another.

From the ongoing discussion in this study, I submit that youth culture is a dynamic, continuously renegotiated and continuing process in which the commonality of shared behaviour, ideology, lived and imagined life are expressed, learned and circulated among like-minded youth. Youth culture is understood as a lifestyle that is predominant among the youth. This non-static, dynamic way of life informs their understanding of themselves and how they are viewed and understood in society. Furthermore, I submit that youth culture is a process that includes symbolic structures and systems that the youth share and which are to some degree distinctive from those of their parents and the older adults in their community.

Langham (1973:138) says that one of the dynamic practices of youth culture is that youth culture is intergenerational. This means that the existing culture within which youth culture is created, could be the parental generation that provides financial support and offspring. This could account for why the existing culture and the youth culture are in tension. The same tension could recur when those who are the youth today, become the parental generation who in turn provide support and offspring for membership in society.

Youth culture is intergenerational with particularity. Different youth cultures are particular as learned and practised through behavioural patterns. This particularity expresses itself through behavioural patterns of way of life as lived by the cultural practitioners. HHC is a

way of life. Smith (2013:9) argues that HHC is a way of life (lifestyle), with ideology, values, attitudes and a lived practice.

3.3 Overview of Hip Hop Culture

Some scholars argue that the ideology and practice (lifestyle) of HHC started in the 1940s and early 1950s, with the arrival of the music of rap, beatniks, the rockers, the Teds, the hippies, and graffiti art, breakdancing and deejaying (France, 2007:16; Kitwana, 2005:xi). Kobin and Tyson (2006:344) argue that HHC started in the Bronx in the USA in an era of culturally diverse urban black male street activities and its core element is the music format established in the 1970s with the arrival of street activities such as break-dancing, graffiti, and verbal rhythmic music called hip hop rap music. Katz (2012:4) is of the opinion that HHC historically dates back to the 1940s, when deejaying was invented. Deejaying is an element of HHC that was invented as a hip hop way of life that entails playing phonograph records on the air. Thus, this element of HHC predates the official usage of the phenomenon called HHC.

Kitwana's (2005:xi) historiographical data of HHC agrees with Kobin and Tyson (2006:344) with regard to HHC being a black street movement⁵⁹ that culturally began with lyrics of hip hop rap music in the Bronx, but Kitwana differs with regard to the demography of where HHC started. According to Kitwana (2005: xii), HHC started in North-Eastern USA. Although the Bronx is one of the boroughs located in North-Eastern USA, there are other boroughs in the same part of the country where HHC could be said to have started. Thus, there is no consensus on the history of hip hop, but there is a common understanding that HHC has at its core the genre of hip hop music lyrics and beates. The lyrics are the spoken words⁶⁰ in the music, which is narration, (poetic) history, dreams, goals, feelings,

⁵⁹ Black street movements used HHC to express their grievance against the political, social and economic reality of their time is understood to had led to a black theological praxis popularly referred to as 'Black theology'. Clay (2010:308) narrates that the motif and thrust of black theology is that it provides the cultural raw materials to understanding liberative theological praxis. For Cone (1969:10, 29 & 103), black theology is a liberation theology that was propounded to educate, fight and protest the oppression on the humanness of the black American race in a quest to teach liberate the oppressed and teach on equality in Christ as a Christian theology. Clay (2010:309) and Morris (2001:51) note that black theology is historically used to fight against white dominance, colonization and invasion of the oppressed space and right. Thus, the oppressed uses HHC to express their dissatisfaction, displeasure and disagreement in the society.

⁶⁰The spoken words (lyrics) can be offensive or constructive, depending on the audience's interest. The spoken words can be vulgar or immoral in content, or can communicate values and stories that can be constructive to those immersed or touched by the culture.

expressions and opinions. More so, in 1988, there was a movement in Los Angeles, USA called Straight Outta Compton⁶¹.

However, hip hop is a phenomenon that goes beyond music (Kobin and Tyson, 2006:344; Motley and Henderson, 2008:243; Osumare, 2001:171). Kobin and Tyson (2006:344) posit that HHC is a phenomenon that embodies an entire way of life for those immersed in it. Price (2006:17) agrees and adds that HHC is a phenomenon that has “ignited conversation around the development of new cultural aesthetic and renewal approaches to the formation and expression of artistic endeavours as a culture”. HHC is a cultural way of life (lifestyle) that is developing an enticing aesthetic; aesthetic in the sense of appreciation of something beautiful and an art with pleasing appearance (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2009:21); renewal approaches in the sense that HHC is an ever-evolving and dynamic lifestyle that is a phenomenon. That is, it is a culture that is renewable and not traditionally static. This conceptualisation of HHC as a phenomenon that is ever-evolving and a dynamic lifestyle depicts the descriptive nature of HHC (descriptive-empirical). Furthermore, this research study explores what is happening in HHC as a phenomenon.

In exploring what is happening in HHC, it is clear that HHC has grown from a culture that started in the North-Eastern USA as culturally diverse male street activities and has developed into a global and universal community for all ages, genders, religions, economic classes, and races. Price (2006:1) adds that HHC has grown and become conceptualised from a local phenomenon that addresses the needs and challenges of black, poor, marginalised, inner-city youth into an international, multi-billion dollar institution and way of life among people of all races, changing the genres of music and global entertainment industries. Equally important is the fact that the emergence of HHC as a global phenomenon is due to the variable of the global information age, which creates a capacity for a limitless space of influence (Kitwana, 2005: xii). I agree with Price and Kitwana that HHC is a global phenomenon that is influencing the behavioural patterns of people – not only the youth. However, as argued by Shonekan (2010:8) and Osundare (2005:70) from the Nigerian

⁶¹ Straight Outta Compton was a rap group labelled as Niggers With Attitude (N.W.A) with a debut album in 1988. These movement produced a movie in 2015 and has produce hip hop artist of all time. Artist such as Ice Cube, Dr Dre and Eazy-E (Hayes, D. 2017. <https://www.quora.com/What-does-Straight-Outta-Compton-mean-How-did-the-movie-get-its-title>). Accessed: June 12, 2018.

paradigm, HHC is prevalent in Nigerian society, but as a culture that is predominant among the youth.

There are many conceptualisations of hip hop. HHC is understood as music produced and released within a specific genre by music artists called hip hop artists (Perry, 2004:202; Terkourafi, 2010:333; Vito, 2015:396). Although hip hop music is an integral part of hip hop culture, this culture extends further than the music. Kelley (1994:52) argues that HHC is conceptualised as a way of life through which the youth share their experiences, grievances and dreams. Vito (2015:397) concurs that HHC is an outlet of expression.

In this study, HHC is conceptualised as an outlet of expression through which the youth show behaviours, lifestyle patterns, slang and styles of which the identity is a departure from that of their parents and the dominant traditional culture in their society. HHC is also conceptualised as a culture that informs how the youth see themselves, or their sense of self-understanding and dignity that serves to construct their way of life.

Grenz (2000:304) says culture is a social construct that describes beliefs, ideal systems, values, customs, rituals, behaviours and a way of life. That is, culture comprises of the things that people have, the things people do and why they do what they do the way they do. Culture is a social construct that expresses itself through people's ideology and behaviour. As a social construct, it means that it can be learned and unlearned.

Perry (2004:10, 12) and Kobin and Tyson (2006:344) argue that HHC is a cultural and global phenomenon. Commenting on how HHC became a global phenomenon, Kitwana (2005:xii) submits that "the emergence of hip hop culture in a global information age is a major variable that sets it apart, vastly increasing its capacity to reach beyond anything the world has ever seen". In the annals of HHC, the information age that disseminates information to different locations in the world, has made information about hip hop youth culture readily available and has increased the interest of the youth in this culture. Although, at some point in history, the narration was that hip hop music and culture were a globalised cultural form of a radical black American way of life, current trends in hip hop scholarship emphasise the multiracial origin and practice of hip hop with an immense contribution by people from the Caribbean, whites, Latinos and other groups of people in the world; it would be naive to argue that hip hop is a black American style.

HHC is a medium and platform for expression (Grenz, 2000:304; Kobin and Tyson, 2006:344). At its inception, HHC was centred on the expression of opinions and experiences through communication of a message. The lyrical content of many early rap groups concentrated on social issues in society and discussion of the realities of life. Hip hop has been a platform that gives people an opportunity to voice and express themselves on issues of concern in their own words.

From the forgoing discussion, I understand HHC as a system of beliefs and ideals that are expressed in behaviours and lifestyle that is shared among the youth as social actors. HHC as a system of beliefs and ideals connotes that it is a culture that is informed by certain beliefs, worldviews and systems of ideals, such as values, reasoning, and perception of society and interests of concern. HHC is primarily an ideology before it is practised. Thus, youth ministry engaging with HHC will need to begin by engaging with the ideology and worldview of the HHC. It will be critical for youth ministry to ask the question, what is happening in HHC and why is this happening? To find answers to these questions, youth ministry will need to engage with the youth cognitively in order to fathom youth ideologies that inform their behaviour and way of life. To understand why these things are happening, it is imperative to understand their ideologies and worldviews from the perspective of the youth.

HHC as a behavioural way of life implies that the ideology and worldviews are translated into certain behaviour and manners of responding to concerns of interest in the community. These behavioural ways of life express themselves in visible and tangible patterns, such as the genre of preferred music (hip hop music), stylisation of fashion, slanguage and expressions. These expressions answer the question of what is happening in HHC and point to the reality of what is happening in HHC.

Youth ministry can understand the realities in HHC by studying observable behavioural patterns as expressed by the youth in an empirical engagement that requests to know what is happening (descriptive-empirical task) among the youth and how the things are happening (interpretive task). Beyond the observatory roles of the youth ministry, engaging with the youth and listening to their stories in their own words will further help youth ministry to understand what is happening in HHC and why it is happening. The reason for arguing that youth ministry should understand the HHC before engaging the youth on HHC is because

youth ministry academics, administrators and pastors and the youth's behavioural lifestyle may posit two different cultures as discussed in section 3.2.1.

3.3.1 Formation of hip hop culture

HHC is a lifestyle (like other youth cultures as discussed under youth culture above) that is formed through different causes and essences (Kitwana, 2005: xii; Kobin and Tyson, 2006:345). Discussing the influences contributing to the creation of HHC, Kobin and Tyson (2006:345) propound that: (a) the lyrics in hip hop music are messages that influence the lifestyle. Whoever writes hip hop lyrics in a song conveys messages that inform hip hop youth culture. These messages, which convey expressions of the artist's opinion on issues (religious, political and social), are translated into lifestyle; (b) Themes in the songs are transferred into learned behaviour and lifestyle. The songs in the music are words that exemplify a particular lifestyle or way of thought; (c) It is a source of entertainment. The entertainment industry was a co-creator of hip hop culture; (d) The hip hop artists are icons (Kobin and Tyson, 2006:348), icons whose lifestyle way of life are emulated by their fans because some fans esteem them as heroic, 'super-human'.

The artists are iconic figures whose lifestyles are emulated as the ideal way of life. In a related suggestion, Kitwana (2005: xii) notes that HHC is formed by the youth's quest for a distinctive form of identity. The musical genre of hip hop offers the youth a distinctive identity that can be personal and a group identity.

I agree with Kobin and Tyson, and Kitwana and express their points of view from another angle, namely the Nigerian point of reasoning:

- (a) The lyrics of the hip hop music genre are translated as messages that inform a patterned and practiced way of life. Thus, a hip hop artist who composes lyrics, is a social actor who is able to contribute to youth culture.
- (b) The fact that a hip hop music artist could be a creator of hip hop culture is an invitation for ECWA youth to be active participants in hip hop music. It could offer them the platform to share their Christian life stories and Christian faith through hip hop lyrics. ECWA youth can be co-creators of hip hop culture by exporting their theological reflections in hip hop lyrics.

- (c) The formation of hip hop culture is a learned behaviour. Nigerian youth learn the youth culture as promoted in the Nigerian and global entertainment industry, especially Nollywood and Hollywood.
- (d) Hip hop culture is a lifestyle. It is an expressive lifestyle that can be practised and lived.
- (e) Hip hop culture is the commonality of shared behaviour, ideology, experience, custom, language and perceptions constructed through messages from hip hop music.
- (f) As argued by Poyntz (2012:111) on youth culture, hip hop culture is a commonality of shared behaviour that impacts their lived lives and informs their imagined lives, values and experiences.

The youth learn the lifestyle of the iconic hip hop artists and emulate this within their own space of influence in the community. Nigerian youth learn and appropriate different behaviours that are projected by Nollywood (Omoera, Edemode and Aihevba, 2017:350-351; Ekwuazi, 2008:190; 2011:16; Onuzulike, 2007:231; and Onuzulike, 2014:285). For example, Omoera et al. (2017:350-351), writing on the impact of Nigerian Nollywood films on behaviours, posits that it influences behaviours both negatively and positively.

In terms of negative behaviours, it projects unwholesome and violent behaviour like killing, using abusive words, fraternity of cultism and gangs. In terms of positive behaviours, it creates character building narratives, a medium of good entertainment, and cultural transmission of respect and wealth creation. HHC is a learned behaviour that is informed by the Nigerian Nollywood industry. A professor at the University of Ibadan who is renowned for his research on Media Art (broadcasting and film), Hyginus O Ekwuazi (2008:190), conducted an empirical study among 103 Nigerian urban youth at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria (Ibadan is a cosmopolitan city in the Western region of Nigeria). He discovered that the Nollywood movie industry creates a developmental programme that impacts behaviour and attitudes in Nigeria, other African countries and other countries and continents where Nollywood is aired.

Hip hop culture is so influential among the youth as a result of the prevailing interest of the youth in hip hop music. The youth identify with more than the music, they identify with the culture that is informed by the music (Kitwana, 2005: xii). To emphasise the influence of hip hop music in creating and promoting HHC, Androustopoulos and Scholz (2003:464)

narrate from a European context that HHC, which evolved in the USA and spread to Europe in the early to mid-1980s, became a popular way of life among the youth owing to the hip hop music genre. That is, the successful impact of the hip hop artists and graffiti art, opened the way for HHC to become a national phenomenon in five European countries: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Greece (Androutsopoulos and Scholz, 2003:463, 464). Likewise, in Africa, HHC is mostly created, spread and vastly emulated through the genre of hip hop music, which is a lucrative source of income (Kitwana, 2005: xii).

3.3.2 Hip hop culture glocalisation – Nigeria

HHC is a global phenomenon, but glocalised in different contexts of society (Inyabri, 2016:89; Inyabri, 2013:1; Adedeji, 2013:1). This glocalisation of HHC entails that its elements permeate different societies with a certain uniqueness that may not be commonly experienced in other societies. ‘Glocalisation’ is a concept that depicts how HHC, although global influence, can take on different patterns and influences in different local social contexts. This means that HHC is a global phenomenon that is contextualised in different localities.

Inyabri (2016:89) argues that HHC glocalisation in Nigeria is in the form of music beats and rhythms called Afro hip hop. Afro hip hop is a rebranded genre of HH music with Africanised beats mixed with the global beats and rhythms of globalised HH music. HHC also glocalises in Nigeria in the form of linguistic manipulation (Inyabri, 2016:90). The Nigerian HHC has created different linguistic languages in the form of slanguage that is unique to the Nigerian society. Such slanguage is created and spoken with some elements of Nigerian pidgin language. For example, a Nigerian hip hop artist called Kcee⁶² sang a song titled, Limpopo. The chorus of the song is;

“Baby make we go Limpopo,
Oya limpopo,
Baby make we go Limpopo,
Cos you know the koko,

⁶² Kcee is the stage name of a Nigerian hip hop artist called Kingsley Chinweike Okonkwo. He became famous in Nigeria after he won the Star Quest reality show in 2011 after which his music career became known and celebrated among the youth in Nigeria. The lyrics can be accessed at <https://www.musixmatch.com/lyrics/K-Cee-3/Limpopo>.

So make we go Limpopo,
Oh yeah, tonight, oh tonight”

Limpopo in Nigerian slanguage as created by Kcee means having fun. It is a word that is used when a man wants to have fun (fun in this sense implies sex) with a woman. However, the word Limpopo, to my knowledge, is the name of a province in South Africa. This means that the word Limpopo has different meanings for a Nigerian HH audience and a South African. Thus, HHC glocalises in different contexts by creating slanguage that is uniquely used in that particular context.

Moreover, glocalisation is achieved through music, film, arts, community, music companies, internet, print media, musicians, music magazines, slanguage, TV and radio shows, night clubs and music stores (Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone, 2016:116; Condry, 2001:374; Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245). Adedeji (2013:1) argues that HHC is the fastest growing youth-driven culture in Nigeria. Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016:116) argue that Nigerian HH contemporary music is creating and playing a pivotal intercontinental role in defining and re-shaping the global music scene.

Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016:116), arguing from the Nigerian paradigm, expound that HH music is geared towards creating and circulating a cultural way of life that defines entertainment activities that promote socio-cultural dimensions. Most music performances in Africa surpass the frontiers of mere entertainment activity, but are geared towards socio-cultural dimensions due to music’s ability to socialise, and consolidate values and other utilitarian exigencies. Recently younger generations of Africa seem to not have much enthusiasm for their cultural values due to undue foreign influences. Nigerian contemporary pop music is playing an increasingly pivotal role in shaping the continent’s music scene.

The hip hop influence in cosmopolitan cities is not the same as in rural areas. In cosmopolitan cities, hip hop is embedded in the way of life of the youth, and in less tension with traditional African culture. In rural areas, the HHC has to do more with music than a way of life, and is sometimes in tension with the traditional African culture that dominates the rural areas.

In the Nigerian context, HHC is penetrating the fibre of Nigerian society and influencing the youth’s lifestyle, behaviour and values. Because Nigerian youth are active participants in HHC, the influence of hip hop culture is evident in youth identity, fashion, slanguage and

relationships (fraternity) and the quest for right and wrong (Akpan, 2006:95; Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470; Shonekan, 2010:1). The active participation of urban youth in Nigeria is a clarion call for attempting to understand their learned behaviour patterns and lifestyle in response to HHC.

In Nigeria, hip hop music is a great source of income for the Nigerian youth (Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone, 2016:116; Okafor, 2005:14). Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016:118) posit that HH music in Nigeria has evolved into a multi-business music industry. This music is creating employment and empowering Nigerian youth with untold wealth.

3.4 Elements of HHC

There are different elements of HHC, including graffiti art, rap music and deejaying. These elements are discussed below.

3.4.1 Graffiti art

Graffiti art is one of the elements of hip hop that is used as a platform for innovativeness in creating art. Motley and Henderson (2008:245) argue that graffiti is an element of HHC expressed through visual art. Through the medium of visual art, HHC has often been credited with helping to reduce inner-city gang violence by replacing physical violence with dance and artwork battles between youth of different locations.

The relationship between graffiti and HHC arises from the appearance of new and increasingly elaborate and pervasive forms of the practice in areas where other elements of hip hop are evolving as art forms, with a noticeable overlap between those who create graffiti and those who practise other elements of the culture. Adedeji (2013:1) elucidates that graffiti is a street art where the youth in Nigeria express their creativity. The youth express the art of graffiti by writing and creating images on walls, house fences and stadiums.

3.4.2 Rap music

Malone and Martinez (2015:1) argue that music communicates with people across cultural and linguistic barriers using different genres as its informative, networking and engaging platforms for expressions. Katz (2012:4) posits that rap music rose to prominence in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The prominence of rap music overshadowed the element of DJs that

preceded it. Rap music is a popular and trending genre of music, and a global phenomenon. The popularity of this genre of music is both global and glocalised in Africa (Butler, 2004:986; Perullo, 2005:97; Terkourafi, 2010:333; Vito, 2015:396).

According to Perullo (2005:97), rap music is a popular genre of music in Africa, as this genre of music has entrusted the youth with the platform to express themselves as social actors, create their own identities, and provide popularly famous role models and knowledge holders; a guaranteed platform to speak on political, economic and social issues, and gain employment as hip hop rappers (artists), which has lifted the youth from poverty to wealth (Androutsopoulos and Scholz, 2003:466; Butler, 2004:992; Perullo, 2005:76, 97).

In expressing themselves as social actors, rappers express their experiences and personal struggles, including excitement and frustration over social, political and economic realities in society. Besides expressing their own opinions through rap music and poetic lyrical content, the youth can express the opinions of their peers and friends. Rap music can also aid the youth to cultivate and promote their own cultural and socio-economic realities, and generational group identities.

Perry (2004:13) argues that its musical sound is what makes hip hop music compelling. The sound, mixed with the technological⁶³ advancement that produces sounds already deemed aesthetically pleasing, makes it easier to understand the youth's perspectives through the music of interest. The music they choose, reveals and could influence their theology.

However, as argued by Malone and Martinez (2015:1), music genres can also create platforms that address protest movements, power struggles, political thuggery, and vices in society. For example, in Nigeria, one Nigerian youth, Falz, recorded an HH music video entitled "This is Nigeria". He glocalised his own Nigeria version of the globally trending "This Is America" by Donald Glover (aka Childish Gambino). Falz⁶⁴, in his glocalised Nigerian version, lists the vices in the Nigerian society ranging from extreme poverty, dilapidated medical facilities, corrupt institutions in the nation, Fulani herdsmen killing people (without arrest by the government of the day led by Fulani President Mohammed

⁶³ Perry (2004:13) notes that technology is used to provide sound processing, sampling, drum machines, and the panoply of studio apparatus in order to make hip hop music more appealing to its audience.

⁶⁴ Falz's full name is Folarin Falana. Falz is his stage name. He is the son of a renowned lawyer who uses his profession as an activist lawyer to address the vices in Nigeria. His son, Falz, also a social actor, chose the HH music genre to address the vices in the nation. These depict two different platforms for the same goal of airing, addressing and expressing opinions about the state of the nation.

Buhari), clergy's immoral acts (by putting their hands on women's breasts), and the irresponsibility of religious leaders and government in responding to these vices. In his song⁶⁵:

“[Intro]

They're extremely poor

And the medical facilities are poor

We operate a predictor neo-colonial capitalist system

Which is founded on fraud and exploitation

And therefore, you are bound to have corrupt institutionalists

Many criminal cases are settled in police stations, albeit illegal

[Hook]

Eh eh eh eh eh eh eh eh ewo oh

Eh eh eh eh eh eh eh eh ewo oh

Eh eh eh eh eh eh eh eh ewo oh

[Chorus]

This is Nigeria

Look how am living nah

Look how am living nah

Everybody be criminal

This is Nigeria

Look how we' living nah

Look what we' eating nah

Everybody be criminal

[Verse 1]

This is Nigeria

Just because am on tv nah

Person wey no get work is checking

To see if my watch is original

This is Nigeria

⁶⁵ Lyrics from a website called Genius (Source: <https://genius.com/Falz-this-is-nigeria-lyrics>).

Where that madam philomena?
Money vanish for your office
36 milli, you talk say na animal
This is Nigeria
Never ending recession oh
Where looters and killers and stealers are still
Contesting election oh
Politician wey thief some billion and billion
He no dey go prison oh
Uh, police station dey close by 6 security reason oh
[baba] my brothers and sisters, [e se o baba] I want you to put
Your hands up right now [e se o baba] because your miracle
Is coming this week [a wa dupe baba]
If you believe me, let me hear you say amen

[Verse 2]

Ahn, this is Nigeria, praise and worship, we' singing out
Pastor put his hand on the breast of his member,
He's pulling the demon out
This is Nigeria [yea]
No electricity daily oh [eh]
Young people are still working multiple jobs
And they talk say we lazy oh
This is Nigeria [eh]
There's plenty wahala sha
Fulani herdsmen still dey slaughter
Carry people dey massacre
This is Nigeria
Bombs in my area this is democracy
Political hysteria
Yahoo yahoo don tear everywhere now
And we act like it's so cool
Casting the p and being castigated just for trying to be noble
This is Nigeria, look at my nation ooh
Sarz stop me for road, any explanation,
You go talk am for station oh
Sir, look sir, am just a student
Am a student of the university of Lagos

We're just coming from the club, okay
[eh eh eh eh eh eh eh eh ewo oh]
So my friend and I, we', no, sir, I have my id to prove
[eh eh eh eh eh eh eh eh ewo oh]

[Chorus]
This is Nigeria
Look how am living nah
Look how am living nah
Everybody be criminal
This is Nigeria
Look how we' living nah
Look what we' eating nah
Everybody be criminal

[Verse 3]
"This is break in transmission of ehm, sansmission e
Transmission"
What happen everyday is that, the system must allowed it
For instance, there's no law that allows you
To take money from the church, invest in business
And privatize it – no
It is only in Nigeria where you can take money from the church
Money contributed by poor congregation member [public fund]
You go and setup a university that the members cannot attend
Cannot send their children to
It's against the rule of eh the law of God
It's against our constitution"

In this song, Falz addresses political unrest where looters and killers are still contesting elections, churches are aiding corruption in government, and churches are using church funds to build schools and higher institutions of learning that the church members cannot afford to attend. Falz also laments the lack of electricity in the nation, the plight of the poor, power struggles in governance, the unaddressed injustice in society and the failure of government to the youth in regard to unemployment and better living, despite the Nigerian youth chasing and working multiple jobs.

3.4.3 Deejaying

Deejaying was invented in the 1940s. Katz (2012:4) describes deejaying as an element of HHC that consists of playing phonograph records on the air. DJs are people who play recordings for an audience. DJs metamorphosed from phonograph records into a global phenomenon with the invention of the turntablism controller.⁶⁶ The invention of turntablism led to the development of CD turntables and, later, software/hardware programmes such as Final Scratch and Serato Scratch⁶⁷ (Katz, 2012:214, 229). The sight and sound of DJs mixing and scratching are familiar as a global and glocalised phenomenon among adherents of HHC. Although hip hop rap has become the face of HHC, the DJ has proven to be the genesis and backbone of HHC. Katz (2012:5) notes that DJs, with the aid of the turntable instruments, are notable for creating the sound known as hip hop music.

CD turntables were the analogue development, while software/hardware technological developments in the late 1990s and early 2000s became the digital technology that globally promoted deejaying (Katz, 2012:214). The development of this turntablism technology of Final Scratch and Serato Scratch software/hardware has led to the enormous popularisation of deejaying as a hip hop element.

3.5 Cultural Outlets of Hip Hop Culture

3.5.1 Language

Grenz (2000:305) submits that language as espoused by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)⁶⁸ is both culturally determined and culture-building. Language as culturally determined connotes that language is a natural phenomenon that develops in accordance with fixed and discoverable laws. That is, language is a means of communication that is passed from one generation to the next within a community. An example of this concept is how language is communicated in some culturally primitive African communities. In such

⁶⁶ Turntablism controller (otherwise known as turntables) emerged in the 1980s, when DJs became instrumentalists. A turntable is a controller that enables the DJ to create entirely new sounds from existing songs recorded on vinyl (Katz, 2012:4). The turntable is a playback device and also a device used to manipulate sounds to give a desired effect. These sound effects transform DJs into musical artists who produce their own sound with the aid of a turntable as a musical instrument (Katz, 2012:16).

⁶⁷ Final Scratch and Serato Scratch are software/hardware systems that afford DJs the flexibility to store and play recorded digital musical sounds on their laptops. The DJs play the music from their laptops using these software/hardware systems on a turntable as the controller.

⁶⁸ The concept of language as both a social and a natural phenomenon was propounded by Ferdinand de Saussure and is extensively discussed by David Holdcroft (1991:7-8).

communities, the language of the people is their dialect into which they were born. It is the natural dialect.

On the other hand, language as culture building entails that language is a social phenomenon that develops according to the cultural tools of people. The understanding of language as both a natural and social phenomenon connotes that a linguistic system that creates language in a community is a product of social convention, and the people are the social actors of that social convention. So the interaction of the people in the community develops their language. This means that language is the shared experienced of the people. For example, with regard to HHC, although some elements of the language are passed from one generation to the next, each generation creates its own language, by themselves and for themselves.

Language is both a natural and social phenomenon. Language as a natural phenomenon among the youth means that the language is inherited from parents and communities in the form of conventionally spoken English, Nigerian spoken dialects or tribal dialects. However, language as a social phenomenon means that the youth create their own cultural language from their interaction with global connectivity or within their own glocalised community; this is called *slang* or *slanguage* (Adedeji, 2013:1).

3.5.2 Slanguage

Slanguage comes from a root word, slang. In the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles (2007b:2963), slang is conceptualised as an informal or sub-standard level of language that is frequently spoken by a social group. Although slangs evolved to be known as slanguage – as an informal language of communication – it is not a sub-standard level of language because the community where it is created, informs its standard.

Slanguage implies a dimension of communication in which a third party who is ignorant of the terms, words and codes of the language will not be able to understand the communicated language. Slanguage also involves giving a conventional word a different meaning from its known norm, that is, using a word or phrase differently from its original meaning, as in the previous example of the word Limpopo. Slanguage is predominantly common among people of shared interest. Slanguage can also be a made-up language or word by an individual that no one understands except him or her or those to whom it has been explained.

The study of slanguages is called Slinguistics. Attempts have been made to inculcate this study in Western education for the global world to study and interact with.

Some examples of Nigerian slanguage spoken among the youth, are:

- IJN = in Jesus name
- Bad guy = someone exceptionally good at what they do
- Gbedu = party, disco
- Flushing of pregnancy = abortion
- Insert your sim card = have sex
- Hail God = praise God
- Fist in the air = acceptance, approval or appreciation
- Chokes, dub = stealing/cheating in examination
- Toasting = asking a woman out
- Forming mugu = a fool
- JJC (Jonny just come) = newcomer
- What's up? = how are you doing?
- Hit me = explain
- Let's word = let us talk
- Jazzed = bewitched with evil
- Pimp the ride = make a car look more appealing

3.5.3 Fashion

Motley and Henderson (2008:243) argue that HHC has greatly impacted fashion stylisation, beauty industries and accessories worldwide. It has influenced dressing styles as hip hop clothing, thus informing the perception of the persons in the community; it informs how they dress in sagging pants, oversized tee-shirts, caps and band brands, and sexually arousing dress (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243; Perullo, 2005:78). Motley and Henderson (2008:243) and Perullo (2005:78) provide a few examples, and I add oversized pants, boob tubes, baseball caps, soccer fan clothes, sexy wedding dresses, *droppy* and rap artist bling dress, which are all leading fashion styles among the youth.

3.6 Theological Challenges of Hip Hop Culture

This section investigates the influence (challenges and opportunities) of HHC on the youth with regard to the influence on their ideology and way of life as expressed in behavioural

patterns. Discovering the challenges and opportunities of HHC enables the investigation of one of the research aims and objectives of this research study, which seeks to understand the impact of HHC on the youth. The behavioural patterns of the youth, as investigated under challenges and opportunities, depict the impact of HHC with regards to their behaviour, ideologies and human dignity.

With regard to challenges, the HHC poses challenges such as gangsterism among the youth (Butler, 2004:992; Price, 2006:8, 21). Gangsterism is a racket among the youth that gets them involved in acts reminiscent of crime, particularly organised crime. Price (2006:18) adds that HHC creates the challenge of male-dominant gangsterism – gangsterism that gives dominant empowerment to men. Men dictate the content and messages that HHC disseminates within the community. It becomes a fraternity in which male patriarchy is dominant, as men take custody of the HHC's way of life.

With regard to creating identity, Kitwana (2005: xii) argues that the youth create their own identity in HHC as informed by hip hop music lyrics. Hip hop music lyrics convey words, messages and behavioural patterns that can be observed and imitated. The artists of hip hop music depict certain behaviours, attitudes and values through their music that create or promote a creative way of life through the genre of hip hop music. The message, behaviour, dress, posture and content of the lyrics create a way of life that can be observed and imitated.

This identity formation can either be constructive or destructive for the behaviour of the imitator. This imitation of identity can influence the youth to participate in illegal conduct and crime in a quest to be respected or to create an observed identity in HHC. From an African perspective, Perullo (2005:77) submits that HHC promotes a hooligan identity among the youth because they observe and imitate whatever identity is promoted in HHC. The nature of this hooliganism has led to a perceived notion among older adults that the identity formation of the youth is destructive, violent and hostile (Perullo, 2005:76). Perullo (2005:76) notes that, in Tanzania, youth who associate with HHC are regarded as *wahuni* (hooligans). This quest of identification occurs within and outside the faith community. It is human to search for identification. This human quest for identification can be understood

using the social identity theory⁶⁹. Social identity theory describes a sense of belonging that can create hooligan identity.

This hooligan identity is such that lifestyle parents even forbid their children from associating with hip hop music and the HHC. Since children who associate with HHC are regarded as *wahuni*, parents do not like to be known as parents of *wahumi*. The perceptions of HHC of people in society can be that it encourages “students to leave school, turn them into criminals, and make them forget their cultural traditions” (Perullo, 2005:76). In the Nigerian context, this perceived HHC hooligan identity accounts for the reason why Nigerian youth are perceived and treated as unproductive and irresponsible (Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470).

Hip hop culture can ignite a ‘foreign’ culture within traditional culture (Price, 2006:17), causing “cultural interpellation where Nigerian youth assume the identities of popular hip-hop stars”, leading to lack of productivity in the lives of Nigerian youth who are influenced by hip hop culture (Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470). Although I agree that certain phenomena in HHC can cause laziness in the youth, I will not ascribe the alleged laziness of Nigerian youth to the practice of HHC, as argued by Nigerian scholars Liadi and Omobowale (2011:470). However, I agree that HHC can be the cause of a cultural interpellation because it generates cultural conflict and interruption between the traditional and what Price (2006:17) calls foreign culture. HHC introduces a cultural way of life that could be regarded as strange within the African community, especially because HHC is an imported culture in a global space. Thus, certain elements of HHC, like the rap music genre and dress, could be foreign to the traditional African community.

Another perspective to understanding HHC as a challenge of cultural appellation is that HHC causes generational conflict. According to Androutsopoulos and Scholz (2003:465), generational conflict is the divided way of life that is often referred to as ‘old school’ and ‘new school’. European rap music artists are divided along these two poles, with each pole differing in focus. For example, Androutsopoulos and Scholz (2003:465) note that in Italy first generation rappers (‘old school’) had a militant stance that focused their lyrics on

⁶⁹ Richard Jenkins in his book, *Social Identity* (4th edition) (2014:6), argues that social identity theory is a process of social interaction that is crucial to existence as it confirms that no one is an island in him/herself. Intuitive in human being is the quest to co-exist in collective identity with other human beings (2014:6, 39, 104, and 134). He cites Karl Marx as saying, “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness” (2014: vii).

messages about political and social protest, but second generation rappers of the mid- and late-1990s were more commercially oriented, because they focused their messages on love and the everyday life of society.

Meanwhile, in Nigeria, the understanding of generational conflict refers to division between older adults and the youth. The African traditional way of life is the pole of the older adults, while the HHC way of life is the pole of the youth, despite HHC not necessarily being an age category. However, HHC posits a challenge for older adults in society and the youth. This challenge stems from their different ideologies and lifestyle. For instance, the older adults enjoy classical music like hymnal music, while the youth enjoy the hip hop genre. These differences cause generational tension in some churches, like ECWA. Another instance is that, in ECWA, some older adults teach the religious piety of dressing in skirts for women and trousers for men, while some youth support HHC, where both men and women can wear trousers.

HHC promotes sexual saturation in the community and society⁷⁰ (Akpan, 2006:95; Androutsopoulos and Scholz, 2003:464; Shonekan, 2010:9), with the direct effect of the dehumanisation of the image of women as mere sex objects for the sensual gratification of ‘men’ (Shonekan, 2010:9). One of the challenges of HHC is that it promotes sexism of male over female, which, ironically, is shared by the traditional African culture in the form of male dominance over females in the guise of a patriarchal way of life. This challenge of male dominance posed by the global HHC, influences the youth in terms of their self-image, dress, identity, the respect they receive and the way they are perceived in the society⁷¹ (Abraham, 2015:n.p.; Akpan, 2006:95; Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470; Price, 2006:1, 8; Shonekan, 2010:9).

Shonekan (2010:9) argues that in the Nigeria society male rappers use females as sex objects because the HHC is dominated by male rappers. This dominance manifests to such an extent that some male rappers use woman as sex objects by depicting explicit sexual content, and exposing their bodies for the gratification of men. Androutsopoulos and Scholz (2003:465),

⁷⁰ One of the trademarks of hip hop culture is the saturation of sexual messages in society. This saturation comes through hip hop music as a genre of music, and also in advertisements, movies, etc.

⁷¹ This implies that some people in society have little regard for hip hop youth culture because these challenges posed by HHC present the youth as irresponsible, unmannered and deserving of no respect. For example, some aspects of HHC, such as dress, portray the youth as irresponsible people whose dignity is dehumanised by their style and dress.

narrating from a European paradigm, also note the male dominance in hip hop music, hence this is also a European experience.

3.7 Theological Opportunities of Hip Hop Culture

The literature shows that hip hop culture provides opportunities to negotiate between tradition and modernity (Shonekan, 2010:4). The hip hop youth culture affords the youth an opportunity to define their own human dignity in consonance with current modernisation. The hip hop youth culture provides an opportunity to communicate powerful oratorical, didactic messages and expressions of frustration (Degbovie, 2005:307; Shonekan, 2010:5; Vito, 2015:397). Vito (2015:397) submits that HHC is conceptualised as an outlet of expression through which the youth show behaviour, patterns of lifestyle, slanguages and styles of which the identity is a departure from that of their parents and the dominant traditional culture in society.

This connotes that the youth can use HHC as a communicative means to express their frustrations with the problems and injustices within their society, or in the global world. It also supports the argument that, through hip hop music, HHC can be instrumental in conveying didactic messages that teach good morals and lessons about liberation from addiction or bondage.

Hip hop culture brings happiness (Shonekan, 2010:8). The youth derive happiness from doing what they like to do, and the HHC affords them opportunities to do so. However, what brings the youth happiness (hip hop culture), can cause anger and anxiety among their parents or other members of the society.

Hip hop culture also affords the youth the opportunity to reinvent their identities through stylisation (Alim, 2009:105), to fashion or create their own style of doing things. The youth can represent themselves in the way they want society to see and address them.

Furthermore, hip hop culture breeds fraternity of brotherhood and sisterhood (Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis and Pietrzak, 2002:896; Motley and Henderson, 2008:245; Saleeby, 1996:296), although this brotherhood and sisterhood could manifest in cultism or fraternity (which could become a possible problem). However, hip hop culture creates a culture of fraternity among its members (Saleeby, 1996:296). The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles (2007a:299) defines brotherhood as a collective member

of a fraternity or an association with related things in common for mutual and equal help. The SOED dictionary (2007a:299) also defines brotherhood as a community of Christian fellowship, where feelings are shared in unity with other members of the fellowship. fraternity thus connotes a community created by human beings for the purpose of offering support, mutual help and shared concerns of interest within the hip hop audience – male and female.

The hip hop culture offers the youth a community in which they experience mutual help and support for their concerns of interest. In other words, hip hop youth culture offers the youth a fraternity of communal support, mutual help and way of life (Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002:896; Saleeby, 1996:297). The youth who are members of this brotherhood do so for the benefit of the opportunities it potentially offers them. They are invited to experience communal support and mutual help that could influence their way of life. Mendoza-Denton et al. (2002:896) give an example of how hip hop lyrics create a communal way of life for its members. They argue that a song entitled ‘Jesus walks’, could be used to create a sense of fraternity community with youth and adults who have been incarcerated and marginalised, which could become a prophecy of self-sufficiency for them. Since youth culture is a way of life that is particular to the youth, hip hop youth culture offers the youth a way of life that gives them mutual help and communal support to pursue and achieve that lifestyle.

Moreover youth who share the same or similar identities or behaviour in terms of dress and slanguage relate to each other with a sense of solidarity (brotherhood and sisterhood). However, this sense of fraternity can become a fraternity of reckless behaviour and intimidation within society if the goals of the fraternity are not constructive for their human dignity.

Likewise, HHC promotes history and the presentation of the historiography of a race or cause (Degbovie, 2005:310). The hip hop culture can be used to tell and retell the stories and history of a society and culture in an attempt to preserve the historicity of that society and culture. Kobin and Tyson (2006:346) add that hip hop youth culture is a platform for culturally relevant self-expression. Youth culture is expressed through the HHC. The youth can be prophetic voices and advocates of justice and express themselves through the platform of hip hop youth culture as social actors. For example, male hip hop artists’ usage of the slanguage word ‘bitch’ refers to women who exchange sex for money. Female artists

using the same hip hop platform, express themselves differently. For female artists, the slang term 'bitch' refers to female control and power – power that depicts a feminine model of being in control, of not allowing oneself to be derogatorily controlled.

Hip hop culture is also a therapeutic treatment for patients who are mentally challenged. Kobin and Tyson (2006:343) and Tyson (2003:1) argue that hip hop lyrics can be used for therapeutic dialogue between client and therapist with a therapeutic approach called the client-centred goal (Kobin and Tyson, 2006:343). A client-centred goal is an ice-breaking therapeutic practice in which the therapist uses hip hop lyrics as a projective narration to establish relevance with the client by reciting the lyrics of hip hop songs.

This goal-centred therapeutic approach is used to get the client interested in the therapy and to deconstruct racial barriers and diffuse power dynamics between the therapist and the client (Kobin and Tyson, 2006:347; Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002:896). To deconstruct the barriers between the therapist and the client, the therapist engages the client in a responsive manner using the lyrics of the songs. The response of the clients breaks the barriers of superiority in a therapeutic session. The barriers of superiority are a major challenge in therapeutic sessions because, if the client senses superiority in the therapist, with the therapist being the solution-giver while the client is the one in need of the therapist, it could negatively affect the therapeutic session because the client can become subjective in response to the therapist.

HHC can also be used for hip hop therapy. Hip hop therapy is an approach used for group counselling, mostly among Hispanic and African American youth in treatment (Kobin and Tyson, 2006:345). Unlike the earlier discussion, which describes hip hop lyrics as a therapeutic approach for ice-breaking between client and therapist, Tyson (2002:131) reports that hip hop therapy is group counselling as a semi-structured method of treatment that involves hip hop music, which has been used to assist clients in urban settings. In the words of Kobin and Tyson (2006:345):

“Hip hop therapy includes cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) techniques and psycho-educational undertones. The therapist plays an active teaching role by: (a) introducing hip hop, (b) defining “negative” and “positive” hip hop, (c) playing a verse, (d) facilitating client interpretation of lyrical relevance to social realities, (e) validating client values, (f) helping client addressing goals, and (g) asking for feedback.”

Kobin and Tyson's arguments depict the responsibilities of the therapist when engaging the client in a hip hop therapeutic approach, but Tyson (2002:132) cautions that the therapist should be selective regarding the kinds of lyrics played during a therapeutic session, avoiding lyrics with perceived or real violence, and sexist, misogynistic lyrics with the potential to cause miscommunication between the client and the therapist. Thus, Tyson suggests that the hip hop lyrics for group counselling should be lyrics with a storyline that carries a message narrative of reality, socially conscious rap and stories of hip hop rappers whose lives are constructively influencing their community.

Alongside Tyson's caution, Mendoza-Denton et al. (2002:347) and Elligan (2004:65) admit that the limitation to this therapeutic approach is that it is mostly effective for therapists working in urban settings with clients from different ethnicities and cultural affiliations. It is an approach that is mostly relevant in urban settings. Engaging hip hop lyrics in this client-centred therapeutic approach, aids the building of a learned behaviour in the clients. This implies that it is not the therapist's subjective perception of the hip hop lyrics that is most important, but rather the personal response of the client. The client learns the behaviour of responding to the lyrics through the practice of the therapist. The therapist uses the lyrics to create an enabling environment for the client to learn behavioural patterns from the therapist.

3.8 Hip Hop Culture: Learned Behaviour

Hip hop culture as a subculture of youth culture is a learned behaviour. As discussed earlier in this chapter, youth culture is the commonality of shared behaviour, ideology, experiences, customs, slang, lifestyle (way of life) and perceptions that is constructed through different social processes (Cloete, 2012:2; Ogidi, 2015:28). Ivan Pavlov⁷² used an experiment with animal; a dog, to suggest a social process that has the potential to influence learned behaviour and way of life (experience) of human beings. Pavlov's submission was titled classical conditions.⁷³

⁷² Ivan Pavlov was a Russian who was born in 1849 as the son of a priest. He himself studied to be a priest but later changed to physiology, for which he won a Nobel Prize in 1904 on the physiology of digestion. At age 50 he began his study of the condition reflex (experiment on psychic reflex) which became his second career. He delivered three volumes of lectures throughout Russia. These volumes of his lectures were translated into English by different scholars (Hergenhann and Olson, 1997:161; Pavlov, 1928:3; Pavlov, 1927: ii; <https://www.biography.com/people/ivan-petrovich-pavlov-9435332>: Accessed: December 19 2017.

⁷³ The conditioned stimulus is created by learning, and therefore does not create a response without prior conditioning. It is the prior conditioning that conditions to create a response.

Classical conditioning (CC), otherwise known as Pavlovian conditioning as propounded by Ivan Pavlov, is a term used to describe learning and behaviour acquired through experience. Pavlov (1927:41) argues that responses occur as responses to stimuli. A stimulus creates CC that has the potential to inform responses in behaviour. CC is acquired learning and behaviour that conditions responses to certain stimuli or sounds (rhythms) that can become a lifestyle.

Pavlov (1927:399) experiments and notes that responses are conditioned reflexes that can be negative or positive. It is a learned process in which a neutral stimulus is paired with a stimulus that elicits a reflex or other response, until the neutral stimulus alone elicits a similar response through a learned experience (Hergenhann and Olson, 1997:169; Myers, 1986:258; Kagan and Segal, 1968:153; Beecroft, 1966:7).

3.8.1 The Pavlov experiment process⁷⁴

Pavlov paired various neutral stimuli with food in the mouth of a dog to see if the dog would begin salivating in response to the neutral stimulus alone. To eliminate the possible influence of extraneous stimuli, the dog was isolated in a small room, secured in a harness, and attached to a device that diverted its saliva to another instrument. From an adjacent room food was presented – at first by sliding in a bowl, later by blowing meat powder into the dog's mouth at a precise moment, and then by a particular tone (bell). After several pairings of food and the bell tone, the dog started salivating at the tone alone in anticipation of the meat powder. Using this procedure, Pavlov conditioned the dog to salivate to other stimuli, such as a buzzer, a light, a touch on the leg, even the sight of a circle.

The brain centres that are repeatedly active together form temporary connections, and the arousal of one, will cause the arousal of the others. Thus, if a tone is consistently presented to a dog just before it gets fed, the area of the brain aroused by the tone will form a temporary connection with the area of the brain that responds to food. When this connection is formed, the presentation of the tone will cause the animal to act as if food is present.

⁷⁴ McLeod (2014:1-4) and Pavlov (1927:41, 136-141).



Figure 3.1: A dog with a surgical implant that shows classical conditioning to a learned behaviour

Pavlov's CC helps scholars to diagnose behaviours of humans and animals like dogs,⁷⁵ to understand and boost productive behaviour and dissociate from unproductive behavioural patterns. CC is used extensively to diagnose behaviours, embed ideology and learn caution in humans – infants, children, and adults in marriages (O' Donohue and Kitchener, 1999:16, Pavlov, 1927:181). It is a form of learning that has helped scholars (from different disciplines) to understand and offer helpful knowledge and diagnoses in addressing human behaviour and responses to life. Pavlov (1966:126) adds that stimuli influence responses in human beings, noting that external stimulation has the potential to influence human beings to either negative or positive responses. Beecroft (1966:7) buttresses that Pavlovian conditioning is used to understand and explain the acquisition of behaviour because of the tendencies of stimulus and response.

Critiques of Pavlovian CC question how this theory applies to human beings since the experiment was conducted on a higher animal, a dog. Myers (1986:258), arguing for how stimuli influence responses in human beings, notes that if, after seeing and smelling freshly baked bread, a person eats some and finds it satisfying, the next experience of seeing and smelling freshly baked bread will lead the person to expect that eating some, will be satisfying. The simple reason is that the person has classically conditioned his/her mind that freshly baked bread is satisfying, thus the sight, smell and thought thereof has the tendency to produce salivating satisfaction even before eating the bread. In the words of Kagan and Segal (1968:153), "such a person has learned through classical conditioning to exhibit salivary reflex in response to the sight or thought of bread".

⁷⁵ O' Donohue and Kitchener (1999:276) argue that animal trainers "improve on anthropomorphic inference by developing models and procedures to improve the responses of animals". CC is used to create responses to certain stimuli in higher animals like dogs and human beings as argued by Pavlov (1928:214) and buttressed by Prokasy (1965:311).

Another validation of Pavlovian conditioning can be applicable to understanding human beings' behaviour in response to stimuli. Pavlov (1941:182) in one of his lectures on conditional reflexes (volume 2), propounds on how a sexual seducer is created in response to a stimulus. Human beings respond to sexual desires and sexual appetite if exposed to sexual arousal stimuli. This suggests the propensity of human beings to be classically conditioned to respond to a phenomenon due to stimulation. More so, it suggests that the surrounding environment can influence a human's behaviour and responses.

3.8.2 Components of classical conditioning (CC)⁷⁶

1. Unconditioned response/reflex: Salivating in the mouth in response to food is unlearned, thus it is an unconditioned response (UCR). An unconditioned response/reflex is anything that happens automatically without you having to think about it.
2. Conditioned response/reflex: Salivating in response to the bell tone was conditioned because it was learned, thus it is called a conditioned response (CR). Conditioned response/reflex is a response or reflex that can be evoked in response to a conditioned stimulus (a previously neutral stimulus).
3. Unconditioned stimulus/reflex: Food in the mouth of the dog unconditionally triggers a dog's salivary reflex, thus the food stimulus is called an unconditioned stimulus (UCS). An unconditioned stimulus is anything that can evoke a response without prior learning or conditioning. Pavlov (1941:182) gave an example that a sexual seducer can be created within the body if the body is stimulated with a sexual stimulus. Little wonder then that men can salivate for sex at the sight of a woman in her 'birthday suit' (naked or nude).
4. Conditioned stimulus: The previous neutral tone stimulus has triggered the conditioned salivation, thus called CS. The conditioned stimulus is created by learning, and therefore does not create a response without prior conditioning. For example, when Pavlov rang a bell and caused the dog to salivate, this was a conditioned stimulus because the dog learnt to associate the bell with food. If they had not learnt to associate the bell with food, they would not have salivated when the bell was rung.

⁷⁶ This component of CC is explained by Myers (1986:260); Pavlov (1927:396); Pavlov (1941:171).

3.8.3 Behavioural patterns associated with classical conditioning

1. Extinction: Extinction occurs when the conditioned stimulus is presented a number of times without the unconditioned stimulus. For example, if we ring a bell and cause a dog to salivate, we have a conditioned stimulus. However, if we keep ringing that bell without giving the dog any food (unconditioned stimulus), eventually the dog will disassociate (unlearn) the connection of the bell with food and will no longer salivate when the bell is rung. Therefore extinction has occurred because the bell no longer has any effect on the dog.
2. Stimulus generalisation: This occurs when a stimulus that is similar to a conditioned stimulus creates a conditioned reflex. For example, if we can make a dog salivate by ringing a bell (conditioned stimulus) and we can make a dog salivate by ringing a slightly different sounding bell, then we have demonstrated stimulus generalisation.
3. Discrimination: This occurs when a new stimulus is too different from the original conditioned stimulus to cause the effect we want (the conditioned reflex).

3.8.4 Classical conditioning and hip hop culture

In this section, I attempt to navigate the concept that HHC could be a stimulus that influences the behaviour of the youth. Such behaviour could be exemplified through the different elements of HHC. That is, youth responses to HHC could be because the HHC elements of graffiti, rap music and deejaying could be the stimuli that inform their behaviour as expressed through the cultural outlets of slang and fashion.

Engaging this enquiry of the element of HCC as stimulus that influences youth behaviour, I will use the practical theological methodology of Osmer's interpretive task to determine why the youth can be influenced by HHC as a learned behaviour, how the youth can be classically conditioned by HHC to behave in a certain way.

The interpretive task asks the question, why is this happening? Osmer (2008:83) argues that the interpretive task uses existing theories or literature and interdisciplinary literature to explain the 'whys' of a phenomenon and reality in society. Osmer (2008:98) adds that the interpretive task adopts sage wisdom. Sage wisdom refers to when a practical theologian gleans from interdisciplinary engagement by learning from existing scientific, biblical and

theological theories in literature. Engaging the interpretive task denotes that the researcher acquires pre-understanding of a phenomenon and context by learning how different researchers have undertaken research on the research subject. Osmer's interpretive task seeks to understand why a phenomenon is happening. HHC is the phenomenon in this enquiry. Thus, I seek to investigate HHC as a stimulus to youth response as expressed in their way of life.

Kelly (2006:162) argues that social learning theories, like Pavlov's classical conditioning theory, affect attitudes, behaviours and values in young people (sometimes from childhood). He argues that the attributes of attitudes, behaviours and values are learned through observance and imitation of others. Consistent observance and imitation of hip hop stars and musicians have the potential to classically condition the youth into behaving in a certain way.

A youth lifestyle can be universally shared or restricted to them alone as part of their culture (Honigmann, 1963:3). HHC can classically condition the youth into a particular lifestyle, that is, cultivate attitudes in the youth so that they behave in a way that is consistent with what they have learned. I agree with Kelly and Honigmann that culture, as a way of life, can be learned through observance and imitation within and outside the community.

At this point, I would like to propose that the youth as social actors could be equipped with aptitude to theologically discern the attitudes, behaviours and values that they observe and imitate from HHC. Moreover, the youth can also create a presence in HHC. The individual youth as a social actor can also produce a particular way of life that transforms HHC. Perullo (2005:77) argues from the experience of Tanzania that, in his country, marginalised youth use the platform of HHC to voice their concerns of interest and create their own way of life for the community to observe and imitate. HHC conditions youth for a particular lifestyle and also conditions them regarding how to be seen and known through HHC. HHC is the language of the unheard; the Tanzanian youth experience narrates that youth who are part of HHC are the "knowledge holders and educators within urban contexts" (Perullo, 2005:77).

The Tanzanian youth alter popular conceptions about them using HHC to condition the mind of the community to acknowledge the youth as responsible knowledge owners as opposed to the popular conception in the community that the youth are hooligans. The youth observe and imitate the HHC, and also create observable and imitable culture in HHC. Thus,

Kelly and I part ways on the ideology that observance and imitation in HHC is dependent on the youth. Although HHC has the propensity to classically condition the youth in a particular lifestyle, the youth's discernment is pivotal to their engagement with HHC.

HHC can cause cultural discrimination in the youth. Discrimination as expounded by Pavlov happens when a new stimulus is introduced to cause a new effect of conditioned reflex. That is, a new stimulus can cause a conditioned reflex different to an existing stimulus. The new stimulus of HHC could create in the youth a conditioned lifestyle with regard to language and fashion. In terms of the new stimulus of language, HHC creates a conditioned lifestyle called slanguage; in terms of the new stimulus of fashion, HHC creates a conditioned lifestyle such as oversized pants, boob tubes, baseball caps, soccer fan clothes, crop tops and sexy wedding dresses.

These conditioned lifestyle differ from the traditional African way of life. In the traditional African way of life, a spoken African language is handed over to every generation as a legacy from the older generation. In HHC, on the other hand, a slanguage evolves within each generation and the youth are the initiators and creators of such language. The youth determine the signs, symbols and meaning of such language.

HHC is a conditioned stimulus. According to Pavlov, a CS is created as a prior response to a conditioning. That is, the CS is created through a learning process. It is behaviour that is taught and learnt. HHC is a global phenomenon that is learnt and glocalised in different communities, teaching the HH music genre, graffiti art and practice of deejaying. Likewise, the HH cultural outlets of slanguage and fashion are learnt as prior conditioning before being practised and lived by the youth. The youth learn the elements of HHC and the cultural outlets of culture by observing them in celebrities, on social media and among their peers. After being learnt, they associate their behaviours with the elements of HHC and the cultural outlets of culture that they have learnt.

HHC is an unconditioned stimulus (UCS). According to Pavlov's definition of CC, UCS occurs without prior learning. A UCS is anything that can evoke a response without prior learning, thus a reflex action.

Unlike CS, where the youth learn some behaviours of HHC, some practices of the elements are not learnt. The youth are social actors who create their own stylisation of HHC. That is why, in as much as HHC is a global phenomenon of shared behaviour which affects their

lived life and informs their imagined life, values and experiences (Poyntz, 2012:111), it is also a glocalised phenomenon in which the youth create their own cultural outlets which may differ from the global HHC's cultural outlet.

3.9 Towards a Practical Theological Response to Hip Hop Culture

There have been various theological responses regarding culture. Renowned for his series of lectures on Christ and Culture that were turned into a classic work, Richard H Niebuhr proposed five paradigms of theological response to culture: (1) Christ against culture. This depicts the authority of Christ over culture and the rejection of culture as a worldly phenomenon separate from God's word (Niebuhr, 1951:45-48); (2) Christ of culture. Jesus lived within a cultural context and was hailed as a messiah within that context because he had fellowship with them, ate with them and was involved in their concerns of interest (ibid: 83); (3) Christ above culture. This viewpoint proposes that God is above and orders culture, thus humanity experiences the love and grace of God within their cultural context (ibid: 119-148); (4) Christ and culture paradox. This praxis depicts the tension of God's grace and sin, highlighting that there is sin in culture, thus wrestling with God's divine mercy to a sinner (ibid:149-157); (5) Christ transforms culture. This viewpoint proposes being a 'conversionist' who is hopeful of transforming humanity within the cultural context for the glory of God through involvement and by the help of the Holy Spirit (ibid: 191-196).

The aforementioned five viewpoints propounded by Niehuhr suggest that the faith community thinks differently in regard to engaging culture. Davaney (2001:3) opines that there are divergent and conflicting assumptions and comments in regard to culture, thus different theological responses in the faith community. Thus, there are opposing theological responses to culture. Grenz (2000:307) notes that some theological response opine that theologians should dissociate from cultural practices in the community, while others argue for a theological engagement with culture in the community. Theologians who opine for theological dissociation from culture, argue that engagement with culture carries the risk of elevating cultural practices above biblical and Christian teachings on Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry.

Grenz argues that the Christian engagement with culture therefore can cause Christianity to run the risk of "allowing contemporary thinking to sit in judgement over Christian teaching" (2000:307). Another concern according to Grenz is that, "sensitivity to culture does open

way to a drift into syncretism, as critics of liberalism repeatedly point out” (Grenz, 2000:307). The concern of such a theological disposition is that Christians who engage in the cultural practices in society, run the risk of compromising biblical injunctions on cultural practices. Another concern is the fear of extinction. Extinction, as discussed by Pavlov, explains how the dog in his experiment unlearned the association between the ringing of the bell and food and thus no longer salivated to the ringing of the bell. Extinction can happen in cultures when Christians unlearn their Christian practices and no longer respond to Christian practices as a result of their engagement with traditional cultural practices and HHC.

This concern exists in Nigeria. I have experienced the tension between Christian and cultural practices in society. For example, the premium of paying an exorbitant bride price is a cultural practice in some traditional societies in some Nigerian cultures, accounting for why some youth are not yet married. This is why Christian denominations like the ECWA propose lower bride prices to enable the youth to get married. Another tension is that HHC can influence contemporary thinking in the youth that negates the Christian life and Christian ministry. For example, hip hop rap music is one of the elements of HHC and some Christians fear that, when the youth like and associate with hip hop rap music, it will influence their behavioural patterns, like dressing in sagging clothes.

On the other hand, Grenz (2000:308) argues, and I concur, that within evangelical denominations some evangelical theologians have tended to the opposite extreme of those who dissociate from culture. The reason why they are extreme is that theology “involves the discovery of truth that is transcultural” (Grenz, 2000:308). Lewis and Demarest (1987:19) argue that theologians need to engage a little with culture so as not to be corrupted by the world, but without engagement, theologians cannot contribute to culture.

3.10 Impetus for Theological Discernment on Hip Hop Culture

To give theological discernment on HHC an impetus, I concur with the argument of Grenz, and Lewis and Demarest that theologians need to engage with culture, but add in agreement with Gonzales’s (1992:30) argument that theologians should be active creators of and participants in culture within their space of influence, for the following reasons: (1) The Christian life, Christian faith and Christian ministry are not devoid of culture. The narrative of Jesus’s life and ministry was within a Jewish culture. The Christian life and Christian faith revolve around Jesus’s engagement with people within his own Jewish culture. (2) The

doctrine of incarnation. John 1:4 reads: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” This biblical Scripture shares the message of the doctrine of incarnation. The message of incarnation depicted that Jesus (the Word) became flesh in a particular flesh and dwelled among His people, thus validating the argument that Jesus became incarnate and dwelled among His people. (3) Human beings are the creators and practitioners of culture. Culture as an ideology and practice is a human way of life. That is, human beings live within cultural realities- including the Church faith community.

Therefore, theologians should engage with the cultural realities in which God has positioned them and within their spheres of influence. In engaging with cultural realities, theologians should incarnate the biblical narrative in their contexts. Christ transforms culture. Niebuhr’s (1951:196) fifth viewpoint on Christ transforming culture suggests that the faith community should incarnate the biblical narrative of redemption within the culture in which they live. To transform culture, the faith community will need to transform the biblical narrative into tangible experience that the people who live in the culture, can identify with. For example, the mercies and grace of God are not abstract; when the faith community shows mercy to people in the society, the society will understand God’s mercy and grace. Jesus transformed culture by showing mercy to sinners who by law were to be persecuted, identified with sinners and dined with them, and met their human needs. With the faith community’s focus on Christian faith as exemplified in Jesus’s life, theological discernment will aid the members of the faith community to transform their cultural realities for the glory of God. Osmer (2008:98) expounds that the interpretive task of practical theological methodology connotes emulating Jesus as the wisdom of God revealed to human life.

In support of the need for theologians to engage with their culture, Davaney (2001:8) argues that religion plays a two-dimensional function in regard to culture. Religions are products of and contributors to the negotiations around cultural resources. The Christian religion is not merely a consumer of culture; it is also a producer of culture because people are part of the cultural milieu in the community. People produce culture in consonance with their Christian faith, their Christian life and their theology. Their theology influences their responses to the existing culture and sub-cultures in the community. Likewise, the culture in the community can influence the theological disposition of the people (Christians). The culture and theology mutually influence one another vis-à-vis the way of life of Christians in the community.

Davaney (2001:9) argues that Christian theologians have been sounding a call to attend to the concrete and particular forms of Christian life, practices and beliefs. The cultural practices in the community are the realities of individuals and Christians in the community. That is, Christians do not live in isolation of their cultural realities. Their cultural contexts influence their viewpoints about their theological dispositions on the realities of life. For example, in ECWA, the annual themes for youth ministry programmes are decided by the spiritual leaders (EE) and the youth are expected to implement the themes because, in our culture, the youth are expected to not question the decisions of the elderly. That cultural disposition is evident in the operations and organogram of the church.

This reality of cultural influence within the community calls for theological astuteness (Davaney, 2001:9; Grenz, 2000:307). Davaney (2001:9) argues that studying the realities of individuals and communities calls for a constructive perspective on the individuals and communities that requires critical examination and engagement. The engagement of Christians with culture in their community is crucial to their participation in and production of ideologies, values and a way of life within the community. Cady (1993:145) propounds two arguments for Christian theologians' engagement with culture in the community: Firstly, she submits that it has reconnected academic theology to concrete communities and traditions of belief and practice in creative, non-apologetic and non-condescending ways. Secondly, she submits that it has led to new ways of rethinking academic theology as it entails constructing theology in dialogue with the cultural realities of the people in the community.

Cady's submission supposes that theology is not just a normative discipline that is formulated in the seminary, but theology is also a constructive engagement with the immediate culture. Davaney (2001:10) says that, for theological validation within academia in modern research, theological research should be constructed within the researcher's own theological identity and location. This implies that it is pertinent to theology to engage with the cultural practices in the community (location). Christian youth should have theological content to navigate the cultural realities in their communities.

Brown, Davaney and Tanner (2001:5) add that culture as a way of life is a multitextual, dynamic and contentious process in which ideologies, attitudes and values that characterise the cultural way of life, produce meaning and a way of life that is negotiated by all participants and practitioners within a cultural milieu. Culture as a dynamic and evolving

way of life offers all participants within a cultural milieu the opportunity to contribute to its culture to varying degrees. The participants, irrespective of their discipline, are producers of culture. Thus, theological reflection on HHC can make theologians become creators and producers within a cultural milieu.

Theology should become consonant with the hip hop culture's realities of Christian youth in the community. Arguing for the essentiality of a theology that engages with the realities of Christians, Wood (1994:5) writes that significant theological content should be included in all Christians' basic education to equip them for the realities in their communities. Tickle (1997:126), in illustrating a reality in the community, arguably states that "more theology is conveyed in, and probably retained from, one hour of popular television than from all the sermons that are delivered on any given weekend in America's synagogues, churches, and mosques".

Tickle's statement is arguable because he could be stating the obvious, or exaggerating the reality of the concern. However, a basic theological education should equip Christians for reflection on their Christian life, Christian faith and witness, and how their Christian life and Christian faith resonate with their engagement with the realities of their communities – whether that reality in the community is popular television shows, as stated by Tickle, or the reality of entertainment through music, as argued by Kobin and Tyson (2006:353), or HHC as argued by Motley and Henderson (2008:243) and Kobin and Tyson (2006:344).

Grenz (2000:303) proposes that these realities in the community should challenge us to rethink the way "we engage in theological reflection and, in turn, how we engage theological education in an age of entertainment and the media". Grenz's (1994:5) insight suggests that theological equipping cannot be naïve or divorced from the people's realities and concerns. Wood adds that theological equipping for discernment should take cognisance of equipping that can guide and counsel the essence of this theological education, which is to equip people for an abundant measure of judgement as they engage with the realities in their communities. This suffices to argue that theological education is taught and formulated to improve theological judgement and discernment. Woods further says that theological judgement and discernment could inform sound imagination and courage in relation to how life is understood from God's perspective.

To have the impetus for theological judgement and discernment that understands life from God's perspective, Wood (1994:6) suggests the need for theological inquiry – theological

inquiry that raises questions about and investigates the concerns of the community. However, Wood (1994:6) argues that theological inquiry can be a complex inquiry for two reasons: (1) It involves several academic disciplines or families of disciplines. This complexity is exercised within the forum of theological academic discourse – academic discourse that invites disciplines other than theological into the discussion of a subject or concern. This invitation sometimes necessitates intradisciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches to a subject or concern. (2) It comprises disciplined reflection on the Christian life, Christian faith and Christian ministry.

This complexity is exercised within the forum of lay or ordinary theologians (as discussed in Chapter Two, lay or ordinary theologians are Christians without structured theological training) in which they reflect on their own understanding and experience of the Christian life, Christian faith and Christian ministry. This reflection is an invitation to reflect on how their theological understanding equips them for theological discernment as they navigate the different cultural dynamics in society.

However, despite the complexity of theological inquiry, Wood (1996:7) argues for theological inquiry that commences with what Martin Luther referred to as *Oratio*, *Meditatio* and *Tentatio* (OMT). In contrast, Lienhard (2003:505) argues for theological enquiry in the form of a process of theological discernment. Admittedly, theological inquiry could be a guiding approach for theological discernment, but to engage with it as a process, is more complex. The reason for this is that a process will entail precept upon precept in which one practice is dependent on the other practice, and culture (hip hop culture) is a lifestyle that cannot be determined by precept. Thus, I concur with Wood's argument that commences with what Martin Luther referred to as OMT. I concur because each practice can be dependent on and also independent of the other. For instance, prayer can be dependent on testing and likewise independent of testing. This argument is further expanded on below:

3.10.1 Oratio – Prayer

Oratio connotes prayer. Prayer refers to the moment of attentiveness, receptive listening – openness to God in order to understand a subject. Prayer is dialogue between God and human beings. It is a spiritual discipline that involves human beings dialoguing with God on a subject with the purpose of understanding the subject from God's normative

perspective. It means that, in prayer, the youth enter into dialogue with God about their interests of concern.

3.10.2 Meditatio – Meditation

Meditatio means meditation. Meditation is reflecting on the Word of God and the reality of life experiences in which a person poses questions and judgements are made. Meditation is twofold: (1) Reflection on life's concerns of interest and on experiences. Meditation is reflecting on a concern of interest with the purpose of reaching a theological judgement on the concern. (2) Meditation is a reflection on God's self-revelation. Briggs (2010:16) explains that God's self-revelation is revealed in the Word of God. The Word of God, according to Briggs, is documented in Scripture (Bible) and in God's revelations to individuals. It implies that the youth's meditation on the Word of God is cognisant of their experiences with HHC in order to reach theological discernment on their engagement with hip hop youth culture.

3.10.3 Tentatio – Testing

Tentatio refers to testing, to appropriating what is learnt in daily experiences making decisions. That is, making decisions on issues and phenomena premised on individual understanding and equipping. For example, tentatio as a moment of testing could refer to moments when the youth are confronted by the hip hop youth culture in regard to ideology and way of life, as expressed in behaviour, identity and dignity. Evidence of these expressions is in shared identity, slanguage, dressing, body language, worldview and sexuality. The youth need to make decisions on how to engage these expressions.

In other words, when the youth are tested with the challenges and opportunities of HHC, they are required to discern and make decisions in response (theological discernment). These decisions will be informed by the theological content with which they are equipped. The youth's theological discernment could be tested by the hip hop culture movement. If a hip hop artist promotes drugs, fashion, violence and explicit sex in the wording of a song, how should the youth respond? Their theological discernment will define how they respond.

I, further, argue that the church admonishes the Christian faith to go and preach the Gospel of Christ to all of creation. The church is supposed to fight against injustice and oppression in society. This links to a crusade of some HH music artists in society. HH music artists are

speaking out against the injustice in society by expressing their displeasure and disapproval of corruption and injustice in society, while the church (in Nigeria) is mute on those issues. Instead, the church has immersed itself in self-righteousness and religious practices that are void of caring for the concerns of the poor, the marginalised and the disadvantaged in society.

The Bible, in Jam. 1:27, speaks of the need for the Christian religion to engage in a way of life that takes care of and, by extension, speaks for the fatherless, widows and the afflicted in the world. The church ought to be the voice of the marginalised, fatherless (orphans), widows, and afflicted, whether they are afflicted and marginalised by government policies or economic hardship. Thus, HH music artists are fulfilling the prophetic mandate of speaking out against marginalisation and the human reality of dissatisfaction, while the church is taking the back seat in society.

HHC is doing the work of defending the defenceless that the church is commissioned to do. Chapter Two argued that the teaching of theological discernment is equipping the youth with Christian teachings on the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry that can guide their decision-making process about what is right and what is wrong as they interface with the interests of concern in society. These Christian teachings are modelled after Jesus's life, death and resurrection. In Jesus's teaching and life, he modelled care for the oppressed and marginalised, as depicted in the narrative of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (Luke 10:30-37), Jesus healing the man oppressed by the devil (Luke 5:1-13), Jesus feeding the hungry (Mark 14:13-21), and Jesus healing the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19).

Jesus's life was one lived in preaching to the poor and marginalised. Examples of other marginalised people to whom Jesus reached out are the immoral woman in Luke 7:36-50 and the meal with tax collectors and sinners (Luke 5:29-32). How about the youth ministry sharing the Gospel with HHC associates? Jesus's salvific life and message was to the poor and marginalised. Through Jesus's mission, the Gentiles, who were outcast, became co-heirs with the Jews (Gal. 3:26-29, Col. 3:11, Rom. 10:12). HH associates are expressing their frustration with culture to make their opinions heard in society, yet feel downtrodden and rejected and have been marginalised. The youth ministry can be the mission that identifies with HH associates who are experiencing rejection so that they can achieve redemption.

In Luke 2:10-14, Jesus narrates that the angel of God announced that reaching out to all people is the joy of the Gospel. To this, Luke 3:6 adds that the salvific message of Jesus is to all humanity, irrespective of their realities and behaviour. Jesus's life and ministry portrayed that, before God, all (humanity) are on equal ground and should be gracious to one another. Youth ministry should also reach out to the marginalised, who are oppressed and seeking platforms to express their opinions and experiences on their issues of concern – whether political, economic or sociological. The reason for this is that the aptitude for theological discernment stems from emulating the life and ministry of Jesus.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter conceptualises HHC by engaging with Osmer's descriptive-empirical and interpretive methodology tasks to investigate what is happening and why HHC is a phenomenon in the lifestyle of the youth.

Youth culture has evolved over different generations with different forms of identity. It has evolved through the beatnik generation, the beat generation, and HHC. The beatnik generation took to street-wise behaviour and HH to rap music to express their experiences of and displeasure with the realities in society. The beat generation took to HH rap music, writing literature, academia and the media to express their experiences of and dissatisfaction with materialism and corruption in society. HHC is a combination of both behavioural patterns. The youth who are HH associates express their experiences, disenchantment and opinions on issues of interest, their frustration with political, economic and corruption vices in society through street-wise behaviour, drugs, slanguage, fashion, HH rap music, academia, and the media.

HHC poses challenges and offers opportunities. These opportunities and challenges beckon for models to equip the youth (ECWA) with theological discernment to address them, because the Nigerian youth are active participants in HHC (Akpan, 2006:95; Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470; Shonekan, 2010:1). In the light of these challenges and opportunities, a significant theological content should be included in all Christians' basic education to equip the youth for the realities in their communities. The practices of hip hop artists, deejays and graffiti artists create HHC and is an invitation to ECWA youth to be active participants in hip hop music. It could offer them the platform to share their Christian life stories and Christian faith through hip hop lyrics.

Kuhn (1996:67) adds that the evolving counterculture within the traditional culture attracts attention from the media and academics because the counterculture has an effect on the way of life and how reality is interpreted. Kuhn (1996:67) further says that this academic attention also seeks to navigate the conflicts of interest that evolved in the quest for different understandings in the sociology of knowledge, philosophy of science and epistemology of knowledge. This quest for different understandings in the sociology of knowledge stresses the paradigm shifts in science and social sciences, with implications for the way that reality is interpreted by different groups and cultures (Kuhn, 1996:67).

HHC is evolved in progression. The beat generation (culture) was identified in terms of behaviour like using drugs, practising vices and expressing their opinions about the injustices in society. The beatnik generation used cultural practices of ideologising their opinions through literature and academic writing in academia and the media to combat the materialism and injustices of society.

HHC is an embodiment of both cultural practices. HHC is a phenomenal way of life that expresses displeasure and dissatisfaction with the injustices in society or nations. The associates of HHC express their dissatisfaction through the medium of HH rap music. The artists express their opinions on political, economic and social injustice and oppression in society.

The next chapter will provide the research design and methodology of this research study. It will account for the methodology as a practical theological methodology of Osmer's four theological tasks. It will also provide the method of data collection, procedures and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The research design is the blueprint of a research study. The research design of this research study correlates with the research question. The research question determines the choice of research design. This research study was conducted using the research design of qualitative research study. The qualitative research design was chosen because it has the potential to help seek answers to the research question. That is, the research design of qualitative research design was chosen as the study sought to sample in words the opinions, worldviews and lived experiences of participants regarding their theological discernment in relation to HHC.

Regarding the methodology used to investigate the research question, this study employed a theoretical and an empirical study. As a theoretical study, it employed deductive reasoning to understand the research question as discussed over decades from extant literature. For the empirical part of the study, this study employed an inductive coding approach to generate codes, group codes and report findings as themes from the raw information of participants.

4.2. Research Design and Methodology

This section narrates on the research design and methodology for this research study.

4.2.1 Research Design

A research design is a research map, plan or blueprint of how a researcher intends to conduct a research study (Mouton, 2001:55). For Creswell (2014:3), a research design indicates plans and procedures for research that indicate steps from broader assumptions to more concrete details of data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the data. Therefore, I conceptualise research design as a research travel map, a research architectural model plan and a blueprint, with procedures that detail concrete and measurable steps of conducting a research study.

The essence of a research design therefore is to serve as a travel map, architectural model and blueprint for answering the research question of a research study. The research question(s) of a research study necessitate(s) a blueprint that can guide the researcher's

quest to seek for answers. Therefore, the research design is drafted as a compendium that guides a research study in seeking approaches to answer the research question(s).

Salkind (2012:11) argues that a qualitative research design examines the individuals, institutions, organisations and social phenomena within a particular context. A qualitative research design is employed as a blueprint to understand a globalised and glocalised phenomenon within the context in which it occurs. This could be a social phenomenon that is a reality and a way of life that is lived in a particular glocalised context. A qualitative research methodology also examines an individual way of life by engaging with that individual as a source of information regarding a social phenomenon, an institution or an organisation.

A qualitative research design typically describes experiences, explores, and discovers a process (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006:482). It enriches a researcher with information about participants' experiences and the reality of a social phenomenon in their own words. Accordingly, a qualitative research design provides the descriptive response of the respondents and describes why the respondents think in a certain manner (Hansen, 2013:3).

Defining the research design of qualitative research, Walliman (2006:3) argues that it is based on encouraging participants to express their experiences themselves in their own right and understanding. Lending voice to the significance of qualitative research design, Mouton (2001:194) further submits that qualitative research affords a researcher the opportunity to attempt to understand people in their own words according to their worldviews. On the basis of Mouton's argument, it can be deduced that a qualitative research design enables a researcher to unpack the nature of a phenomenon in the words, worldviews and experiences of the people who live in and are associated with that phenomenon. It does not involve counting and dealing with numbers like quantitative research, but rather is used to generate data from people's words, opinions and experiences.

The reason for embarking on a qualitative research design and not a quantitative or triangulation research design, was that this study sought to investigate people's opinions, situations, thoughts and experiences in words and narrative not figures and frequencies. According to Marks and Yardley (2004:39) and Tracy (2013:132), the rationale for a qualitative research design is that it enables the researcher to gain an appreciable understanding of how people's lived experiences are shaped and defined by their subjective and socio-cultural engagement and perspective. Silverman (2013:39) argues that a

qualitative research design can be subjective or objective. It can be subjective because it is influenced by personal opinion and lived experience, or objective because it may be informed by observation or knowledge of people's experiences, and not primarily by personal opinion.⁷⁷ However, the thrust of the argument remains that the data should represent the realities of the people in their own opinions, viewpoints and expressions. Moreover, both people's personal experiences and the observed practices of other people's experiences (for example friends, relations, and neighbours) represent the reality within the community.

A qualitative research design aids research to gain knowledge of the "different viewpoints of people in different circumstances; the way that people actively makes sense of their experiences; and the psychological, socio-cultural and linguistic factors and processes which influence the process of creating meaning" (Marks and Yardley, 2004:39). In other words, meanings are generated from people's experiences and from their own points of view in relation to their realities, as influenced by the psychological, sociological and cultural engagement in the community. Mertens (2005:15) adds that qualitative research design in its natural setting helps to make sense of, or to interpret data (subject) from a context and phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to the phenomenon and subjects being studied.

A qualitative design collects information from the participants about their experiences, behaviours, feelings and opinions in their words (Merriam, 2009:2; Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006:482). Qualitative research design was chosen for this study because it would enable me to generate data in the words of the participants about their understanding of theological discernment and their engagement with HHC. Seeking this understanding provided primary data on how the theological discernment of the youth aids their experience of HHC. The respondents were also able to make suggestions in their own words on how they think the youth programmes can be improved to take cognisance of theological reflection that addresses questions that are of interest and concern to the Nigerian youth.

This research study agrees with the qualitative research design as argued by Salkind. Salkind (2012:11) argues that the qualitative research design is interested in gaining an in-

⁷⁷ For Marks and Yardley (2004:39) and Tracy (2013:132), a qualitative research design is more subjective. However, Silverman (2013:39) regards a qualitative research design as more objective than subjective.

depth understanding of people's behaviour and the reasons for such behaviour. This study is interested in understanding the behaviour and lifestyle of youth and youth leaders as influenced by their engagement with HHC.

I agree with Saldaña (2011:5), when he argues that culture and its impact are better understood through the individual expressing his/her own opinions, experiences and attitudes in words. Saldaña's argument suggests that knowledge is constructed on the biasedness of people's personal experiences. That is, culture, as a way of people's life, can be understood through their personal experiences and worldviews, which constitute the epistemology of knowledge. The epistemology of knowledge can be people's worldviews, experiences and situations as expressed in their own words. However, Salkind (2012:11) adds that qualitative research design also looks to sources of information other than the experience of people.

4.2.2 Methodology

The research methodology aims to aid the researcher to understand and identify applicable techniques to find credible answers to the research question(s) of the research. Mouton (2001:57) and Hansen (2014:6) explain that the methodology used for research is a process and technique(s) employed to examine the research topic. This means that a well thought out methodology assists the researcher in determining what techniques to employ in unpacking the research question. Hansen (2014:6) adds that the quality of research findings is dependent on the techniques and accountability of the research methodology employed. This study employed theoretical and empirical study in an attempt to answer the research question.

4.2.2.1 Theoretical (literature) study

Engaging in a theoretical study of the literature aids the researcher in evaluating the existing literature related to the research subject (Alston and Bowles, 2003:64). This research draws from extant literature by academic writers, authors and experts, documents and archival sources, and researchers who have been interacting with equipping programmes, hip hop youth culture, and practical theological discernment in journals, books, articles, conferences and the internet.

Saldaña (2011:68) observes that there are various perspectives on whether a researcher should review literature before embarking on fieldwork for empirical research. The reason

is that pre-knowledge of the subject can contaminate the researcher's openness and objectivity to information from the participants. The researcher could tend to judge the participants' information with his/her understanding of the concepts, theories and arguments in the literature. However, Saldaña (2011:68) recommends that having pre-knowledge of a subject from literature gives the researcher some fundamental and basic knowledge on the subject of research. Rubin and Babbie (2007:73) validate the significance of reviewing the literature before embarking on empirical field research:

“Until we review the literature, we have no way of knowing whether the research question has already been adequately answered, of identifying the conceptual and practical obstacles that others have already encountered in this line of research, of learning how those obstacles have been overcome, and of deciding what lines of research can best build on the work that has already been done in a particular problem area.”

Engaging with the literature before embarking on an empirical study gives a background understanding of the subject of enquiry and a pre-understanding of how scholars have wrestled with the subject over a period of time. It also gives a conceptual understanding of the subject and how to align the subject in a research study. Through engagement with the literature, the researcher is able to identify gaps in knowledge on the subject and what tools are needed to address those gaps.

The theoretical study of the literature (primary and secondary data) can be reviewed by deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning – what Bak refers to as working from the ‘outside in’ or working from the ‘inside out’ (Bak, 2004:19; De Vos et al., 2005:47). Deductive reasoning, or the ‘outside in’ approach, entails studying or coding a subject or phenomenon from a broader framework to a smaller unit or core. Inductive reasoning, or the ‘inside out’ approach, entails studying a subject through observation and shared experiences and seeks to establish a theory or model (De Vos et al., 2005:47).

Regarding the theoretical literature study, this research employed deductive reasoning. It engaged with literature from the broader understanding of youth culture to the smaller unit of HHC. The literature was reviewed from the broader perspective of the Christian faith to the practice and understanding of that practice in ECWA as a church denomination. The

literature was reviewed by engaging both with secondary data and primary data of secondary data.⁷⁸

The theoretical data collection was from the extant literature and an intradisciplinary conceptualisation from different disciplines (theology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and historiography) to aid the understanding of theological discernment, youth, youth culture, and HHC. These literatures have been researched by scholars from different disciplines and geographical locations. Thus, the literature is multidimensional, representing the expressions, opinions and experiences of different nationalities.

I understand the relevance of literature review as a bedrock of a research study. It depicts a scenario in which a person joins an ongoing conversation, listening to what has been discussed. The researcher (person) needs to sit alongside the discussant (literature) to have an intelligent understanding of the topic under discussion. Then the researcher can suggest an area of interest for the discussion. It would be an error of enquiry to join a discussion without listening to the discussants who participated in the discussion prior to joining the discussion.

This study engaged with the ECWA archival sources in its literature review. These archival sources include documents, minutes of meetings, diaries and narratives that show the historicity and context of reasoning and why participants behave the way they do (Salmon, 2016:7). Smith (2007:43) argues that such documents are beneficial to a research project in practical theology. The documents that this research collected, are ECWA documents and other documents relevant to church-based ministry and HHC.

4.2.2.2 Empirical study

Mouton (2001:53) argues that the empirical method of data collection generates data about real-life situations and problems. The empirical method of data collection connotes sourcing information about a real-life situation from participants who have experienced it. It is a data generating approach of people's opinions, worldviews and contexts by asking people to

⁷⁸ Secondary data is theoretical research literature on specific subjects. Primary data of secondary data is empirical data reported in the literature. That is, it is a documented source of information that was generated from empirical field research on existing data (Mouton, 2001:53).

express their situations and experiences in their own words (voice), attitudes, social experiences and factual information about their lives (Saldaña, 2011:32).

Generating empirical data for an empirical study can be done through a deductive or inductive approach (Krippendorf, 2004:113; Marks and Yardley, 2004:57). A deductive approach (or coding) entails drawing on theoretical ideas and conceptualised ideas that the researcher is conversant with because there is documented information. The inductive approach (or coding) consists of generating ideas, themes and theories from raw data (information) as the observed or lived experiences of interviewed participants. It demands that the researcher refute, extend or replicate existing knowledge, theories and ideas. For the empirical study this research engaged in an inductive approach. The reason for engaging an inductive approach is to allow the researcher to make “sense of a situation without imposing pre-existing expectation on the phenomena being investigated” (Mertens, 2005:15).

That is, the inductive approach enables the researcher to generate ideas, concepts, theories and themes from the information shared by the interviewed participants. Weber (2015:6) adds that one cogent reason for conducting empirical research is so that the voice of the youth can be heard about issues that concern them.

4.3 Data Collection

Alexander et al. (2008:131) say that data collection methods are styles engaged in to collect data for a research study. Salkind (2012:11) notes that, for a qualitative research design, sources are “archival records, emails, open-ended surveys, videos, physical artefacts, direct observation, transcripts, participants’ observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups”. This research study engaged the method of in-depth interview as its method of data collection.

4.3.1 In-depth interview

An in-depth interview is a guided, question-answer conversation (Conrad and Schober, 2008:195; Tracy, 2013:131). The question-and-answer conversation involves one-on-one and face-to-face interactions between the researcher (interviewer) and the participant (informant), and seeks to build a level of intimacy and conditions for mutual self-disclosure

(Johnson, 2001:3; Merriam, 2009:17). It tends to involve a greater expression of the interviewer's self than some other types of interviews.

Salmon (2016:7) says that the researcher should either record the discussion or take notes during the interview. However, before recording or taking notes, I assured the interviewees of the confidentiality of their responses. After conducting the interviews, a transcriber was sought to transcribe the recordings, although not without confidentiality agreements.

Rubin and Rubin (2005: vii) argue that interviewing is like having 'night-vision goggles'. This is because interviews enable the researcher to gain knowledge from the participants' perspectives, and further explore complex phenomena that may otherwise be hidden or unseen in the existing literature. A cogent strength of interviewing is that it enables the interviewer to generate depth of knowledge, information and details gained from the interviewed participants. That is, the interviewer can gain valuable knowledge from the participants (interviewees) on their contexts and experiences.

Johnson (2001:7) stresses this significance when he argues that in-depth interviewing seeks deep information and offers great advantages to generate information on people's lived experiences, ideology, cultural knowledge and perspectives. In-depth interviews can be problematic if the researcher does not maintain a high level of confidentiality. I avoided this problem by abiding by pastoral and research ethics of confidentiality (Salmon, 2016:74). The interviews were used to obtain the opinions and attitudes of people towards HHC.

Rubin and Rubin (1995:31) add that a qualitative research design emphasises the active participation of the researcher (interviewer) and the importance of giving the respondent (interviewee) a voice in the investigation. To unpack the phenomenon of HHC in this research study, I adopted an indebt-interview approach. The interviews used in this study were unstructured and were administered by the researcher.

This research study adopted in-depth interviews as the empirical method of data collection to source primary data from participants on their religious practice of theological discernment and the social phenomenon of HHC. Marks and Yardley (2004:41) add that in-depth interviews cover one or two issues in great detail. The detail is dependent on the interviewee's responses, which determine the follow-up questions that the interviewer asks. The detailed opinion and perspective of the interviewee on an issue, event or phenomenon is what makes in-depth interviewing crucial for generating data. However, selecting

interviewees who are willing to give detailed information can be difficult without a gatekeeper, and generating information in detail can be time consuming.

In this research I examined the thoughts/perceptions (opinions, ideas, concepts, practices, experiences) of ECWA youth, youth leaders and pastors in relation to theological discernment in conversation with HHC so as to answer the research question, namely: How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within the contemporary hip hop youth culture? The researcher serves as the primary data-gathering instrument in qualitative research, while the respondent is the source of the data. Hollway and Jefferson (2000:3) argue that respondents can be a quality source of data, and note that “[o]ne of the good reasons for believing what people tell us, as researchers, is a democratic one: who are we to know any better than the participants when it is, after all, their lives?”

In this research study, the interviews were conducted face-to-face in English. The time frame for each interview varied, with some lasting 15 minutes and others as long as 45 minutes, depending on the participants’ involvement, immersion and understanding of HHC. That is, some participants illustrated more knowledge of HHC than other participants. However, on average, the interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

There are different types of interviews: structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. A structured interview uses a structured interview schedule to generate data that contains a standardised, fixed set of questions and requires coded, fixed answers (Marks and Yardley, 2004:40). Semi-structured interviews are structured with questions as guidelines, but are not standardised (Marks and Yardley, 2004:41). This allows for flexibility and adaptation during interviews. That is, the questions allow the respondents to respond to the questions according to their own line of thought. The researcher must refrain from displaying disagreement during the interview, even when the researcher disagrees with the respondents’ viewpoint, because the goal of the interview is to generate information from the participant’s viewpoint and understanding.

This research study employed semi-structured interviews because, as argued by Marks and Yardley (2004:41), though semi-structured interviews are not standardised, they do have guidelines. Thus, a semi-structured interview encompasses components of structured and unstructured interviews. It is structured because there are questions as guidelines, and unstructured because follow-up questions can be asked in the course of the interviews. In

other words, in semi-structured interviews, the interviewer prepares a set of questions to be answered by all interviewees, but additional questions may be asked during interviews to clarify and/or further expand on certain issues.

This study employed semi-structured interviews, which allowed the researcher to be flexible in adhering to the questions and allowing open-ended questions to emerge in the course of the interviews (Mason, 2010:7). An interview question can be closed-ended, open-ended, or a combination of both (Hansen, 2013:51; Picardi and Masick, 2014:150).

Closed-ended questions are questions that do not give the respondents freedom to express their experiences (Picardi and Masick, 2014:150). The respondents are conditioned to respond to a particular question precisely, without the liberty to express their opinions in detail.

On the other hand, open-ended questions in interviews allow the participants to freely express their experiences and opinions, without being conditioned to adhere to a fixed, structured question. Picardi and Masick (2014:150) state that an open-ended question is part of an interview in which the respondent is allowed to freely provide a response of any length or detail, where the respondent is at liberty to answer as he or she sees fit.

This study used open-ended interview questions so that the respondents could express their thoughts and experiences in their own words (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014:74). Wilkinson, Joffe and Yardley (2004:39) stress the importance of participants expressing themselves in ways that are not constrained and dictated by the researcher's written questions (see the appendix for the sets of questions).

4.3.2 Sampling

Sampling is a representative group of cases from a particular population (Picardi and Masick, 2014:154; Tracy, 2013:134). The sampling must consist of all the characteristics and criteria of the entire population. Picardi and Masick (2014:154-156) note that there are different types of sampling, including random and purposive sampling. Random sampling employs different techniques. Sampling is when selection is done by randomly selecting participants from a pool of the population. Stratified random sampling is a sampling method that divides participants into sub-groups and the researcher chooses participants from those sub-groups to constitute the sample of participants for the research. Cluster random

sampling sampling that divides a population into different strata of sub-groups by geographical location.

A purposeful sampling of participants was done for this qualitative research (Mason, 2010:7; Picardi and Masick, 2014:154; Salkind, 2012:72). Mason (2010:2) argues that, when undertaking purposeful sampling, the qualitative sample should be large enough to ensure that most of the ideas, perceptions and experiences that may be important to the subject of discussion are uncovered, but it is also important to avoid a sample that is too large, which can cause superfluous use of words and ideas. A purposive sampling of the youth, youth fellowship leaders (youth and youth leaders who are 18 to 35 years old, both male and female), youth pastors and the CED at ECWA headquarters was employed to sample from all possible segments of the ECWA who satisfy the criteria of interest for this study. The sample for this empirical study and for primary data collection was done in four geopolitical zones of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Since a qualitative sample should be large enough to ensure resourceful information, but not too large to avoid a superfluity of ideas, saturation needs to be gauged (Mason, 2010:2). The criteria for sampling to achieve saturation for this study, was participants who are ECWA youth fellowship members, and an LCB member is located in a cosmopolitan city⁷⁹ in each of the DCCs.⁸⁰ The youth fellowship members and youth leaders had to be between the ages of 18 and 35 years. The pastors in each DCC I communicated with did the sample selection of the youth and youth leaders.

This research study sampled the opinions, understandings and experiences of forty (40)⁸¹ participants. Of these participants, sixteen (16) were youth⁸², eleven (11) were youth leaders, and fourteen (13) were youth pastors⁸³, CEDs, and CEOs. These participants were coded into three categories, each with a separate set of questions. The youth were coded as

⁷⁹ The choice of cosmopolitan cities is because HHC is an urban/cosmopolitan culture that is globalised through films, the arts community, music companies, the internet, print media, musicians, music magazines, TV and radio shows, nightclubs and music stores (Condry, 2001:374; Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245), and also because cosmopolitan cities embrace multicultural demographics.

⁸⁰ DCCs are areas (zones) in all geographical locations in ECWA. The DCCs are leadership structures that supervise the affairs of the LCCs and LCBs within the geographical locations where ECWA churches are situated. There are ECWA DCCs that superintend in all zones (North, South, West and East) in Nigeria.

⁸¹ Check Addendum E for an overview of the participants and their regions.

⁸² Youth and youth leaders in ECWA were discussed in footnote 1 and 2.

⁸³ The youth pastors in the ECWA are often associate pastors without training or equipping in youth ministry. They are posted to the LCBs by the DCCs as associate pastors, but designated by the LCBs as their youth pastors.

Y, the youth leaders were coded as YL, and the youth pastors, CEDs and CEOs were coded together as YPCED.

To achieve saturation, the forty participants were engaged, with the aid of a gatekeeper, in in-depth interviews to sample their opinions, understanding and experiences in their own words. The participants were from the Jos ECWA headquarters' CED and five DCCs in cosmopolitan cities (each DCC has at least one LCB in a cosmopolitan city). The five DCCs supervise five cosmopolitan LCBs in each of the four geo-political zones of Nigeria (Northern region, Southern region, Western region and Eastern region) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT – Abuja). The five DCCs are Ebute Metta DCC in Lagos (Western region), Kano DCC in Kano State (Northern region), Garki DCC in Abuja (FCT), Umuahia DCC (Eastern region), and Aba DCC which superintends Abia State (Eastern region) and Port Harcourt (River State).⁸⁴

In Jos two participants were chosen from the CED of ECWA headquarters and two youth pastors were selected by the CED director as the head of the department. At Ebute Metta DCC in Lagos, seven participants were chosen (three youth, two youth leaders, one youth pastor, and one CEO). At Kano DCC in Kano State, five participants were selected by the church pastor (two youth, two youth leaders and one CEO). At Garki DCC in Abuja, five participants were selected (two youth, one youth leader, one CEO and one youth pastor). At Umuahia, five participants were chosen by the pastor (three youth, one youth leader, and one CEO). At Aba DCC, 14 participants were selected because Aba DCC superintends two cosmopolitan cities located in two different geo-political zones in Nigeria (Port Harcourt, River State, in the Southern region and Aba, Abia State, in the Eastern region). Among the 14 participants were six youths, five youth leaders, two youth pastors, and one CEO.

4.3.2.1 River State

River State was founded on 27 May 1967 by military decree and contains 23 local government areas of Southern Nigeria (River State, 2003; 2018). It is bordered/abuted to the South by the Atlantic Ocean, to the North by Anambra, Imo and Abia States, to the East by Akwa Ibom State and to the West by Bayelsa and Delta States.

⁸⁴ The Aba DCC in Abia state, which is in the Eastern geo-political zone in Nigeria, superintends the cosmopolitan LCB in the Southern geo-political zone. Thus, Aba DCC had participants at Aba (East) and Port Harcourt (South) because the cosmopolitan churches in both Aba and Port Harcourt are superintended by the Aba DCC.

As reported on the River State online website, the capital, Port Harcourt, is a cosmopolitan city and “is the nerve centre of the famous Nigerian oil industry and over ninety industrial concerns, including the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (Limited), AGIP, Texaco, Elf, NPRC, Michelin, West African Glass Industry, Alcan Aluminium, Metaloplastica, Risonpalm, NAFCON, Pabod Breweries, to mention a few” (River State, 2018).

River State is currently made up of 23 local government areas and has the unique natural advantage of being the nation’s second largest sea port. The existence of a large sea port is why Port Harcourt is an attractive cosmopolitan city with influences of global cultural phenomena like HHC.

4.3.2.2 Abia State

Abia State (2018) is a state in South-Eastern (Eastern region) Nigeria and was created in 1991, having previously formed part of Imo State. The capital is Umuahia, although the major commercial city is Aba. The area known as Abia State was previously part of the East Central State created by the Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon on 27 May 1967 (Abia State, 2018).

The state has 17 local governments and is blessed with “rich mineral resources: petroleum which is mined in parts of Ukwa and Ukwa East local government areas, natural gas found and extracted from the oil rich areas of Ukwa” (Abia State, 2018). Abia State has two cosmopolitan cities with influences from global cultures like HHC. Umuahia is the state capital and Aba is the state commercial city.

4.3.2.3 Lagos State

Lagos State is one of the oldest states in Nigeria (it was a colony province of the defunct Western region of Nigeria). It is a cosmopolitan city that was created by decree No 14 of 27 May 1967 (Lagos State, 2003). Lagos State (2003) has twenty local government areas (LGA). According to an online website report, geographically Lagos is situated in South-Western (Western region) Nigeria, neighbouring the Republic of Benin, Ogun State, and the Atlantic Ocean. It has a land mass of 3 577 sq km, of which 787 sq km (22% of the land mass) is water.

Yaba in Lagos is a cosmopolitan city with commercial centres of business conglomerates and the state airport, and a hybridisation of different lives and practised cultures like HHC.

4.3.2.4 Federal Capital Territory (Abuja)

Abuja (Abuja State, 2018) is the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and was formed in 1976. Abuja was formed partly from the former Nasarawa, Niger and Kogi States and is in the central region of Nigeria. According to Abuja State (2018), the region is “bordered to the North by Kaduna State, to the East by Nassarawa State, to the South-West by Kogi State and to the West by Niger State”.

Abuja has six area councils. A cosmopolitan city is the central capital of Nigeria and the Nigerian seat of power because it hosts the executive, judiciary and legislative arms of government.

4.3.2.5 Kano State

Kano State (2018) is a state located in North-Western Nigeria (Northern region), formed on 27 May 1967. Kano State has 44 local government areas and is surrounded by Katsina State to the North-West, Jigawa State to the North-East, and Bauchi and Kaduna states to the South (Kano State, 2018).

Kano State is the largest industrial centre in Northern Nigeria, and second largest industrial centre in Nigeria, with textile, footwear, cosmetics, plastics, pharmaceuticals, ceramics, furniture and other industries. The industrialisation of the state developed it into a cosmopolitan city with mixed cultural practices. As it is an industrial centre, the youth are exposed to the influence of global cultures like HHC.

4.5 Unit of Analysis/Evaluation

Understanding the scope of the study and having clarity on the research subject are crucial to a research study (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:365). Furthermore, Babbie and Mouton (2001:365) argue that the unit of evaluation (or analysis) entails components that should be evaluated. Such components include administrators and actors (or people) who are relevant to the research; programmes and services that are relevant to the research study; and components that will enable the evaluator to enrich the subject of research.

In this research study, the unit of analysis is ECWA youth (male and female in the age bracket 18 to 35 years old); LCBs in cosmopolitan cities; male and female youth fellowship leaders; CEOs, CEDs and youth pastors; opinions about theological discernment and youth fellowship programmes; and HCC.

4.6 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of translating the collected data into structured and meaningful information (De Vos et al., 2005: 333). The information gathered from the in-depth interviews was transcribed, and the computer software ATLAS.ti, was used to analyse the generated data (De Vos et al., 2005:336-337). I used the content codes of ATLAS.ti to theme the data, and the themes were interpreted using open codes that coded sentences and paragraphs relevant to the research subject.

Interpretations of the emerging themes were derived directly from interview scripts after the exercise of open coding and clustering them into group (family) codes. The themes of the empirical study were developed independently through the group (family) codes and, while the coded labels differed, the interpretations overlapped. This consistency in the themes provides confidence in the narrative (story) provided by the primary data.

There are different methods of data analysis, including content and thematic data analysis. I will narrate both methods, and account for the reasons why I chose thematic analysis as the method of data analysis for this research study.

4.6.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is when data collected from the sampled population is analysed using the thematic approach⁸⁵ (Attride-Stirling, 2001:388). A thematic approach to data analysis aims at exploring the understanding of an issue, case or people. It examines the significance of people's opinions by coding them in themes. Braun & Clark (2006:79) and Ezzy (2002:88) add that thematic analysis is used as a method to identify and report themes generated from data that answers the research question of the study.

⁸⁵ A thematic approach to data analysis aims at exploring the understanding of an issue, case and people. It examines the significance of people's opinions by coding them in themes.

Joffe and Yardley (2004:57) and Krippendorff (2004:10) argue that thematic analysis considers the qualitative aspect of the material analysed. It analyses the experiences and opinions of the respondents in terms of themes. Joffe and Yardley (2004:56) note that a theme connotes a specific pattern noticed in the data that is of interest to the research. Central themes are generated from the wealth of information by coding the reality of interviewees' experiences.

Joffe and Yardley (2004:56) add that thematic analysis also enables the researcher to replicate, extend or refute prior discoveries. The researcher can engage with the themes of existing discoveries in an attempt to critically engage the discoveries. This study engaged with the theoretical discoveries in Chapters Two and Three and the empirical data generated in the field through in-depth interviews.

4.7 Ethical Implications

Scientific research is a form of human conduct, hence it follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values (Mouton, 2001:238). As in any sphere of human life, certain kinds of conduct are morally acceptable, whereas others are not. Considering this, ethical clearance was sought from Stellenbosch University (SU) Research Ethics Committee (REC) before proceeding with the research study. A letter of permission from the selected faith communities (ECWA) in Nigeria was obtained to allow the researcher access to its youth ministry programmes and its youth. I also received ethical clearance approval from SU to embark on the empirical study.

I guaranteed and secured all recorded audiotapes under lock in a safe place at home. A professional transcriber did the transcription. However, all the audiotapes were coded based on the categorisation of the participants. The categorisations were youth, youth leaders, youth pastors and CEOs. Therefore, each code represents a unique identity for each participant.

The transcriber could not identify the participants because the participants were not addressed by their names during the interviews, but by their coded identity. I explained the reason for giving each participant a coded identity to them, namely to protect their identity. Their identities were therefore coded for confidentiality. I informed the participants and the

gatekeepers⁸⁶ that the audiotapes used for recording would be destroyed five years after the end of this study, allowing time to verify the respondents' views if necessary, but ensuring that the audiotapes cannot fall into the wrong hands.

The participants, especially the youth and youth leaders, responded to my presence and the interview sessions with a sense of 'ethical correctness'. They respected the fact that I am a clergyman in the same denomination, and more importantly, a youth pastor who can represent their voices at the ECWA national level where decisions regarding the youth are made. To prevent my potential bias as an ECWA staff member to interfere with the participants' opinions, I explained the significance of the research study to the youth ministry of ECWA, and the importance of airing their voices regarding the research problem.

4.8 Reflections from the Field

In this section, I reflect on the experiences in conducting empirical study in Nigeria. The reflection shows the experience of investigating the research question through seeking the opinions, experiences and viewpoints of participants in four regions of Nigeria (Northern, Eastern, Western, and Eastern) and the Federal Capital Territory.

4.8.1 Challenges of empirical study

Documenting the challenges of empirical studies indicates that it is not as reliable as documented in literature (Weber, 2014:154). Different contexts and countries experience empirical research in varying ways. The process of conducting a study differs from research to research, context to context and country to country. However, each varying experience constitutes a wealth of knowledge. This necessitates the need to state some of the challenges experienced in conducting this segment of the research study.

⁸⁶ The gatekeepers of the DCCs are the CEOs. The CEOs superintendent all fellowship arms in the ECWA, including the Youth Fellowship. So all the youth fellowships and evolving youth ministries are supposedly under his guidance. At the CED unit, the director of Christian education was the gatekeeper because all the staff at the Christian Education unit at ECWA headquarters are under his guidance.

4.8.2 Distance covered

As discussed in section 4.4, the empirical study covers four states and the Federal capital city (Abuja) of Nigeria. It includes DCCs in five cosmopolitan cities, and I began the empirical research journey by travelling by road from Abuja to Port Harcourt (Southern region), which is 671.8 km in 10 h 58 min (Google Maps, 2018a). The second destination was Aba (Eastern region), a distance of 61.6 km which took 1 h 59 min (Google Maps, 2018b) by road. From there I drove to Umuahia, a distance of 60.1 km, driven in 1 h 21 min. The fourth destination was Lagos State (Western region), whence I drove from Umuahia – 580 km, taking 8 h 40 min (Google Maps, 2018c). From there I flew to the fifth destination, Abuja, a distance of 758 km.

The sixth journey was from Abuja to Kano (Northern region) and back, a distance of 443 km taking 5 h and 35 min (Google Maps, 2018e) by road, thus, a return journey of 886 km and 11 h and 10 min. The seventh trip was from Abuja to ECWA headquarters in Jos: 282 km and 4 h 35 min (Google Maps, 2018f), thus a return trip of 564 km and 9 h 10 min. The total distance travelled by road was 3 581.5 km.

These distances as calculated by Google Maps were based on the premise that the vehicle travelled at a particular speed. However, Google Maps does not take into account the state of the roads in some of these regions. For example some sections of the road from Abuja to Port Harcourt are so bad that a distance of 10 km can take more than an hour . Though tedious to have travelled by road to meet the participants in different regions, the experience was enriching because I was able to meet with some youth who are hip hop audience and were glad to be given the opportunity to come out of hiding and express their experiences. Asking them about their opinions of the youth ministry programmes was elating to them, because they did not expect that their opinions would ever be sought by the ECWA. The trip exposed me to youth and youth leaders who are concerned about the state of youth ministry in ECWA, and are seeking to be equipped as youth workers.

4.8.3 Quality of transcription process

Weber (2014:154) says that an interview can be transcribed at different levels. She alludes to how she used three different people to transcribe her research study, and the unforeseen situations arising during the transcription, suggesting that a perfect transcription could be unattainable as noted by Silverman (2001:231).

However, quality transcription was pursued in this research study, although I acknowledge that transcription can always be improved, as argued by Weber (2014:154). To ensure quality transcription, I made sure the interviews were conducted with little (or no) background noise. I coded the recorded interviews, then gave the transcription work to a professional who is experienced in transcription services. After the transcription, I went through the transcribed text while listening to the recorded audio recordings to validate the transcriptions and confirm that the respondents' opinions were given verbatim. Thus, transcription is costly and time-consuming.

4.8.4 Change in sample size

Changing of sample size is a natural reality in conducting empirical research (Silverman, 2001:253). Certain circumstances and experiences can cause a researcher to change the size of the sample. Thus, a proposed sample can be changed if necessity warrants it.

In this research study I changed the sample size from 38 to 40 participants because the ECWA church in Southern region is under the spiritual leadership of the DCC in Eastern region, so I had to extend the number of participants to also generate data from the Southern region.

Reasons for the change of sample size is that, (1) I had to extend the number of participants in Umuahia DCC (Eastern region) in Abia State, as Umuahia is the state capital, city of power, and throne of Abia State economy, and more cosmopolitan than my initial destination (Aba City); and (2) Some DCCs in a region do not have a youth pastor or young pastors designated as youth pastors.

4.8.5 Gained experience from pilot study

The pilot study of this research study served as a forerunner (testing ground) for the main research study. As a forerunner, the pilot study was helpful in providing background knowledge to the research question and ascertaining the clarity of the instruments (questionnaires administered to the interviewed participants).

De Vos et al. (2005: 205) reason that when embarking on methodical research with a research question, the researcher needs to gain a pre-knowledge of and background on the research question.

4.8.5.1 Feasibility of the study

Following the pilot study, it was evident that the main study is feasible. Experienced gained through the pilot study aided the feasibility of this study indicated the following:

1. Some of the questions were clearly understood and some were not clearly understood by the pilot participants. I had to rephrase the questions that were not clearly understood so as to make them clearer for the research participants;
2. The questions were appropriate to the context of the intended case study of ECWA;
3. The research aims and objectives of the study were realistic and achievable;
4. The topic is researchable;
5. The research question is relevant as it is seldomly discussed or researched.

4.8.5.2 Suitability of the interview process

The pilot study indicated that the method of data collection (indepth interviews) is a suitable method for generating primary data on the research question. It also revealed that seeking to embark on empirical study that will give the youth and youth leaders the opportunity to express their opinions, understanding and experiences in their own words, is crucial, riveting and relevant to the faith community of ECWA.

4.9 Theological Significance and Limitations of Study

The contribution of this research study is twofold: (1) academic and (2) practical. The academic contribution fills the gap in knowledge in practical theology as a Christian mediation discipline that can bring understanding of the opportunities and challenges posed by HHC. According to Heitink (1999:8), practical theology concerns, firstly, the mediation of the Christian faith in God's coming to humanity in the world He created so that humankind may experience Him daily through others. Secondly, practical theology is concerned with how the Christian faith can influence society through God's normative perspective on the question of concern. This study attempted to enlighten the academic discipline of practical theology on the impact of drafting youth ministry programmes that equip the youth with theological discernment to maximise the opportunities and confront the challenges posed by hip hop youth culture.

The practical contribution, on the other hand, is firstly to determine the significance of drafting the ECWA youth ministry annual programme themes by involving the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors in the process. Dean and Foster (1998:26), in arguing for the importance of getting the voice of the youth involved in planning and drafting their own programmes, say that “God needs their [young people’s] prophetic voices in the church, in the culture, and in the families, they call their own”. Secondly, this study discovered that a context-based (e.g. location: cosmopolitan cities) approach to developing youth programmes is important and pertinent for improving the theological discernment and reflection of the youth.

As discussed in Chapter One (section 1.4), the problem in the ECWA youth ministry, which is also the central problem of this dissertation, is that the themes that determine the annual youth programmes are determined by the ECWA headquarters, without consulting the opinions of the youth. The EE makes such decisions and disseminates the information to all fellowship groups, including the youth fellowship. This research study gave the youth an opportunity to express their opinions and viewpoints on the ECWA structure that deprives the youth at LCB level from voicing their opinions on the theme that informs the youth programme every year.

This study discovered the significance of teaching the youth theological content for theological discernment that can equip them with Christian faith and Christian ministry to aid their engagement with HHC. This equipping enables them to navigate the opportunities and challenges of HHC. Also, this research investigated the extent to which equipping for theological discernment should take place in conversation with the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors in youth ministry by addressing their areas of interest.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter addressed the roadmap and blueprint of this research study. It explained the choice of research design that attempted to answer the research question. The qualitative method of data collection was theoretical and in-depth interviews, with thematic analysis as the qualitative method of data analysis.

Chapter Five will focus on the empirical study conducted in the ECWA. Using an inductive approach, this chapter reports on themes generated from the empirical data collected in the field through the process explained in section 4.6.1 (thematic analysis).

The inductive approach to presenting primary data of empirical study entails engaging the primary data to generate theories and arguments in conversation with existing theories and arguments as documented in the literature. Thus, Chapter Five will present findings and discussions on the empirical primary data by deducing theories and arguments from the participants' opinions, understandings, and experiences.

CHAPTER FIVE: EMPIRICAL STUDY CONDUCTED WITHIN THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH WINNING ALL (ECWA)

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present themes arising from the collected data. It entails generating themes that capture relevant and significant data from participants in relation to the research questions. In generating relevant data from the participants, I tried to identify underlying ideas, opinions, experiences, concepts, assumptions and ideologies from the experiences and narratives shared by the participants. This generation of data was done by reflecting on the research question of this research study, using the research practical theological methodology that seeks to know What is happening? (descriptive-empirical task), and Why is this happening? (interpretive task).

This chapter uses figures to present findings. As argued by Pexman and Nicol (2010:3), figures present findings and tell a story, sometimes instantaneously with the goal of aiding the reader to get a pictorial understanding of the findings, speaking of the findings at a glance.

5.1.1 Reflection on the research Question

The research question for this study is “How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within hip hop culture (HHC)?”

This research question was investigated by breaking it down into smaller units in an attempt to generate themes from the participants’ shared viewpoints, experiences and understanding. By generating guiding questions in analysing the primary data collected from the participants, I sought to note:

- (1) The ECWA process of drafting themes for its ECWA youth programmes;
- (2) Who is responsible (and why) for drafting the programmes for the youth;
- (3) Whether the ECWA programmes equip youth in their areas of concern regarding an interest in phenomena like HHC;
- (4) The prevalence of HHC in Nigeria and the response of ECWA;

- (5) Whether this process equips the youth with an aptitude for theological discernment to engage with the challenges posed by HHC;
- (6) Whether this process equips the youth with an aptitude for theological discernment regarding the opportunities provided by HHC;
- (7) The conceptualisation of the youth, HHC and theological discernment; and
- (8) Models for equipping the youth with theological discernment.

5.1.2 Categorisation of interviewed questions and participants

The interview questions that were administered to participants were categorised into three categories: A) Youth programmes; B) Hip hop culture; and C) Theological discernment. In each category, questions were asked that address the smaller units of the research study. For example, in Category A, all the questions asked were in relation to the participant's viewpoint about the ECWA programmes, in Category B, all the questions asked relate to the participant's viewpoints about HHC, and in Category C, all the questions asked were in relation to the participant's viewpoint about theological discernment. The findings in this research study were also classified in these three categories. All the themes that relate to programme content were reported under the programme category, likewise the themes relating to the HHC and theological discernment categories.

The participants for this research study were also categorised into three groups: the youth as Y, youth leaders as YL, and youth pastors, CEDs and CEOs of DCCs as YPCED. The youth and youth leaders are youth fellowship members who are involved in the LCB of a cosmopolitan church.

5.1.3 Generating themes for this research study

Braun and Clarke (2006:84) argue with regard to what should constitute a theme in a thematic analysis, that generating a theme entails the capturing of something that is important and relevant to the data collected from participants in relation to the research study's research question(s). The relevant data should be representative of a certain patterned meaning, include a striking narration that is noticeable in the data, and include data that attempts to answer the research question. Regarding theme selection, Braun and Clarke (2006:84) further argue that it should be guided by how the emerging theme responds to or captures a relevant and significant aspect of the research question that guides the research study. Braun and Clark (2006:83) add that the themes generated from the

participants' responses follow from the data and may not necessarily follow from the specific question asked by the researcher. Thus, the themes are generated as data in an attempt to answer the research question(s) of the study.

Braun and Clarke (2006:84) warn that the reoccurrence or frequency of appearance should not be a major factor (although it could be) to be taken into consideration when choosing a theme in a qualitative study (as it would be in a quantitative study), and state that, in a qualitative study, the major consideration is how the data attempts to answer the research question(s).

To generate themes from the collected data, Braun and Clarke (2006:85) suggest six steps that could be helpful:

1. Familiarisation with the collected data;
2. Generating initial codes and family (group) codes;
3. Searching for themes in the family (group) codes;
4. Reviewing themes;
5. Defining and naming themes;
6. Producing a report on your findings.

I generated data through the approach of inductive coding based on how the data attempts to answer the research question of the study. Inductive coding, as opposed to deductive coding, is used to describe a phenomenon and aims to enable themes to emerge from the data. Deductive coding inputs existing themes from literature into the data (Elo and Kyngä, 2007:109). The figure below shows how codes translate into themes in inductive coding and how themes are input into data on Atlas.ti.

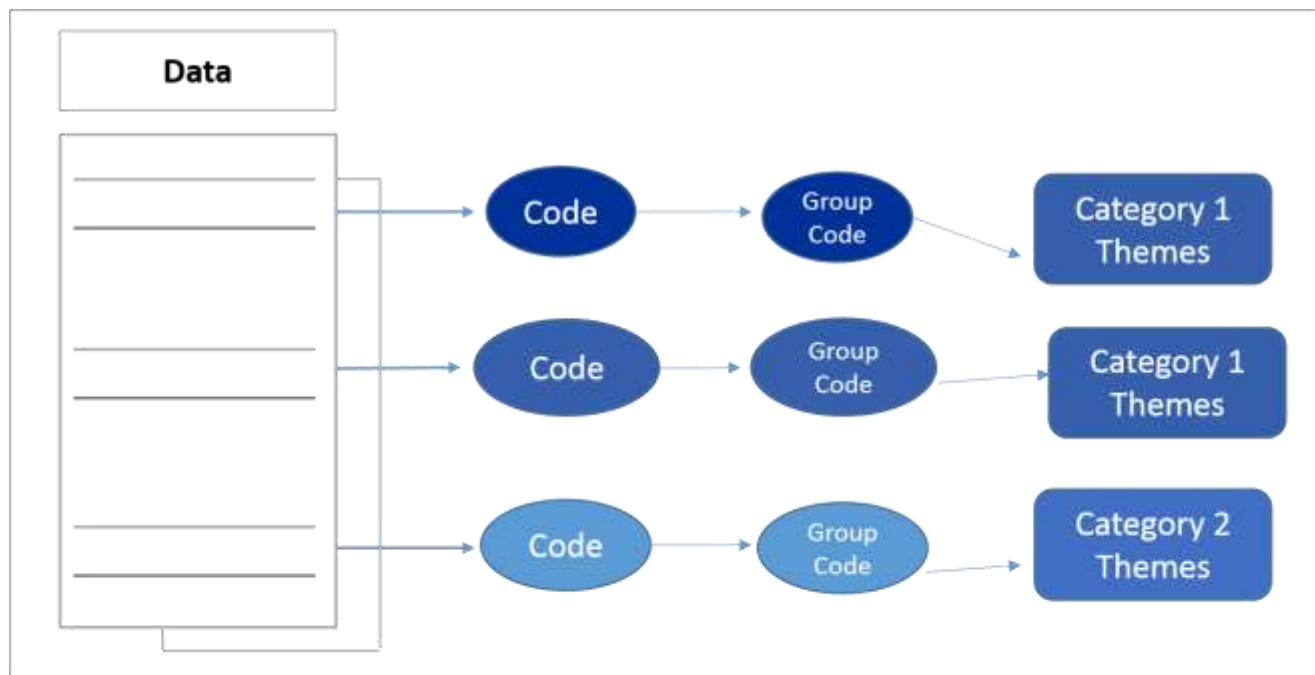


Figure 5.1: Inductive coding

According to the six steps narrated by Braun and Clarke and illustrated in figure 5.1, step 1 happens after the data is transcribed. I familiarised myself with the data by reading through the data in order to have a fair idea of the participants' viewpoints before uploading the data on Atlas.ti. Step 2 and 3 were generating codes and group (family) codes from the data. Step 4 and 5 were reviewing and naming the themes and categorising the themes into different groups (programmes, HHC and theological discernment). Step 6 was exporting the report from Atlas.ti into Microsoft Word to report the findings.

These six steps guided the process of and decisions on creating themes from the collected data. In creating reporting themes from the findings, Mark and Yardley (2004:57) argue that thematic analysis allows the researcher to replicate, extent and refute prior and existing discoveries. Thus, this research study reports findings in dialogue with existing discoveries as documented in literature by replicating, extending and refuting existing discoveries.

As depicted in the above diagram, when using Atlas.ti.8 software, there were different phases in the process of reporting findings. I used a semantic thematic approach by generating themes from the participants and not exceeding the viewpoints of the participants. To report the themes as findings, I employed five different phases. The first phase was generating codes by labelling the codes as they resonate with the research question of the study. The second phase was clustering and labelling the codes into group

codes. The third phase was creating themes from the group codes with the research question in mind. The fourth phase was reviewing the themes by cross checking the themes with the codes generated in phase one for assurance that the themes truly represent the codes that informed the group codes. The fifth phase was reporting the themes as findings from the participants. In reporting the themes, I engaged the findings from literature to achieve scientific validation of the findings. Sequeira (2014:3) argues that reporting findings in engagement with literature is helpful in a qualitative study because this engagement aids the researcher to replicate, extend or refute prior discoveries as argued by Mark and Yardley (2004:57) in a thematic analysis approach of qualitative study.

The first four phases were done on Atlas.ti.8 while the fifth phase, the final phase of reporting the findings in the themes was done in Microsoft Word. On the Atlas.ti.8 space, I created the codes and family codes, and labelled the themes before exporting them as a report to Microsoft Word. I then wrote out the findings as themes.

5.1.4 Reporting the findings

Kelly (2006:350) argues that including the subjective understanding of participants' experiences is critical in a research project as obtaining subjective understanding of the participants provides the researcher with resources to interpret and complement context and theory. That is, through the findings and discussion of the collected data, the researcher is able to connect the participants' contexts as a perspective to existing perspectives in literature.

Presenting the research findings and discussion provides empirical findings for documentation of a particular context in engagement with theories sourced from other contexts.

In reporting the findings and providing a discussion later in Chapter Six, I generated codes from the interview transcripts (data) as the first phase of searching for themes. Using Atlas.ti 8, I generated 281 codes using open coding. The reason for using the open code option as opposed to the Nvivo or autocode options was because, with open code, I was able to name each code with the relevant label in the data that attempts to answer the research question of this study as explained in section 5.1.1. Unlike the Nvivo coding option, which automatically generates codes without a labelled name for the code, open coding allows the

researcher to label the code by name. The labelled names for the codes were useful in creating family codes later in the data analysis.

The generated codes from the data using Atlas.ti 8 were thereafter organised into a family groups as the second phase of searching for themes (29 family codes) to show patterns in semantic thematic analysis (content) and not theoretical thematic analysis, which focusses primarily on the theoretical concern of the research study. This choice of semantic thematic analysis was made because the researcher's interest was to generate themes from the participants' responses and not adding to the participants' responses (Silverman, 2006:84). Then I summarised and interpreted the family codes as themes in an attempt to theorise the significance of patterns and their broader meanings and implications (Silverman, 2006:84; Braun and Clark, 2002:84). The codes generated were sorted into family codes, and then created as themes through mind-mapping in terms of relevance to their significance to the research question of the study.

This means that how the family codes were relevant to the research question, determined what counted as themes in the third phase. After drafting the themes from the family codes, the themes were reviewed by cross checking the initial codes (confirming that the family codes were created from the initial codes on Atlas.ti 8). The themes were then labelled as representations of participants' opinions in response to answering the research question.

In the fourth phase the themes were reviewed. This phase was done by being mindful of the research question. Thus the aim of reviewing the themes was for assurance purposes, for assurance that the themes attempt to answer the research question of this research study.

The fifth phase was the final phase of searching for themes. In writing the final report as findings for this research study, I wrote in the form of reporting a story, because Atlas.ti.8 exports analysed data into a Microsoft Word document in the form of a report. However, the story reported as themes was engaged with scientific validation in literature (the thrust of Chapter Five).

Katz (2012:7) argues that narrating experiences, messages and opinions in the form of stories is a powerful method of conveying of knowledge as it is used to preserve traditions and illuminates the present with possible suggestions of how to navigate the future. Thus, I reported the themes in the form of a story that reflects the experiences, messages and opinions of participants. To write the report in the form of a story, I narrated the stories in

sentences by summarising how the stories connect with the themes to answer the research question of this study.

5.2 Participants Understanding of Some Concepts

Conceptualisation of terms in a research study is a developmental process of giving clarity to the terms and concepts. The clarifications involves bringing together several considerations in an attempt to give a concept a working definition in the research study (Jain, Lindley and Rosen, 2014:243). Sequeira (2014:3) adds that conceptualisation of terms is used to specify exactly what the terms signify in that research study, what they mean and what it do not mean.

The conceptualisation of youth, theological discernment and HHC is one of the objectives of this research study (Chapter One, section 1.5).

5.2.1 Understanding of youth

There is no simple definition to conceptualise the youth because there is no simple definition that encompasses the entirety of who the youth are (Lang, 2000:132; Perullo, 2005:76; Cloete, 2012:2). The reason why there is no simple definition is because some authors define the youth in terms of what they are and do, while others define the youth in terms of who they are. Those who define the youth according to what they are define them in terms of an age bracket and their behaviours, while those who define them according to who they are, define them in terms of their humanness, as human beings.

- (1) Authors who define the youth according to what they are, conceptualise youth (a) within an age bracket (Perullo, 2000:76; Badejo, Stephens and Anyanwu, 2011:284; Cloete, 2012:2; Van Dijk-Groeneboer, 2015:25), (b) in terms of rites of passage which could be informed by culture (Alan, 2007:6; Wamuyu, 2013:40; Adeogun, 2015:213), and (c) in terms of a distinct phase of life which could be based on marriage and/or employment (Onuekwusi and Effiong, 2002:95; Oyefusi, 2010:327; Cloete, 2012:2; Noval, 2014:44).
- (2) Authors who define the youth in regard to who they are, conceptualises the youth as human beings (Qvortrup, 1994:4; Noval, 2013:44; Ellis, 2015:126).

Interviewed participants shared differing concepts to define the youth as people within an age bracket and in terms of them as human beings as follows:

Youth as a matter of fact is a group of young people who are just coming up who I will not call children, they have graduated from being children to a certain age, the age we call youths, automatically you cannot call them complete human beings because they are not yet adult (Participant YPCED 6);

They are in a critical stage of development as a person, so it is also a period where one is strong, active, where the body chemistry is very strong, it is a time of learning new things, a time of forming a character, a lifestyle that will help one be a better person tomorrow (Participant YPCED 6);

A youth is a person going through a period of growth and I deliberately understand youth as a person and the period (Participant YPCED 4);

A youth is a person, he is a full individual, he is not a human being in the making and reacting to the African understanding that young people are sub-human. So I think they have the intellect, the youth has a mind, the youth is a spiritual person having the Christian faith. So if we have a youth who is a believer, he is also the church (Participant YPCED 3);

...The other component of being a period is the fact that it is a developmental reality of youthfulness; the growth process that takes place, the whole ideas relating to social development, physical development, moral development, showing that the youth also need to be trained, giving avenue to grow in these other areas as they use their personhood to contribute to society, also provide avenues that they can grow and develop, and to understand the whole developmental period of youthfulness allows us to be able to understand youths better, to not understand them in our own terms (Participant YPCED 3);

A youth is somebody within a certain age bracket, who has strength, ego, somebody that is more or less in his capacity as a human being, can think, can try to explore, he is working towards testing everything and he feels like he is relevant in every area; so he is somebody who is energetic (Participant YPCED 9);

Youths are young people, people that are full of strength, people who are available and very active. They are people within the age bracket of strength, where strength is really flowing (Participant YPCED 13);

Youth are young people who are within a particular age bracket, depending on where one is coming from. Nowadays, we have a funny understanding of youths Just yesterday in church somebody who was in his 50s was saying that he is a youth and in fact, he said, in Nigeria, youth age spans have been tampered with due to unemployment, hardship and hustling (Participant YPCED 2);

Youth are people who are not complete human beings. They are not yet complete human beings because they are not yet responsible for themselves and are always doing new things that are destroying our traditions and cultures (Participant YPCED 6).

Within the Nigerian context, youth are conceptualised based on what they are and who they are. Regarding what they are, they are people within an age bracket, full of strength, active and within a distinct developmental phase of life. In regard to who they are, they are human beings who have the capacity to think and explore. In fact, one participant understands the youth as people who are not complete human beings because they are between childhood and adulthood.

This research for descriptive purposes acknowledges the youth for what they are within an age bracket, but also understands the youth as human beings in a God-relationship as promoted by Hunsinger. Hunsinger (2015:140) promotes that, theologically, a God-relationship is the central purpose in understanding human beings. He advocates that the human being does not exist apart from the basic God-relationship. The God-relationship means that being human is to “know, love and glorify God forever”. Strong (2015:3) argues for a God-relationship when he argues that theology is primarily about a relationship with God as exemplified in Jesus becoming flesh (human) and dwelling among human beings. The God-relationship is pivotal to understanding human beings in the sense that God exists in relationship with human beings, and likewise human beings exist in relationship with God. Therefore, the youth are human beings in a God-relationship. Their God-relationship is how they are conceptualised beyond age bracketing and descriptive classification of what they are and do.

5.2.2 Understanding of theological discernment

Theological discernment is the normative process of thinking, making decisions and displaying an authentic faith response in relation to good and evil, truth and falsehood, using a biblical (Word of God) lens in each situation of life in the pursuit of spiritual maturity (Hendriks, 2014:62; 2004:19; Reese, 2013:24; Paver, 2006:8; Lienhard, 2003:505). Furthermore, theological discernment as admonished to the faith community in Thessalonica by the apostle Paul is to “examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21-22).

Theological discernment is synonymous with individual theological and biblical thinking about issues and questions of concern. Nel (2003:75) elucidates that theological discernment is guiding the youth to understand how God works in them and through them to the world. In this research study, theological discernment is understood to intersect with faith in every sphere of youth life. It also works on the premise that biblical narrative provides the needed discernment for the faith community.

Theological discernment is normative judging through biblical and theological understanding between right and wrong, true and false, and good and evil. Some participants share this conceptualisation of theological discernment.

These participants conceptualised theological discernment as a process of being equipped with theological content through the study and teaching of the Word of God (the Bible). These participants are proponents of theological discernment as a personal way of life that informs and aids in discerning what is right or wrong. This is demonstrated by the following remarks:

Theological discernment means to have that sense of judgment of right and wrong, what you need to pick from certain things (Participant Y 2);

Theological discernment is being able to think of how the Bible expects you to behave. That is allowing your behaviour to show your theological belief. Your interaction with the Scriptures, which form your theology, shows in your behaviour. We will see [it] in how you behave rightly or wrongly (Participant YPCED 2);

Theology is the study of God's Word (the Bible). God's Word informs theology and peoples' theology equips them with theological content for theological discernment (Participant YPCED 5);

Theological discernment is a phenomenon and personal way of life in the sense that, for instance, you have gone to the market to buy music, you should be able to know if this music you want to buy is right for you or not, that is one aspect (Participant YPCED 6).

Synergising the conceptualisations of theological discernment of Participant YPCED 6 and Participant YPCED 5, I deduce that theological discernment is the phenomenon of being able to discern right and wrong as informed by their personal understanding of a biblical and theological sense of judgement. According to Participant YPCED 2, human behaviour in responding to right and wrong is a litmus test that demonstrates theological understanding.

Within the ECWA context, conceptualisation of theological discernment is described as discerning what is right from what is wrong, but adds that theological discernment is understanding right and wrong from a biblical perspective. Discerning right and wrong is informed by biblical and theological injunction. According to these participants, theological discernment is being equipped with biblical and theological understanding to discern between right and wrong, good and evil.

Theological discernment is also seen as being able to discern right from wrong through the gift of discernment as enabled by the Holy Spirit, as expressed by these responses:

Theological discernment is being able to discern what is right and wrong, as written in the Scriptures, but we also need the Holy Spirit for discernment. We have to ensure that we discern rightness and wrongness by the spirit of discernment. In fact, the spirit of discernment is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is not everything that comes in the name of God that has God's approval, so the issue of theological discernment cannot overemphasise, that is where we have to distinguish what is coming from God, denomination or devils. Nobody can do that for us except we who are in tune with the Spirit of God that will be able to give direction on rightness and wrongness (Participant YPCED 6);

There are things I do and things I do not do because I could hear God telling me through the gift of discernment on how to respond to life situations (Participant YPCED 1).

According to YPCED 6 and YPCED 1, theological discernment is a gift of the Holy Spirit that aids theological discernment in regard to the judgement of right and wrong.

Two participants gave examples of how theological discernment engages concerns of interest as regard to judging between right and wrong, and good and evil. It is worth sharing the examples at length here:

You have friends who are faithful to you, if they say they want to come with you when you have a business talk or what has to do with education, and these people smoke (I am not saying I have friends that do that), and they come on time, they are actually dedicated to their work, they are educated minds, they are very wise, but that fact that they smoke is a disadvantage to your relationship with them. So are you going to carry that aspect of smoking along the character you are involved with, or are you going to carry the fact that he is punctual in whatever he does and he is dedicated to whatever he lays his hands upon to do? That is discernment. Based on that, if I look at his lifestyle, I realise that this guy is supposed to be at UBA by 2 pm and he is going to be back in the next 45 minutes and he goes there at 2 pm and he comes to meet me 45 minutes later. That is something I should learn from him. And he does it at different occasions, at five times he said, Okay, I will meet you at this spot, he is not going to lie to you, and he is not going to stand you up. Or let's just use money, for example, he will say I need to use this amount of money to do so and so and you actually give the money to him and he brings back the money with profit, this is someone who is business thinking, but he smokes cigarettes and drinks alcohol. So I am actually going to pick the fact that he is keeping himself busy as a successful businessman. Those are the kind of people I want to associate with, but I have to discern not to pick the character of smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol along with the good features of how to become a successful businessman that comes with that person. You know that is unacceptable in the ECWA. If he becomes pushy on you to also learn the smoking and drinking alcohol, I feel you need to cut off that relationship, else the ECWA will put me on church discipline. But you have benefitted in how to do business (Participant Y 2);

Some people think you have to go to seminary before you can have theological content to aid discernment. I believe everybody is a theologian in their own right, because the moment you are reading and making a comment on Scripture, you are already theologising. The impact of theology in discernment depends largely on the background of the person who is theologising. So that if I have a group of young people who are equipped with scriptures and adults in the church to live a Christian life, their understanding and interpretation of Scripture will be different from somebody who has not been equipped. So youth can theologise from their interaction with the Scriptures. This theologising is what enables youth to make choices (Participant YPCED 2).

Youth interaction with the Scriptures and learning the Christian faith from adults can make them lay theologians. I further asked him about the challenges of the youth as lay theologians who may not be theologising correctly. He responded by saying:

I would say that if we find young people not theologising correctly, it would be because they have not been equipped and taught by those who are supposed to be their teachers and mentors from the church. Some Christian teachers and mentors are not giving out the total Gospel, but giving Gospel with interior reasons, denominational rules and policies instead of the total Gospel of God's Word.

The youth fall prey to false theologising when they do not meet the right Christian teachers and mentors. By right teachers, this participant means Christian teachers who teach the Gospel, and not those who present their denominational rules as the Gospel.

5.2.3 Understanding of HHC

HHC is a global and glocal phenomenon that embodies an entire way of life for those immersed in it, and a cultural outlet of expression that influences the behavioural patterns of people – not only the youth (Vito, 2015:397; Shonekan, 2010:8; Kobin and Tyson, 2006:344; Osundare, 2005:70; Kelley, 1994:52). Some participants shared similar opinions about HHC when I asked about their understanding of HHC. Some participants commented that HHC is a culture that defines a hip hop lifestyle as expressed through different elements such as HH music, deejaying and different outlets of expression such as fashion (dress), slanguage and classically conditioning to certain behavioural expressions of exuberance:

Hip hop culture is our lifestyle, your way of life that makes us live in a hip hop way. You see it in the way we dress, talk and behave. It has already eaten deep into our Christian way of singing; you will see some new beat that you hear outside, you hear it in the church, but with different Christian lyrics. We the youth and even some older people I see in church are moving along very, very well with hip hop music (Participant Y 6);

Hip hop culture is like any other genre of music in as much as we have bits of genres of music. It gravitates us, the youth to satisfaction. I see HHC as an opportunity to evangelise to those who use hip hop for a negative purpose. HHC fans can easily evangelise HHC fans with the Gospel of Jesus (Participant Y 15);

It is a genre of music. It is all about this music that involves loud sounds and jumping. Culture is people's way of life, the way they do things, relate with one another and things that are obtainable

within that community. Going by the word, hip hop culture could mean the youth culture, culture of exuberance (Participant Y 7);

Well, you know in every generation, from time to time you have certain things that will come up. I remember in those days when we were growing up we were going for disco dancing and dancing to disco music in clubs, and we were dancing to disco musicians. After that time we now have another paradigm – youth started doing hip hop and rap. In fact, this hip hop thing has been here in the city for a very long time. And I don't know if I should say fortunately or unfortunately, but I think it has even crept into the church; you see in some of the gospel songs, you see youth behaving like the fruit of the culture through dressing, dancing and language (Participant YPCED 6);

HHC has to do with worldly music, any music that is worldly. Of course we know that the foundation of worldly music is not from God. Anything that has to do with hip hop has no God in it, and it is worldly. HHC is a Western, ungodly music and I do not think a Christian should be in love with such music (Participant YPCED 6).

For some of these participants HHC is conceptualised as an American lifestyle similar to the trend in most of the Pentecostal churches – wearing trousers, leaving the hair uncovered in church and living a free lifestyle. HHC is a Western white man's way of life that is imported into Africa. Conceptualising HHC in Nigeria, they also gave a background to the evolving of HHC in Nigerian society.

From these findings, I discovered that some elements and outlets of HHC as documented in literature, such as graffiti, are not experienced by the participants, while others, like dancing and dress, are experienced more by the participants. In this study, HHC is conceptualised as an outlet of expression through which the youth show and share behaviours through different elements and outlets of expression.

CATEGORY A: Programmes

The questions administered to the participants were categorised under: Programmes, HHC, and Theological discernment. Thus, I clustered the participant responses under these categories which serve as guide to answering the research question “How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment required for them to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within the contemporary hip hop youth culture?”. These questions were simplified into three smaller units by creating

the three categories that also structure the reporting of the findings as explained in section 5.1.2.

One of the questions and response under the category of programme: “Who is responsible for the drafting the annual ECWA youth week programme?”

It's the president, the youth president that's at the headquarters (Participant YL 8);

I think it should be from the fellowship executive at the international level, and in combination with the CE department, that is what I think (Participant YPCED 7);

Well, usually at the beginning of each year, in fact before the particular year runs over like we are in 2017 before the year runs out, the GCC must have met and come up with a topic for the next year and then it will be communicated to the secretaries of each DCC, chairmen of each DCC, and then at the beginning of next year, the calendar will come out. You know we have ECWA calendars and all of that from the GCC, so those things will reflect there. Once you see it you already know we have a new year, but generally it will be communicated to the general church council members by GCC members; we're talking about the DCC, the chairmen and secretary of the DCC, and then the delegate (Participant YPCED 6).

There is uncertainty as regard to who drafts the ECWA programmes. The responses include that the ECWA CED drafts the ECWA annual programme, that ECWA youth fellowship week is drafted by the international leaders and the general church board; that it is drafted by the leadership of the ECWA youth fellowship at national level, because the programme comes from national level. This indicates that there is need for clarity as regard to who is responsible for drafting the ECWA programmes.

In response to the question “Who decides the annual ECWA theme for all programmes?” the general response was that the ECWA EE are responsible for the annual ECWA themes. So there was a clear understanding that the ECWA EE are the spiritual leaders who decide on the annual theme in ECWA. This annual theme informs the subject of discussion of all ECWA ministry programmes (youth, men's and women's fellowship).

5.3 Drafting of Programmes

In seeking to discover the respondents' views on how the ECWA youth week programmes and themes for each year are drafted, this research study generated answers to questions

regarding who is responsible for drafting the ECWA youth week programmes and themes. The study also generated themes from the respondents on the reason why the spiritual leaders and not the ECWA youth determine the yearly themes for their youth meetings. Osmer's practical theological interpretive task seeks to find out why things happen the way they do. Osmer (2008:83) argues that the interpretive task guides the student (researcher) to identify the issues embedded within the episodes, situations, and contexts. It seeks to find out the 'why' of underlying issues within a context. Thus, this theme explains why the spiritual leaders draft the annual themes and programmes for the ECWA youth.

5.3.1 Adult (spiritual leaders) drafting programmes for the youth

Stanton (2015:9) argues that spiritual leaders take responsibility for their faith community when they lead a Christian community, demonstrating their values and beliefs system. In ECWA youth ministry, the CEOs are gatekeepers and spiritual leaders who preserve the culture of the church under the leadership of the EE through the CED. Thus, the programmes are drafted at the CED then disseminated to the youth through the CEOs.

Some responses on the role of the CEOs as spiritual leaders in ECWA are:

Making sure that members of the church are educated theologically (Participant YPCED 3);

One of the major things that the CEO organise at the DCC, LCC level or the LCB level is to have them and make sure they understand the Bible doctrine so that the youth will not drift to the left or to the right pursuing what they want to pursue outside the Bible Then we organise seminars for them from time to time and it's a way of teaching them the fundamentals of the Bible, fundamentals of life to make sure they have all they need, they don't just follow people seeing them doing but to make sure they are doing their own thing, pursuing their career in the Bible way. As CEOs we make sure that they are in line with ECWA constitution and because we are talking about ECWA constitution and youth fellowship guide, so that they don't mess it up, they don't over use power so they don't go beyond what they are supposed to do (Participant YPCED 5);

The CEOs represents ECWA as a denomination to see that whatever goes to ECWA youth (and members) is doctrinally in line with ECWA's articles of faith (Participant YPCED 7);

I have always said that anybody that has no individual that tell you, or give you direction, that person is lost. If you do not have anybody who said this is right do it or this is wrong do not do it, particularly a young person, then that young person is in trouble. So this young people are under

the leaders of the church so it is not out of place for the leaders to tell them what programme and discussions to have (Participant YPCED 6);

We have gone through this youthful life before so we have had experience (Participant YPCED 6).

These participants responded that adults draft the programmes for the youth to give them direction, and guide them with the ECWA constitution, so the youth are guided in good behaviour. Another reason the CEOs draft the programmes for the youth is the intention to guide the youth theologically. When I asked Participant YPCED 10 his thoughts on the process of adults drafting programmes for the youth instead of the youth drafting it for themselves, he said that programmes are written and handed to the youth for implementation as an approach of giving the youth direction and moving the church forward. He also explained that since the adults who drafts the programmes at the ECWA headquarters were once youth, they have experience of the realities of youthful life.

Although the findings indicate that youth programs in ECWA are designed by CEOs who are adults, and not youths, this may not be an effective approach because it does not fully involve the youths. A more effective model could be the two-way approach of Maiko (2007:15). Maiko (2007:15) argues for a two-way model of teach in faith communities in the sense that the Christian faith and Christian life should be taught and modelled through a relational approach between the youth and spiritual leaders. That is, spiritual leaders need to pay attention to understand the youth's conceptions and how they walk with God, which informs their process of making meaning of the realities in society. But the youth also need to be taught by spiritual leaders on their Christian life and Christian faith. The guiding notion is that youth and spiritual leaders are together in a God-relationship because they are all made in the image of God (Hunsinger, 2015:140; Maiko, 2007:15)

5.3.2 Youth drafting programmes for themselves

Youth and youth leaders are cultural gatekeepers who understand the cultural context of the society in which they live, and how the cultural context influences their concerns of interest in regard to the challenges they pose to their Christian faith, Christian life and engagement in ministry. Explaining the praxis of cultural gatekeepers in society, Bergler (2010:21) argues that cultural gatekeepers are participants of cultural realities and practitioners who understand the cultural context in the society from an experiential perspective due to their daily involvement and engagement with the cultural realities.

The ECWA youth expressed their desire to be consulted regarding the drafting of the ECWA yearly theme because this theme determines the annual programme in ECWA for the whole year and also informs the topic of discussion at the ECWA youth fellowship week of prayers. The general opinion was that the youth and youth leaders are willing to make their own contribution to the church through their knowledge of the contemporary cultural realities and how these cultural realities are redefining how life is lived in society. Thus, they need to be encouraged to take responsibility for deciding on their annual themes in their various regions, and be equipped by ECWA through youth ministry to theologically understand how to discern in their engagement with the cultural realities of HHC in society.

Feedback on this issue, includes:

The drafted programme don't really address our issues and yet we don't have any involvement or say in what comes to us (Participant Y 11);

We should at least be given the opportunity to tell them what we think about our yearly theme and programme (Participant Y 4);

I will like youth to determine their programmes since they understand themselves and challenges better than their church leaders (Participant YPCED 10);

I don't know if they are aware because there isn't a feedback mechanism, there isn't any form of evaluation that comes up after everything, so I doubt if they will be aware. From my part, I have tried to share in an occasion or two about how these things should be done. I have shared with the Christian Education Office, with the person that is in charge of youth ministry. I have shared with them that I think you should have youth pastors develop some of these things together with other young ministry in our seminary. I have shared that with them, but concerning being aware, I don't know to what level they are aware, I can't categorically say (Participant YPCED 3);

I wish that ECWA will allow youth to give feedback about all this yearly themes that are irrelevant and bling to youth's problems (Participant YL 6),

These responses show that ECWA youth and some older adults do not so much have a problem with their spiritual leaders drafting their programmes, but seek active involvement in the choice of themes and programmes that are designed to equip them for theological discernment, especially because they (the youth) know their concerns of interest and influences in society. For Klaasen (2018:1), this scenario shows the challenge of the power

struggle between the youth (who are marginalised) and the spiritual leaders (who are the decision making bodies).

5.3.3 Hip Hop culture not discussed at youth programmes

Despite the influences of HHC among the youth (as discussed in section 5.4.1), discussions and equipping of the youth for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC are not taught at programmes in ECWA churches for different reasons as narrated by participants:

HHC is not even discussed at our fellowship meeting because there is no platform to do such discussion. In my church, I cannot really say my mind about HHC as freely as I am talking with you now, because there is still this mentality that if you are into HHC, it is sinful; that living the HHC lifestyle does not portray you as a true Christian (Participant Y 12);

But beyond prayer, I saw that, if there are other things youths need to be taught, will be HHC – understanding HHC will go a long way. Because it would not be good for youths to discover some of these things outside, but rather in the church. Now, if these things were re-oriented in the church, and given a new way of seeing things, it will help. For example, men who fall prey to the vices of sexual women in HHC, is not because they do not pray. The Bible says watch and pray now, if you pray alone and did not watch, something will certainly befall you as you pray. Watching is actually like being a security of yourself, of the Word of God. In addition, if there are challenges, these things should be brought out properly and taught in church. In fact, all these social elements of HHC activities going on in the society, when we go to church, there are people who actually live this kind of life, I have seen men, and I am sure ECWA members are part of this, I am sure (Participant Y 14).

In ECWA, as narrated by the participants above, HHC is viewed as sinful, thus it should not be discussed in the church. Also, it is unchristian to engage in the HHC way of life. Nevertheless, HHC includes the genre of hip hop music, which can create wealth for the artist. Thus, the participants opined ECWA needs to create forums where the youth can discover and discuss the truth about HHC from the theological viewpoint of the church.

5.3.4 Youth pastors are designated by senior pastors of local churches

In the course of conducting this empirical study, I discovered a problem which was expressed by the participants. Though it was not within the scope of this study, I find it crucial to understanding salient concerns that are problematic for how ECWA youth

ministry can equip the youth for theological discernment. The problem I discovered, is that youth pastors in local churches are not necessarily equipped for youth ministry, because the senior pastors of the church designate youth pastors to work with the youth and youth leaders. That is, the district spiritual leaders (DCC executives) post a pastor to a church as associate pastor and the senior pastor determines his or her function and responsibilities in that church.

When asked about the ECWA tradition of posting a youth pastor to a local church (LCB), participants shared their realities:

The senior minister is actually assigns the responsibility of coordinating the youths in the church to a pastor and sees how best we will help them to have a better understanding of the ministry (Participant YPCED 10);

This method has its advantages and its disadvantages. Its advantage is that the LCB will have a youth pastor who can help the youth to understand youth ministry (This advantage solves a challenge raised by Participant YPCED 7).

The challenge is that one pastor runs the whole church, carries the youth, apart from the children ministry that may have some teachers assisting in that department. You find out that the church has only one pastor, whether he is a young or old person; he is the one running that church. So provisions are usually not made for the youth ministry in most/the majority of our churches (Participant YPCED 7).

The role of the youth pastor in the ECWA is uncertain because it is abstract, so much so that his expected role is to seek the opinion of the youth leadership should the youth need his advice. The responsibility of the youth pastor is designated by the senior pastor of the church. The DCC posts a pastor to the LCB, then the senior pastor designates that pastor to serve as the youth pastor of the church. So youth pastors are not designated by the DCC, who post pastors to churches, but by the senior pastor of the church. The majority of ECWA churches do not have youth pastors. They do not even have second pastors, but have only one pastor, especially in the Eastern region. The senior pastor can also choose not to designate a pastor to the youth, since it is at his discretion to do so. So people cannot rely on youth pastors to minister to the youth. This poses a challenge that I intend to explore after this research study. I will propose a method whereby the DCC, who oversees the district, can designate a youth pastor to an LCB so that the job of a youth pastor will become part of the tradition of the denomination. Some of the experiences shared resonate with my

experience when I was a youth pastor at a church. The ECWA is structured so that all agencies (youth, women's and men's fellowships) are superintended by the CEO of that LCB. The challenge becomes, when a senior pastor designates a youth pastor for the youth, what becomes of his function? Will he too be answerable to a CEO who is not theologically equipped to superintend agencies? This suggests that the youth pastor does not superintend the affairs of the youth – it is the CEO who does. This causes confusion and frustration for the youth pastor.

One remedy for this is that CEOs be trained and equipped as lay theologians who can also equip agency members as lay theologians.

For the significance of this theme, it is worth quoting this viewpoint at length because the participant shared from his own experience as a youth pastor:

The denominational system allows for two types of pastors: the senior pastor and the associate pastor, and these are people who are prepared to reach out to the adults of the church. So that when someone comes as a youth pastor, his job, so to speak, is not in the books, his job is not part of the system. And when he comes in with that designation of youth pastor he is not understood as a pastor in the church, he is rather understood as a pastor to the young people in the church. In reality he is also a pastor to everybody in the church, only that he will oversee structures within the church that reach out to young people. However, the system does not have a job description for a youth pastor – the system does not even have the designation youth pastor completely, so it becomes very, very difficult. Apart from that, there is this office within the eldership of the church that is called the Christian Education Organiser, it goes in from level to level, Christian Education Secretary, Christian Education Officer, Christian Education Organiser, Christian Education Leader. All agencies in the church – women's fellowship, men's fellowship, youth ministry, and children's ministry – all of their offices are under that Christian Education Organiser. Now that youth ministry has been introduced, things have not been restructured to state exactly the relationship between the youth pastor and the Christian Education Organiser. Because there is constantly going to be a tussle, who now oversees the youth ministry, is it the Christian Education Organiser or the youth pastor that has been employed? Now in many churches, this particular problem has caused a rift and they will have to change the title of the youth pastor from youth pastor to associate pastor, otherwise the youth pastor will have to answer to the Christian Education Organiser. So you see, that is where the whole problem in the system just comes up (Participant YPCED 3);

The youth pastor does not have a place – that is exactly what I was trying to say earlier on. The youth pastor doesn't yet have a place, he is still an idea somewhere abstractly, not concretely. As a

matter of fact, I have heard some leadership of the Christian Education Office that would say the youth pastor, categorically, and this is verbatim, “the youth pastor has nothing to do with the youths, what the youth pastor should do is, he should go to the leadership of the youths and tell them if you have any advice, come and seek for it”. Two top officers from the Christian Education Office made this statement at a conference, I think almost a year and a half ago, at a conference that had youth workers and Christian Education Officers and both of them said it, that the youth pastors should not meddle in the affairs of the youth fellowship; rather, they should just avail themselves for the leadership of the youth fellowship if they want any advice or mentoring, and that is all. So the youth pastor, as he has been called, has been told to stay away from his primary congregation, the youths. He has been told he has nothing to do with them. I wonder really if the system really understands the place of the youth pastor (Participant YPCED 3).

5.3.5 Programme for Cosmopolitan cities and rural areas

Some participants expressed their viewpoints about the practice of disseminating same programme and theme to youth in cosmopolitan cities and rural areas. Participants shares their dissatisfaction on the practice,

I disagree with the ECWA model of using the same youth programme and theme for both urban and rural areas. I don't think the same programme and yearly theme speaks to both rural and urban areas. I think ECWA should generate a different programme and theme for each location, because it will address things that relates to that particular area (Participants Y 16);

Our ECWA programme does not meet the need of youth in the urban area. My opinion is that programme to urban areas should address contemporary issues like the hip hop culture because it is the in-thing in urban cities (Participants YL 5);

Youth in rural areas and youth in the city are not having the same challenges, though they are all youths. We can actually be youths but even our perspective is not the same. It tends to be that the people in the rural areas have fewer problems to those in the urban city, because, here, in the city you have lots of things contending for your attention unlike the village. So releasing one programme to serve youth in rural areas and city will not really address the challenges of both geographically located. So that's my understanding (Participant Y 14);

The person who drafts the programme, for him, he organize it with the consent of the location where he is staying in the North. But down here in the east, the programme doesn't speak to us, because Eastern Nigeria is not the same as Northern Nigeria. Likewise, challenges in the city are not the same as rural areas (Participant Y8).

According to these participants, the geographical location of cosmopolitan cities and rural areas are not the same. So same programme for both context does not address the challenges

of cosmopolitan cities. Participant Y8 added another dimension that, the programme is a Norrthen programme that addresses Northern challenges and not challenges in the Eastern Nigeria. I will need to explore this observation further after this study because it is not in purview of this research study.

CATEGORY B: HIP HOP CULTURE

Category B includese themes that reflect opinions and viewpoints of participants in response to questions relating to HHC. HHC is a phenomenon, a way of life, an ideology, a values system, an attitude and a lived praxis with distinctive peculiarities (Smith, 2013:9). The distinctive peculiarities are expressed through different behavioural patterns, lifestyle as lived by the cultural practitioners.

I discovered that HHC is a prevalent culture in the Nigerian society as participants from different regions report the prevalence of HHC in their respective regions. The prevalence poses different challenges and opportunities to youth ministry as it influences the youth and youth leaders alike.

5.4 Prevalence of Hip Hop Culture in Nigeria

Adedeji (2013:1) argues that HHC is a phenomenon that is the fastest growing youth-driven culture in Nigeria. I asked the youth and youth leaders “How prevalent is HHC in your community? And some responses are narrated below. To the youth and youth leaders, HHC is an undeniable reality in their communities and neighbourhoods. And even though their spiritual leaders live in denial of HHC, they are active gatekeepers of HHC. Evidence of the prevalence of HHC in the community is the response of the youth in church music with hip hop vibes, and music in buses, barbershops, garages and even in shops on the street. The element of hip hop music leads the youth to express themselves on various levels in hip hop style. It is clear that the church needs to address the phenomenon of HHC urgently, because it is here to stay:

I have observed that this HHC is something that is prevalent today in our community, it is not peculiar to a particular place. HHC is everywhere (Participant Y 7);

No matter what our spiritual leaders are saying because of their ECWA culture, HHC is as real as it gets among the youth (Participant Y 15);

I would say ECWA youth are really involved with HHC in secrecy. Some are involved in denial, but if you want to know Christian youth's involvement in hip hop, probably you should choose a gospel song that has a hip hop vibe and then see the kind of reception it gets. You would see youth gathering there (Participant Y 15);

I have noticed that most of my students and their friends in high school want to do things the fast way, not just them but even young boys in our neighbourhood, so they want to behave in a certain hip hop way, make money fast so as to flenjoy [to enjoy]; so they generally want to dress and do fashion in a certain way that is peculiar to them (Participant Y 13);

HHC is undeniable because it is taking over the world because even in the music world, like four, six years back, Lecrae (a gospel hip hop artist) and he got the award as best MBA or is it GRAMMY music artist of the year, rapper of the year and he is a gospel artist and he is doing hip hop. I truly believe that HHC is something we really need to address and address fast because it is here to stay and it is not going anywhere. HHC is an expressive form that is everywhere – whether you like it or not. It is in your face. It is everywhere in the society and churches who have adapted to this means of expression in worship are more attractive to the youth than churches who are yet to understand the impact of HHC... (Participant YL 11);

HHC is all around me. I know it has to do with the music culture particularly and the popular doing and trends of any particular generation, especially young people and hip hop culture. I hear the music in buses, barbershops, garages and even in shops on the street. It is a big issue for the churches and youth because people cannot help but be influenced by the environment we are and they find themselves. And it is a big issue in youth ministry because the culture affects the Christian culture we would have loved the youth to exhibit, so there is a conflict between hip hop culture, which we discard, but there is a lot of it that is unsavoury for our Christian development (Participant YL 4);

Really, I think the time we are in now is the hip hop season. It has crept into the church, but whether it is for good or for bad, only time will tell. In some churches, especially Pentecostal churches, you see people rap in the course of singing gospel songs, they adapt it, rightly or wrongly. But for me what is important is the spirit behind whatever everybody is doing. Even though ECWA is fighting this movement not to happen in church, but it is in the youth already. I think discernment on the rightness or wrongness should be the goal and not fighting youth over a culture that is everywhere in the city (Participant YPCED 6).

HHC is prevalent in cosmopolitan cities. In fact, very prevalent was the word used. It is a culture for every tribe, and it is a central location for everyone. In HHC everyone is neutral,

there is no tribe, language, culture – it is like any modern city in the world. HHC can be seen everywhere in society – whether it is discussed in church or not.

HHC is not just a culture that is prevalent in Nigerian cities, it is a way of life for all those who are youth. Respondent Y 15 stated that: “Hip-hop culture, from what I know from the secular background before now, I think hip-hop is for the youth, it is a kind of dance that is being enjoyed in hip hop culture. I can say it has to do with the culture of the youth, the way of life for the youth.” She argued that HHC is not just prevalent among the youth, and it is not just a youth culture – it is the real life of the youth. She explained: “What I mean is that whether or not it is spoken about, it is staying, it is selling, youths are listening to it, so it is as real as it gets, whether the church talks about it – it does not reduce”.

Comments like these raise the concern that the ECWA youth seem to be well informed about the reality of HHC’s prevalence among the youth in society, but spiritual leaders in church do not create the enabling opportunity to have it addressed, neither are the spiritual leaders addressing it.

Therefore, it is crucial that ECWA recognises that the youth who are ECWA members are faced with HHC in society and need to be trained and equipped for responding to the prevailing culture, rather than living in denial of HHC. The youth may not be allowed to talk about HHC in church, but the church cannot determine how they engage with HHC in community. Participants allude to this argument of ECWA equipping the youth to engage with HHC because it is already a cultural way of life among the youth in the community, especially the youth in cosmopolitan cities. The equipping of youth faith will aid their decisions and life choices. Weber (2017:2) argues that the faith of youth and their identity formation towards maturity impacts their responses in their interaction with worldviews and contesting faith traditions. Thus, Christian youth need to be equipped for discernment in their interaction with the divergent views and praxis of HHC that are prevalent in society.

5.4.1 Prevalence of HHC through the traditional and social media

Social media is a boundless technological web-based media, and networking sites create platforms that empower individuals and corporate institutions to disseminate any sort of information, engage in user interaction and create personalities, identities and spirituality that inform choices in society (Ogidi, 2015:14; Osatuyi, 2013:2622; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010:59; Boyd and Ellison, 2008:211; Qualman, 2011:64). Social media as a boundless technological web-based media space creates platforms that are frequently and often used

for intergenerational engagement among both young and old (Pirraglia and Kravitz, 2012:165; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010:59).

Social media creates boundless space for the creation and promotion of HHC as a way of life and outlet of expression. Lomibao Richard in Times magazine of February 24, 2015 narrates that social media creates platforms to reach out and engage HH artists and fans. Through the boundless space of social media, HH artists express their stories, thoughts and viewpoints to their followers. Social media is also a broader space to express elements and cultural outlets in society.

For example, social media gives HH artists more space to reach out and share cultural outlets with fans on social media networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to name just a few. Lomibao (2015) argues that with social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, HH artist fans can easily engage their role models and learn from them regarding trends on fashion, dance, graffiti artistic innovation and slanguage. Participants shared how HHC is prevalent through the platforms of social media:

Because of the social media (networking) that people have nowadays, like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and all that, you will discover that as soon as something hits the city it gets going that very moment. It is exported to other people through these social media links and so people are gisting [sharing, discussing] concepts, ways of life and ideas with just the touch of a button (Participant YPCED 2);

They (youth) learn by what they see on social media and think the society should be exactly like they see it on social media... Unfortunately, the church does not talk about this HHC thing, in order to give the right perspective to the youth on social media (Participant Y 13);

A social media website called Genius helps gives stories about rap music. It does equip me to live the life, it helps me understand what I need to know from the artist and models lifestyle, and it equips me to know what is right and wrong in hip hop culture, like sagging (Participant Y 2);

With the advent of the internet now it is easier to access people's life, it's easier to see people; you can Google any of these hip hop artists, the famous ones, the ones who are doing very well with the best songs. Just yesterday, I was watching a video on YouTube and I just watched how one hip hop artist progressed from selling 25 000 copies of his first music album release to selling 300 000 (Participant Y 12).

HHC is prevalent in society through the means of social media. The youth are learning the right and wrong of HHC on social media. Participants also commented that some youth and churches “do not even know what is wrong and right about HHC”. The fact that social media offers a platform for HHC, is an invitation for youth ministry to equip the youth on how to engage HHC on social media. This suggests programmes to equip them for dealing with social media and HHC, especially because HHC is a prevalent phenomenon in society.

5.4.2 The conflict of cultures: Traditional and hip hop culture

Adama (2015:115), writing on the conflict of cultures in Nigeria, argues on the cultural conflict between Christianity and African Traditional Religion that there is always a cultural conflict of encounter when two cultures co-exist. Participant Y 5 narrated a cultural conflict, but unlike Adama, who wrote on the cultural conflict between Christianity and African Traditional Religion, Participant Y 5 referred to the conflict between traditional culture that is prevalent among parents and HHC that is prevalent among the youth.

Today the hip hop youth culture is actually the one I think is majorly disputing between the normal traditional culture and the law of the society because of the dispensational gap that exists between the parents and the youth of today. Parents have certain expectations from the youth, the youth also have expectations that are different from what the parents want from them. And that being the case, you see that the parents want them to behave in a certain way but the youths today behave in their own hip hop way (Participant Y 5);

The hip hop culture is an ‘imported culture’ and a culture that is influencing growth in the churches today. Unfortunately, or fortunately, any church that stick with the traditional parents culture and does not conform to this imported culture are losing its youth members to other churches (Pentecostal churches) who understand the times by importing this HHC into their liturgy of worship (Participant YL 8).

HHC is in tension with traditional culture, thus creating a gap and tension in relationships and understanding between parents and the youth. This gap manifests in the realm of expectations; parents have un-met expectations of the youth and vice versa. However, churches that adopt HHC in their worship, are seen to understand the time, because they draw more members than churches who are traditional in the liturgy of worship. For the co-existing of two or more cultures, Adama (2015:115) argues for a cross-fertilisation and interaction of ideologies, lifestyles, concepts and belief systems. Such cross-fertilisation

demands the borrowing, adaptation and appropriation of ideologies, lifestyles, and belief systems.

5.5 The Influence of Hip Hop Culture

According to Kobin and Tyson (2006:345) HHC influences the youth lifestyle. The lyrics in hip hop music are messages that influence the youth lifestyle. The writers of hip hop lyrics in songs convey messages that inform a hip hop culture lifestyle. These messages, which convey the artist's opinion on issues (religious, political and social), are translated into emulated lifestyles that become a way of life. Kobin and Tyson (2006:345) further note that in regard to influence, the themes and entertainment content in HH songs are transferred by the youth into learned behaviour. This lifestyle and behaviour becomes a way of life that the youth express in values, actions and conducts. These values, actions and conducts could be perceived or known as negative or positive influences in the lives of the youth as narrated by participants. That is, the participants narrated that HHC is influencing the youth in different ways that can be perceived as negative or positive:

HHC already has a followership that is very wide and large and for us to deny that hip hop culture has an influence in our churches today, it will be very naïve to think that HHC does not have a say in our churches today because as long as there are young people, definitely young people are sold to this hip hop culture (Participant YPCED 2);

Outside the church, they see it. So if I do hip hop at home, I am not allowed to do it in church, I wouldn't want to come so that you won't tell me that what I am doing isn't spiritual. I have faced that when I want to dance, but then I cannot express myself because people would definitely say something is wrong about it. Therefore, I live my life at home and in school, but play according to the church's script when am in church (Participant Y 1).

The influence of HHC is evident in the lives of the youth at home, at school and in church. The youth are influenced by the reality of HHC in society and it translates into their worship in church. However, in situations where they do not have the liberty to express themselves in worship in church, they adhere to the church's way of life and live according to the scripts of ECWA. Youth 'play according to church scripts' when they are in church, and thus create the pretence of a lifestyle. The youth come to church and behave in accordance with the ECWA's supposed cultural standard, but are certainly influenced by HHC, and thus live and behave in pretence regarding involvement in HHC.

5.5.1 Negative influence of hip hop culture

The negative influence of HHC expresses in actions. It manifests in how the youth behave in emulation of what they see in the lives, music and entertainment of HH artists. For example, Participant YL 11 narrated how she pierced her nose because of the influence of an artist called Tupac Shakur:

I was once influenced negatively in time past when I pierced my nose because of a secular hip hop rapper called Tupac. When I gave my life to Christ, I started listening to hip hop gospel artists like Lacrae, Da Truth because I still enjoy rap music but now my music life is to glorify Christ (Participant YL 11);

It makes ladies to wear trousers to church which is a sin in ECWA church (Participant Y 12);

If somebody is wearing a tattoo, they want to have one, or if somebody is wearing a big chain on his neck. And some of these people they are copying are completely unchristian. They may not know why they are doing it, some are even cultists and some of the things they do even reflect their cultist background... since they want to go with the other persons, singers, artists (Participant YPCED 1);

That youth just copy somebody who is in a different culture, in a different world, in a different class entirely. It has a negative effect because you do not know the spirit controlling those people, you just want to be like them, and you do not want to be who God has made you to be – original (Participant Y 13).

The negative influence of HHC in the Nigerian society is that it influences youth into nose piercing, tattoos and the emulation of lifestyles that constitute sinfulness according to the church doctrinal and theological tenets of ECWA.

5.5.2 Positive influence of hip hop culture

HHC also influences the youth in positive ways as it provides the platform to promote individual and communal belief. It also promotes employment to create wealth. The participants argued that HHC provides the platform for people to express their beliefs and thoughts about any concern of interest by sharing the convictions and messages. One participant's opinion of the genre of hip hop music is that it can create wealth for the artist.

The positive influence of HHC is that it creates youth employment and improves youth access to wealth. Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016:116) argue that HH music in

Nigeria is a multi- business music industry that has created a source of income for the Nigerian youth, empowering them in the process. Some participants shared:

One positive influence of HHC is that it is used to promote beliefs through hip hop music (Participant Y 12);

I can make much money through HHC because I just watched how one hip hop artist progressed from selling 25 000 copies of his first music album release to selling 300 000. Then next he goes to selling 600 000 copies (Participant Y 12);

The opportunities or privileges of HHC is that ministrations could be happen when such persons are Christians and godly. If we can have youths who can be equipped for youth ministry, then they can become like shining examples for the rest to follow. While it possesses challenges, it can also provide opportunities to project godly youths who have excelled. Even at the local level, you will find some Christian, godly heroes who could serve as examples for them to follow (Participant YPCED 1);

Youth can learn from HH artists like Nicki Minaj, who through hard work and discipline has become a celebrity, but must not learn from her promotion of herself through nudity as shown in magazines and her song title Anaconda (Participant Y 13);

...learn discipline from a celebrity like Cristiano Ronaldo, but should not copy his acts of ego as if it was not God who for gave him the skills, and his behaviour of posing with pants in magazines and on social media (Participant Y 13).

Participant Y 13's viewpoint suggests the need for equipping the youth for theological discernment. She argues for instance, that the youth should discern constructively from celebrities like Cristiano Ronaldo and Nicky Minaj without emulating certain aspects of their lives because of their (the youth's) Christian faith and belief. Thus, she emphasises the need for the youth to theologically discern what to learn from celebrities and what not to emulate. Her viewpoint also points to the fact that, although HHC is seldom discussed at ECWA youth meetings, she is knowledgeable about HH artists like Nicky Minaj and the content of her songs.

5.6 The ECWA Culture

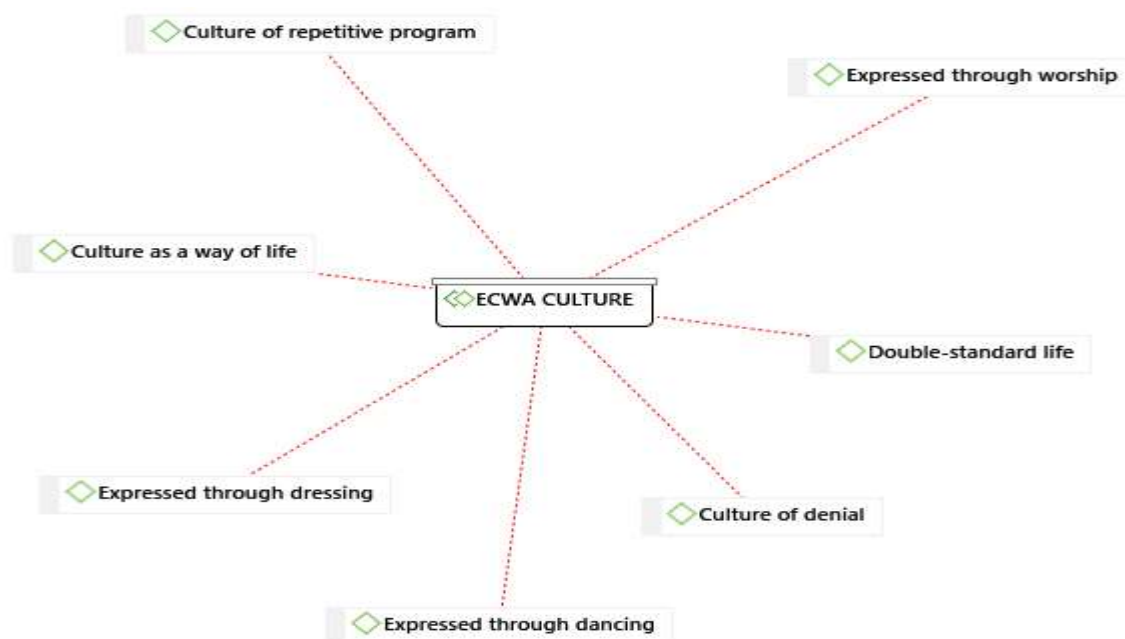


Figure 5.2: The ECWA culture

The figure above gives a summary of the themes of ECWA culture as narrated below. The participants gave this research an ideology and way of life called the ECWA culture. Culture can be an ideological belief system of how things are done and how life should be lived. The ECWA culture resonates with these different concepts of culture as an ideological belief, how things are done and people's way of life. The views of participant Y 1 explain these concepts as experienced in ECWA. When I asked her how the ECWA youth programme equips her to engage with HHC, she talked about the structured ECWA culture and how it is enshrined in the denomination. This concept caught my attention because, having served as a youth pastor in ECWA for over a decade, I had never heard of the concept and praxis called ECWA culture, even though I am familiar with the elements that the respondent categorised to describe what she coined ECWA culture.

5.6.1 Culture as an ideological belief

In terms of culture as an ideological belief in people's minds and thoughts, the youth feel that the ECWA culture does not afford the youth the liberty to express their opinions.

The ECWA structure is not built in a way that the youths are expressive of their own culture. You may not even know that ECWA has a structured culture that does not allow youth to be expressive... (Participant Y 1);

In ECWA, some things are unspoken rules, while some things are made clear (Participant YL 11).

It is a culture that does not allow the youth to be expressive of their opinions, experiences and thoughts.

5.6.2 Culture of repetitive programmes

In regard to culture as a way of doing things, Participant Y 1 opined that ECWA culture consists of repetitive programmes:

ECWA ... is busy repeating programmes on topics which generally are not really a problem to youth right now; Bible studies today, prayer meeting tomorrow, visitations or you go to persons, it has just been the same thing over and over again. And it is not even taken into consideration that they need to ask us, the youth, if the programmes are relevant to us or not. ECWA does not do things relating to us at all... ECWA will need to change its culture of just writing programmes and sending them to us.... (Participant Y 1).

ECWA culture is accustomed to repetitive programmes that are predictable and do not take into consideration its lifestyle relevance to the youth. The programmes are written and sent to the youth for implementation. This respondent explained that the structured ECWA culture is such that the youth do not question a programme drafted and given to them. As argued by Davaney (2001:5), this way of doing things, has formed the community throughout history. That is, ECWA's way of doing things as narrated by Participant Y 1, has become part of and defines the history of the church culture.

5.6.3 Culture as a way of life

Culture is people's way of life and a commonality of shared behaviour, experiences, customs and slanguage that is practiced and lived by the people (Cloete, 2012:2; Ogidi, 2015:28; Poyntz, 2012:111). Poyntz (2012:111) argues that this commonality of shared behaviour and experience of people impacts their lived life and informs their values and experiences. Culture is a shared patterned behaviour that is lived as a way of life. This behaviour is expressed and patterned as way of life through spoken languages, dress and

lifestyle. Some participants explained how the ECWA culture is expressed as a way of life through different patterns as narrated by the respondents.

ECWA culture as a way of life is expressed through dress:

ECWA culture is a pattern of lifestyle, worship, dressing. The ECWA church has its standard; ladies have to cover their hair, you will not wear a skirt below your knees, you have to wear it above your knees, even your hairstyle – you cannot have coloured hair. You know ladies can't wear trousers in ECWA. That is a rule that has been in place from time immemorial. But I even heard of an ECWA pastor who quarrels about women who are doing make up, braiding hair, and fixing attachments. There is this ECWA culture that sometimes wants to tell you how to dress. For example, I have worn a gown to church and an elderly person in church said to me that the gown is too tight because it shows the shape of my body... In ECWA 'we don't do this, we don't do that.' Also, I heard my pastor on the pulpit the other day saying that women who don't cover their hair to church are not respectable women (Participant YL 11);

... for the guys there are some kinds of clothes you can't put on; like putting on jeans and sagging it. You can put on jeans but don't sag it, if you want to dress, dress decently. These are the morals we have been trained with, and over the years, most of us have been born and bred in ECWA that way. So we sometimes pretend to abide by it (Participant Y 8);

Even when we were going for an excursion outside church premises, some of the youth came to me and asked, 'Nanle, can we wear trousers?' Of course, some of them came with trousers that day and went with us from the church, but nothing happened because that was an outing, but if it were on Sunday morning, you can't do that, you'll never see an ECWA lady wearing trousers and coming to church (Participant Y 12);

... you dress properly by not showing your buttocks or any private part (sexual organ)... (Participant YPCED 1);

The church teaches that it is a sin for a lady to wear trousers to church (Participant Y 12).

ECWA culture as a way of life is expressed through dance:

In terms of dancing, when you begin to dance, there are some dances that entice or distract people's attention, which should be avoided. Everybody has a way or cultural way of dancing – Hausa have, Igbo have, and Yoruba also have theirs. But once we discover that when a youth is dancing and

shaking their buttocks, it is a sign that that dance does not glorify God. People are encouraged to dance normally or so to say (Participant YPCED 1);

In ECWA guidelines, we are meant to understand that you don't put on trousers, you don't listen to some styles of music, and you don't dance in a certain way, style (Participant Y 8).

ECWA culture as a way of life is expressed through worship:

ECWA culture is a pattern of ... worship (Participant t YL 11).

The concept and practices of ECWA culture has to do with the ECWA standard of how to worship God in church, and one's lifestyle and mode of dress – especially how women should dress to church, such as no tight dresses that reveal the body shape, no dresses that are sexually revealing, no trousers, attachments or uncovered hair. Participants also noted that they sometimes pretend to abide by the ECWA principles and guidelines, since they were born into that culture.

5.6.4 Culture of denial

Though the youth seem to obey this embedded ECWA culture, participants narrate that the ECWA culture causes the youth to live in denial:

They (youth) lives in denial because they pretend to obey these cultural expression when they are in church, but actually live differently at home and in the society (Participant Y 8);

I think what youth are calling ECWA culture is a denial culture from ECWA. It is a denial culture because ECWA is in denial and refusing to learn the realities in the society as it pertains to their youth. I think ECWA feels that if you don't talk about it, then all is well (Participant Y 15);

I think for me ECWA have the standard that has been maintained over time but I think they have refused to acknowledge the growth or the contemporary trends that are happening in this century like HHC.... In ECWA the young people are more than the old people, yet they are being slowed down with words like, 'we have been youth like you before' (Participant YL 11).

Participants in the youth (Y) and youth leader (YL) categories reported that the ECWA culture is a culture of denial because it refuses to acknowledge and address the realities in society. Evidence of such denial is the refusal to acknowledge and address contemporary trends of HHC. The viewpoints of participants from the category of youth pastors, CEOs

and DECs (YPCED) explain why the viewpoints of Participants Y 15 and YL 11 are a reality in the ECWA culture.

Well, it is difficult to know what influence this HHC is having on youth because I do not know what they do in their homes, but when they are in church, we watch over them. I have not seen HHC as an influence on youth because it has not been discussed in our interaction (YPCED 1).

Spiritual leaders watch over the youth when they are in church, but are less informed about what the youth do at home. Participant YPCED 1, who superintends the youth fellowship, says he does not rule out the possibility that HHC could be a strong influence among the youth (since he does not know what they do at home), but he is confident that he is watching over the youth in church and they have given him no indication that they are influenced by HHC.

Since culture is ever evolving and dynamic, and it is also created and co-created by people, the ECWA culture could evolve to not labelling fixing of attachments and wearing of trousers as sinful practices. Brown, Daveney and Tanner (2001:5), adding a theological voice to the argument that culture is not static but dynamic and evolving in the sense that it can be recreated and re-negotiated, argue that culture as a process of making meaning, and people's way of life is "produced, contended for, and continually re-negotiated in the context in which individual and communal identities are mediated and brought into being". The ECWA culture is produced, contended for and can be re-negotiated by the people.

Another argument is that subcultures can co-exist within a dominant culture. As argued by Vito (2015:397) and France (2007:17), the drive that created youth culture within a dominant cultural milieu, is the quest to confront and create a distinctive way of life that is different from the conventional, traditional culture in the society. ECWA youth can create a subculture called HHC within the existing ECWA culture that could re-define the ECWA cultural way of life⁸⁷.

Therefore, Ackerman's proposal (2001:34) for a process with five stages of equipping can be helpful in equipping ECWA youth instead of the church living in cultural denial of HHC. Ackerman, (2001:34) encourages the church to: Ackerman, (2001:34) encourages the church to equip church members by teaching them the value of the spiritual discipline of

⁸⁷ I will discuss in Chapter Six how HHC can co-exist as a subculture within ECWA culture.

prayers and attentively listening to God as stage one; Stage two is assigning members with mentors, disciplers, sponsors or group of Christian community; Stage three is equipping members to grow in the discipline of being alone with God; Stage four is providing an atmosphere where members can ask questions regarding their concerns of interest and get answers for their questions; Stage five is assigning members who have gone through these four stages with mentees and disciples to mentor and disciple and sponsor.

ECWA can adopt these five stages as a model for equipping the youth. These stages have the propensity to equip the youth with spiritual disciplines that can guide them unto maturity in Christ – which is included in the aims and objectives of ECWA youth ministry (ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook, 2010b:6). This is especially valuable because these five stages of equipping create an atmosphere for the youth to ask questions concerning their concerns of realities, and interest as regards to how to navigate the influence of HHC.

5.6.5 Tension of family culture and ECWA culture

The ECWA culture is sometimes in tension with family ways of life. This poses the question of how parents and the church can work together in teaching the youth the same church culture, otherwise it creates tension for the youth as expressed by the following participants:

Nobody in my house, including my parents, said anything to me about the dress, but in church I was told that it is too tight. So sometimes you come to church and meet people who want to tell you this is not how to dress and tell you that, 'this one you are wearing is not acceptable in ECWA'. (Participant YL 11);

For example, in our house, my dad was opposed to trousers, and now we have a last born, she just turned 14 years this July; for me, I do buy trousers for her, notwithstanding the fact that my dad is against trousers, my wearing it, but doesn't complain of my kid sister wearing it (Participant Y 8).

These two participants speak of different orientations in their families. For Participant YL 11, her family does not disapprove of her wearing trousers, but she is told that wearing trousers is not accepted in ECWA. According to participant Y 8, her father disapproves of her wearing trousers, but does not disapprove of her younger sister wearing trousers. This suggests the need for adequate teaching on dress and fashion. Parents need to educate their children on the difference between the ECWA culture that is enshrined in traditional culture (the parents' culture), and biblical cultures.

Unfortunately, some parents do not teach their children biblical injunctions on doctrinal issues and the biblical tradition because they (the parents) had relegated the responsibilities of teaching their youth to youth leaders in youth ministry (Powell et al., 2013:116). Parents must play their God-given parental responsibilities, while the youth ministry should play a supportive role in equipping the youth to discern traditional culture from biblical injunctions. I can resonate with these arguments because it seems that some of the cultural elements referred to as ECWA culture, are actually a Northern culture adopted by the ECWA church. The ECWA headquarters are situated in Northern Nigeria and the denomination ECWA was established by missionaries in the Northern regions before it started extending its presence to other regions in Nigeria. So ECWA has a stronger presence and greater impact in the Northern regions of Nigeria. For example, in the Eastern and Southern regions of Nigeria, their men tie wrapper as customary traditional outfits – an outfit that is also unacceptable in ECWA (including ECWA churches located in such communities).

The Northern traditional dress and conduct in public could be the lens through which ECWA culture looks at dress and liturgy of worship in church. Some fashions and modes of worship could be seen as unacceptable in ECWA culture because the ECWA culture is moulded according to a Northern Nigerian culture. What is referred to as ECWA culture in terms of dress, may have been completely different if ECWA was founded and established in the Southern, Eastern or Western regions of Nigeria.

5.6.6 Commendable values in ECWA culture

The following extracts shows that the youth in ECWA not only perceive and complain about the ECWA culture from a negative perspective, but that they (youth) do appreciate some elements of this culture. These extracts also show that some praxes of the ECWA culture are aiding in equipping the youth for theological discernment, but not theological discernment for HHC. That is, there is an appreciable side of the ECWA culture. Participants narrate that ECWA culture is good at Bible studies, Bible exposition and prayers. These spiritual disciplines aid in teaching about the Christian life and spiritual maturity that equip the youth for theological discernment.

Bible studies and prayer meetings are helpful programmes in ECWA. It teaches me a lot about the Christian life – how to live like Jesus in this world (Participant Y 1);

Bible study is what ECWA is known for. That is why each week or each day in a week we still have to make that Bible study. Bible studies are very relevant, that is why even if you put every activity that is dynamic that is flexible, and we still have to do Bible studies because ECWA Bible study is very rich in theology. So no matter what we do, we still have to come back to that study, because that is what ECWA is known for (Participant Y 6).

When I asked, what ECWA is known for, the response was:

ECWA is known for preaching the Word that is undiluted through Bible studies and Bible exposition (Participant Y 6);

Personally, I have learnt to grow in spiritual maturity through such teaching from the church, but there is more to life than just knowing the Word of Bible (Participant YL 11).

Participants acknowledge the significance of ECWA culture in their lives as youth. The ECWA culture equips the youth for spiritual maturity and Christian life, helping them to discern right from wrong, true from false (theological judgement).

5.7 Theological Challenges of HHC

Investigating the impact (challenges and opportunities) of HHC is one of the aims and objectives of this research study. Understanding the challenges that HHC poses to the Nigerian youth is pivotal to answering the research question of this research study.

With regard to challenges that HHC pose to youth on a global and glocal context, scholars narrate challenges such as gangsterism, identity crisis, male dominance, explicit dress, violence, hostility, vulgar language, sexism, cultural interpellation, and sexual saturation in the community (Liadi and Omobowale, 2011:470; Price, 2006:8, 21; Kitwana, 2005:xii; Butler, 2004:992).

However, from the glocal Nigerian community, I discovered more challenges from the participants. Some of these challenges correlate with the challenges the authors mentioned, but some viewpoints are extensions of such challenges.

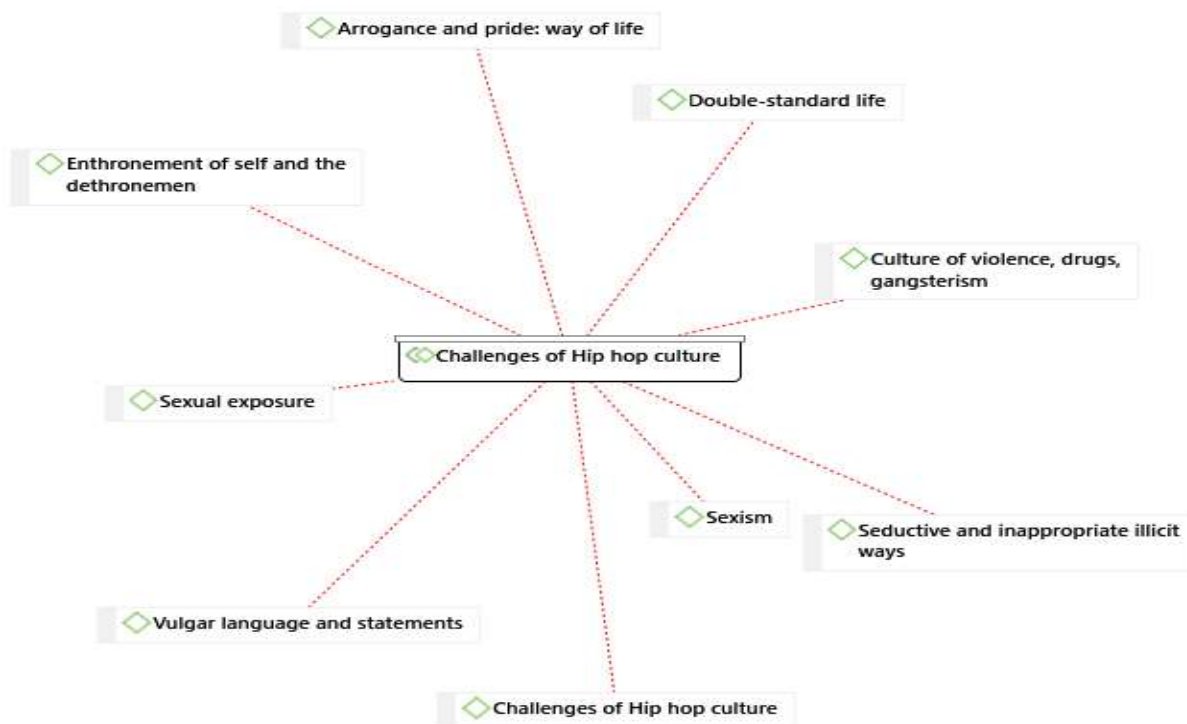


Figure 5.3: Challenges of HHC as reported below.

5.7.1 Sexual saturation through seductive and inappropriate explicit dress

HHC promotes sexual saturation in the community and society⁸⁸ (Akpan, 2006:95; Androutsopoulos and Scholz, 2003:464; Shonekan, 2010:9). In Nigerian cosmopolitan cities, HHC promotes sexual saturation through seductive dress especially among women. Some participants share this challenge:

This HHC makes our ladies to dress in seductive ways that open the way for pornography. It is not just when you see naked people having sex that is pornographic; it is a lot broader than that. The way a woman dresses by exposing some hidden part of her body can arouse sexual desires in a man – already which is pornography going on. Recently someone was saying that even the way women breastfeed needs to be checked. That women should know how they breastfeed, because just bringing out their breast and trying to breastfeed a child in public can cause a man to lose control – so pornography comes in different ways and forms (Participant YPCED 2);

Your nakedness is meant to be covered, so by the time the place that has to be covered is not covered then it becomes offensive and sexually provocation (Participant YL 9);

⁸⁸ One of the trademarks of hip hop youth culture is the saturation of sexual messages in society. This saturation comes through hip hop music as a genre of music, and also in advertisements, movies, etc.

Hip hop culture; for instance, I am doing work that has to do with youths, fashion, fame, finance and things like that, so when it comes to fashion, you find out most youths go to the market, buy clothes and shoes just to be fashionable, not knowing the value. They may be walking on the streets not knowing they have been rated prostitutes because of the way they dress/appear. But they are not inwardly; these might be Christian youths, but look at the way they are being tagged on the street. And some of them will at the end of the day be having bone stones on heels because they put their legs into any shoe because they want to be fashionable. Some of them at the end of the day will lose their natural beauty, because I have interviewed one lady in the course of work who happened to go and create an open teeth in her mouth because she wants to be beautiful, so they go to a place where they will file the teeth so that there will be an opening there and for the rest of her life she has been living with toothache (Participant YPCED 7);

It has really affected us in terms of our dressing code, especially the ladies, their hairstyle. You see a lady in the church, I can give precisely but not the name, spraying her hair a golden colour, then shaping their eyebrows, and some they remove them totally and then use their eye pencil and design it the way they want. So I think since you are talking about culture it has affected the youth (Participant Y 6);

...seeing young people wearing trousers and they are sagging (Participant YL 8);

HHC has a lot of influences. For instance, let us talk about the dress sense now. You will find it that most youths today, some people cannot dress without sagging, that is one of the hip hop culture too. When you see some of these hip hop artists, some of them say they do not button up their shirts. Some wear blinks, they are called blinks, those pendants made of gold, and if you look at the Nigerian youths or the youths in the church, we are also bringing that kind of dressing into the church because I have seen two youths who sagged to church. Also, when you look at the kind of songs we sing in the church too, and hip hop generally is rap music, so nowadays you will find it in the church – that some youths are gradually bringing that kind of music into the church. I am not saying there is something wrong with the music, but I am just trying to say how it has affected the youth dressing in the name of HH fashion styles (Participant Y 10).

HHC is synonymous with dressing revealingly and ‘exposing some hidden part of her body’, which suggests either ignorance of what HHC is about or a misperception of HHC. However, I find it difficult to comprehend how dressing equates to pornography? One other surprise from participant’s narration is his remark that public breastfeeding could be an element of pornography. I will need to explore this further, but that is not part of the scope of this research study. HHC influences the youth regarding seductive dress and fashion, to such an extent that people are labelled as prostitutes according to the way they dress in

public. HHC way of life influences Christian women to dress like club girls going out to nightclubs. For the men, Christian youth now wear sagging trousers, wear their shirts unbuttoned and expose their chests (six-packs), and wear blink necklaces and chains simply because they see HH artists doing so in their videos or movies.

5.7.2 Enthronement of self and the dethronement of God

HHC is a cultural way of life that enthrones human self over the submission to God's Lordship over the self. HHC culture accords admiration and adulation to the self as expressed in the focus on self-gratification in terms of material things, and human aggrandisement in terms of wealth and pride. Some participants narrate this challenge:

In my view, I think one of the challenges that the hip hop culture brings, is the enthronement of self and the dethronement of God. There is so much adulation of self, making money, pride, rather than refocusing or sending one's thoughts toward God... To recap, enthronement of self and man over God is something that is seen, and the desire to make a fast, like we call it here, to blow [get wealthy], so to make wealth and just be comfortable with life and make money... That materialism that comes with the culture is something that I think is an effect (Participant YPCED 3);

HHC does not source its values from Scriptures (God's Word). In other words, HHC is not something that is produced from the church, if you understand what I mean by church – it is not the church culture (Participant YPCED 2);

HHC is a way of life outside and does not glorify God (Participant YL 8);

Youth idolise celebrities and try to live like them instead of being like Christ as Christians (Participant Y 13).

I do not think human gratification should be a challenge if it does not compromise the cardinal values of Christian faith and Christian life, as discussed in sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2; a lifestyle that emulates the life of Jesus, bears witness to the Christian faith community, and recognises God's glory.

HHC poses the challenge of not sourcing its values from God. For one participant, it is a culture that sources its values from how certain individuals decide others should behave and dress. HHC is a life outside God because it does not really glorify God, as it is not rooted in the Scriptures.

5.7.3 Vulgar language and statements

HHC is a culture that sometimes speaks in vulgar language; spoken vulgar language is part of the features that characterise HHC.

Some HHC language is vulgar. ECWA as far as I know is a Bible-based church, and on that, the Bible say we should not adhere to vulgar language (Participant Y 5);

He further stated that:

...although ECWA has not put these HHC as a theme or subject to be studied, as far as I know the usage of vulgar language and statements, which are features of HHC, is not acceptable for an ECWA youth (Participant Y 5);

I think in the area of language, many young people that are caught up in the effects of hip hop culture, you will find that there is this allowance and licence for the use of vulgar words, which come up with the whole of, you know that is learned through rap music (Participant YPCED 2).

5.7.4 Arrogance and pride: Way of life

Arrogance is one of the challenges of HHC. Arrogance is a challenge as exemplified in the lives of the HH artists who show off their voices, wealth and women. These ‘possessions’ make some artists arrogant and proud. In addition to arrogance and pride, there are also elements of rebellion as behaviours associated with HHC:

HHC makes some youth feel like they are kind of higher than someone because of the material things they possess. HHC promotes arrogance and pride in HH fans, who take pride in their ladies because of their beauty and sexy shape (Participant Y 15).

5.7.5 Sexual exposure

HHC creates sexual exposure and nudity as its cultural way of life, which is contrary to biblical moral standards. Some of the artists’ video projects include sexually explicit scenes:

The Christian culture or biblical Christian culture is simply the Bible standard culture, and the Bible standard can never change. And more often we see hip hop culture going against biblical morals. We see how HH artists display nudity and all kinds of illicit sexual scenes in their videos (YL 4).

When I asked for examples of such videos, the participant listed:

Lil Wayne who sang Pussy Monster, Nicky Minaj who sang High School, and Chris Brown who is also sexually explicit in some of his videos (Participant YL 4);

HHC has content that gives sexual exposure that some youths may not be able to handle (Participant Y 7);

If you as an artist do not show naked girls or half-naked girls in your music, your music may struggle to compete with other artists like our own MI, Techno and Tiwa, who show naked ladies in their videos (Participant Y 16).

Shonekan (2010:9) reports how, in the Nigeria society, male rappers use females as sex objects through depicting explicit sexual content and exposing their bodies for the gratification of men. To extend Shonekan's argument, I discovered that female artists such as Nicky Minaj and the Nigerian Tiwa Savage, also do so.

However, I argue that the youth may not be able to determine what these artist like Lil, Nicky, Tiwa, MI and Chris Brown project in their videos, but the Christian youth can through theological discernment choose which artists they listen to and watch. White argues that discernment is a spiritual practice of the church that is a central component of ministry with youth who wrestle with decisions that tend to shape the trajectory of the rest of their lives – either for good or evil (2005:2). Discernment is thus needed to equip the youth with a sense of judgement based on their Christian life and reflecting on their Christian faith. So the Christian youth have the discernment not to watch explicit sexual videos because the content of such videos negates their Christian faith.

Moreover, Christian youth can well create their own content of HH music. White (2005:29), arguing for the significance of aptitude for theological discernment, argues that the Christian youth should be equipped theologically to establish their influence within the community. This influence in the community can be through creating HHC content that projects the reign of God as, opposed to artists who create explicit sexual content.

5.7.6 Double-standard life

HHC is leading the youth to live a double-standard life – a life inside church and a life outside church. The way they dress at home, is not the way they dress to church because the church will not accommodate the way they dress at home:

We have clothes to wear to church and those hip hop ones that we wear at home and to birthdays and all of that, but we do not actually portray that you are this person, you seem to be different in the church and outside the church, which makes us not to be real. So that is what is going on today (Participant Y 14);

A lot of us have two kinds of lifestyles among us as Christian youth: the one at home and the one we live when we come to church. Because we do not discuss HHC in the ECWA church, we focus too much on spirituality, those things that are 'spiritual', and we neglect those integral parts of the youths' life. A lot of youths are struggling in the church – not because of a lack of spiritual teachings – we have sound spiritual teachings, every Sunday. We have sound preaching from the reverend and pastor but there is still something lacking, we have not been able to get that common ground with the elders or older people to understand what are our actual needs and which subject we are yearning for them to address in church. That is why something like the hip hop culture will not be discussed because they are not free enough to express themselves, and when they go outside, they exhibit a different kind of lifestyle that is different from what they actually do in church (Participant Y 10).

HHC has created two kinds of lifestyles among Christian youth – the way they live at home and the way they live in church. Some youth wear hip hop dress at home but dress differently to church, which suggests a double-standard life. The reason for this double-standard life is because HHC is not discussed or acceptable in the ECWA church. Therefore, a lot of youth could be struggling in the church, not because of a lack of spiritual teachings – ECWA has sound spiritual teachings as admitted by participants in section 5.5.6. However, the youth are struggling because though they receive sound spiritual teaching, they still live a double life. This is due to the fact that they (the youth) are not free to express themselves regarding issues that are impacting on them in society. Thus, when they go outside, they exhibit a different kind of lifestyle to what they actually do in church.

This viewpoint suggests the urgency of equipping the youth for this concern of interest by discussing the phenomenon with the youth at youth week programmes and through yearly themes that create the environment for such discussion. The question that concerns me fundamentally on reading these viewpoints is: Is it HHC that is causing the challenge of

HHC, or is the church, which does not create an atmosphere for these discussions, responsible for causing this double-standard life? In Ackerman's (2001:34) argument of five stages of equipping, stage 4 encourages the creation of an enabling environment for discussions on questions that impact church members.

5.7.7 Culture of violence, drugs, and gangsterism

HHC is a way of life that is characterised by violence, drugs, and gangsterism. Butler (2004:992) describes gangsterism as an element (racket) of HHC among the youth that leads to involvement in violent acts reminiscent of crime, particularly organised crime. Some extracts from the interviews confirm Butler's opinion:

Going by the word hip hop culture could mean the youth culture, culture of exuberance. HHC is a culture that is characterised by violence, drugs, gangsterism and sexual explosion and exploitation to an extent (Participant Y 7);

You will be tagged a gangster, a prostitute or a wayward girl if you dress in hip hop fashion or you are heard singing HH songs, because of our cultural understanding of the hip hop culture. That is the challenges [that HHC] has (Participant Y 8).

These viewpoints raised another two questions for further exploration after this research study: (1) What does Christian dress looks like?; and (2) What genre of music is godly in itself?

5.8 Theological Opportunities of HHC

HHC creates different opportunities for different purposes. HHC creates the opportunity to tell or retell an existing story, express opinions, convey messages, and create identity and a sense of fraternity and belonging (Shonekan, 2010:5; Alim, 2009:105; Kobin and Tyson, 2006:343). Participants suggested similar opportunities and some other opportunities in their viewpoints.

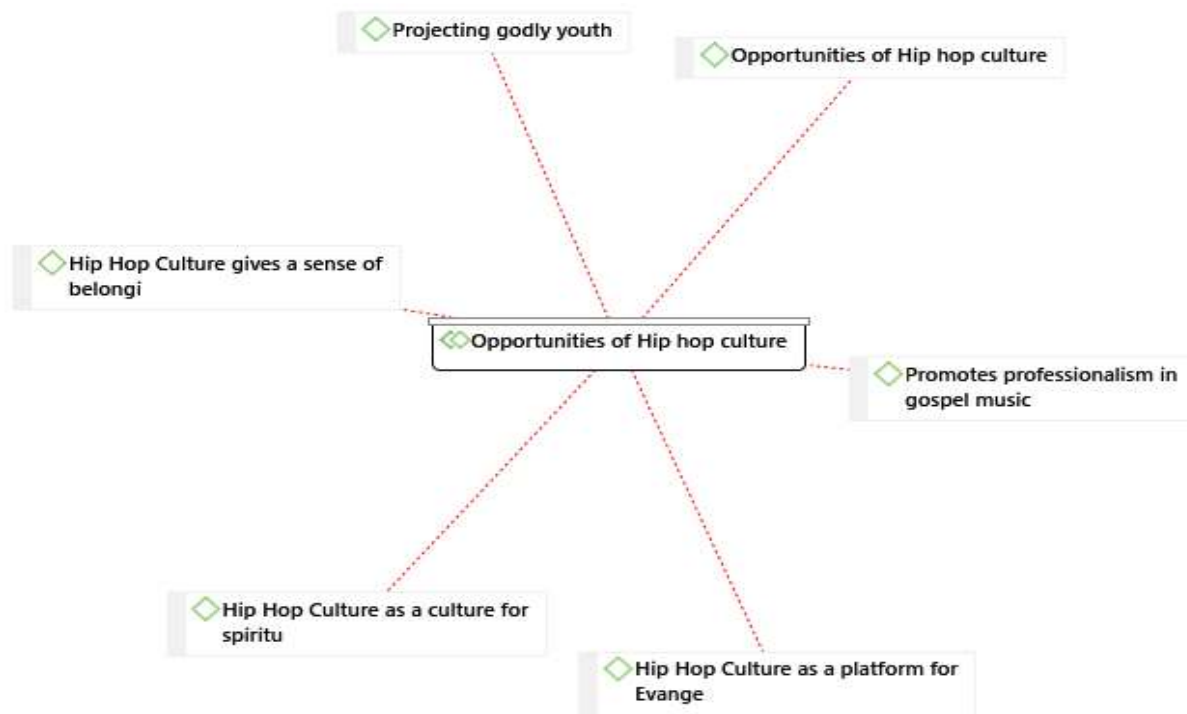


Figure 5.4: Opportunities of HHC as reported below.

5.8.1 HHC as a platform for evangelism

HHC is a lifestyle that disseminates messages of ideologies and behavioural patterns. The youth like different genres of music for different reasons. HH music is a genre of music that some youth are disposed to, thus, for such an audience, youth ministry can equip the youth to share the Christian faith through the platform of HH music. It is helpful to cite this quotation at length because of its relevance to understanding how HHC creates platforms for evangelism:

There are several opportunities. Even in my youth group, a part of hip hop, which is rap, is an integral part of our ministry system because of how young people do hip hop, listen to hip hop. During my research in 2013, I found that an average church youth listens to non-gospel music at least three times a week. So, these people are listening to hip hop. Why can't we put Christian content into hip hop? I think if we have Christian content in hip hop, we are going to make impact. Apart from that, if we have Christian content in hip hop, they will serve as role models to young people and a typical example will be people like Lecrae. You have a person that is into rap music, and so many young people look up to him. I spend time to mentor that young person, I am actually reaching out to many other young people as well. So if I have a Christian rapper in my youth group, I will want to be closer to him, to try to influence him, to disciple him so that the many young people who look up to him, who listen to his music, will be transformed by such – there are such opportunities. And thirdly, I think hip hop can be used to reach out to other areas that conventional

Christian music maybe does not reach out to. For example, if you are going to a slum or even campus areas, where a typical say Don Moen song or Ron Kenolly song will not struck a chord with them, a normal Christian artist may find acceptance there. Now this is not to say that evangelism to such areas can only be dependent on hip hop, but if we are going to have some form of advantage, we must reach out to such areas with hip hop (Participant YPCED 3).

Gospel messages can be preached through the HH rap music. Just as pastors preach about Jesus from the pulpit, the HH music is the young people's pulpit to preach Jesus to their own congregation (Participant YPCED 2).

HHC can be used as a platform to reach out to other areas which conventional Christian music may not reach. The content of the Christian faith can be presented through the genre of HH music. According to participant YPCED 3, one of the few youth pastors in ECWA, he conducted research in 2013 that shows that “an average church youth listens to non-gospel music at least three times a week. So, these people are listening to hip hop. Why can't we put Christian content into hip hop?” His research findings at the time that an average church youth listens to hip hop music, could account for why participants YL 4 and Y 16 are knowledgeable about the names of HH artists and their songs.

5.8.2 HHC as a culture of revival

HHC is a culture that has the capacity to generate a revival movement among the youth. An example is how revival was triggered by a gospel HH artist called Kirk Franklin:

It could bring about revival among the youth. What I mean by revival is that, for example, this guy in America, Kirk Franklin, do you understand the revival this guy brought in the USA using his hip hop? You understand? So, as youths are energetic, all the conservative ways of doing things like this, like that, the guys need to express themselves, give them a platform in the church, let them exhibit in the church – maybe their ignorance or immaturity or whatever – let us exhibit it in the church so the church will quickly identify the area that they can come in. Because if you do not allow them to experiment with it in the church, they will experiment with it outside. So for me the influence creates revival in the church, because some people will understand that I can wear jeans, I can dress this way, I need not dress in one way before they will see me as a person who is filled with the Holy Spirit. The Apostolic revival, you know, has no one pattern. The Holy Spirit speaks in diverse ways – I don't need to be pious, conservative, it goes beyond that (Participant Y 12).

HHC can be a way of life that ignites revival, as exemplified through the ministry of Kirk Franklin in the USA. This participant narrated how God, through Kirk Franklin, used the HHC to cause a revival in that nation. Creating an enabling environment in which the youth

can express themselves without living a double-standard life, as noted by participants Y 10 and Y14, will help equip them to discern the Christian faith from religious rules and regulations that stipulate how to dress and how to behave. The revival can be in the form of happiness; the youth becoming happy by doing what they love to do. Shonekan narrates that HHC brings happiness to Nigerian youth, as they derive happiness from doing what they like to do, and the HHC affords them opportunities to do so. However, what brings the youth happiness (hip hop culture), could cause anger and anxiety among their parents or other members of society (2010:8). Thus, section 6.7 and 6.8 discussed the successful co-existence of youth and parents (adult) through acculturation and enculturation.

5.8.3 HHC gives a sense of belonging and identity

HHC creates a culture of fraternity among its members (Mendoza-Denton, et al., 2002:896; Saleeby, 1996:296), a sense of belonging. Motley and Henderson (2008:245) submit that HHC breeds a sense of identity in fraternity which could also become a brotherhood and sisterhood that manifests itself in cultism or fraternity (which could become a possible problem).

We always want to belong, to be like our friends, to show that I am also part of what is happening in the society, like dressing, like the world, to showcase ourselves. Yes, I am a Christian, but my Christianity does not tie me to identify with only church members. I also need to identify with youth who thinks like me, enjoy my own genre of music, and speaks my kind of language (Participant YL 2);

HHC has caused a bond here; it has actually bonded people together because, since you want to belong, then it gives you a particular self-belonging... HHC just gives you this; I belong to these people, so you have this love and protection because you watch each other's back. That is what it does (Participant Y 13).

According to these participants, being a Christian does not exempt them from needing a group of friends with whom they can identify and be identified. A sense of belonging is pertinent, because they need friendship with people who think like them, speak their kind of language (slanguage) and watch each other's back (protection). HHC gives the youth a sense of belonging to a group of friends who love and care for them, and thus provide protection.

Additionally, hip hop youth culture affords the youth the opportunity to reinvent their identities through stylisation (Alim, 2009:105). This denotes that HHC affords the youth the opportunity to create or re-invent their own style of doing things. The youth can represent themselves in the way they want society to see and address them.

5.8.4 Projecting godly youth

HHC affords the youth the opportunity to live out their spiritual maturity within the HHC space. Youth ministry can equip the youth with relevant theological understanding for theological discernment that can grace them to be godly models and icons of HHC. Hendriks (2004:31) states that biblical witness takes place through fallible people in different communities and settings. The youth can be equipped as biblical witnesses to the HHC community, among their peers, who will be in awe of their (Christian youth) lifestyle:

The opportunities or privileges of HHC is that ministration could be happen when such persons are Christians and godly. If we can have youths who can be equipped for youth ministry, then they can become like shining examples for the rest to follow. While it possesses challenges, it can also provide opportunities to project godly youths who have excelled. Even at the local level, you will find some Christian, godly heroes who could serve as examples for them to follow (Participant YPCED 1).

5.8.5 Freedom of expression in worship

HHC grants freedom of expression in worship. Vito (2015:397) submits that HHC is an outlet for expression. This expression could be in worship as people express themselves to the glory of God in worship. Some participants shared the significance of HHC providing an atmosphere of worship.

HHC is the way youth express themselves. I think the role of the church is to see how to tailor or rather see how to fine tune it. Because if I am to quote the Bible where it said we should do everything to the glory of God, so what I think is that the church should see how to not just condemn HHC and not provide a way out, because that's what most of our mothers and fathers are doing – condemning without discussion and solution. They just condemn it outright (Participant YL 1);

I think if HHC is allowed space in the ECWA church, but with modesty, it can bring back some of the youths who left ECWA churches to Pentecostal churches. ECWA youth are being caged in a religion of rules and regulations during worship at church. You do not do extraordinary things, like

you could if you were in a church that allows freedom of worship in songs and dance. If the ECWA wakes up and makes room for HHC, her many youths that left to churches that allow freedom of expression, will return. The truth is that the HH rhythms and beats actually make you want to dance and shout, but you suppress it when you remember that you are in an ECWA church (Participant YL 2);

I give you an instance, there are songs we sing in church, especially in the Igbo clan, that before now some persons didn't find such songs interesting when sang in the village, but very recently a young man (musician) like the one they call Phyno, used the same lyrics but used the HH style of music to sing the same songs. In fact, it takes restraint, some kind of very extreme restraint, for Igbo youths not to sing and dance to that song in church, simply because somebody we can refer to as an unbeliever sang the song. What was the difference? He only used the HH genre to sing the same song and we all are excited and dancing to the song now. There is a rhythm that is catchy for the youth because they find it interesting (Participant YL 2);

I think it HHC attracts the youth to the church more because someone like me, I will use myself as an example, I liked going to disco parties before I gave my life to Christ. So definitely, a church that allows freedom of worship will be very meaningful to me, because such praise and worship and sermon style will ginger me and lift my spirit (Participant Y 11).

HHC is a culture that gives people an opportunity to express themselves. HHC can be enshrined in the church as an expressive culture that gives liberty and freedom of expression during worship. Some ECWA youth left the church for Pentecostal churches for freedom of worship. They may return to the denomination if the church engages the liturgy of freedom of worship. In regard to expression of worship, the youth can rebrand traditional songs and hymnal songs with HH beats and rhythms. Since the genre of HHC allows the youth to be expressive, and the youth enjoy forums that are expressive, the church can rebrand her songs into the HH genre for the sake of her youth who are involved in HHC, and youth in society who delight in the HH genre.

There is a motivational drive in worship when the rhythms and beats are elements of HHC. Participant Y 11 also narrated that one of her pleasures before experiencing salvation, was attending parties and discos, where expression is the norm. She believes freedom of expression in worship in church will be meaningful to her. I further asked her why she attends the ECWA church if the present style of worship is not meaningful to her, and she responded by saying that:

I attend ECWA church because my dad is an elder in the church and he will not allow me attend a Pentecostal church (Participant Y 11).

As opposed to the youth going to an ECWA church just to keep their parents happy, HHC creates the opportunity for the youth who admire HH music, beats and rhythms, to find an atmosphere of worship where they feel they can express themselves, in ECWA.

5.8.6 Promotes professionalism in gospel music

HHC offers the advantage of challenging and motivating gospel musicians to produce good music, musical beats, and lyrics. The advancement of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in HHC has improved the professionalism of HH music, which, , combined with the messages that HH artists convey, illicit a response to the beat in listener, sometimes unknowingly:

The development of ICT (information and communications technology) has helped HH music to achieve a great level of professionalism – be it secular or church music. We are using a lot of ICT, social media to do gospel music. These beats are HH beats that excite the ears and move the body in spontaneous response. I think that even the secular music somehow has helped to promote professionalism in gospel music. Why? Because, when you feel a good vibe coming from secular music, you cannot help but also want to produce good vibes for gospel music and worship (Participant YL 4);

HH music promotes quality and professional music whose beats are of real quality. Having quality gospel music, not just having good content in message, but good and quality beats, can be influential in a sense that it can bring more youths to delight in gospel music. It will make it possible to bring more youths to the church to interact and be more open to reality, rather than watching all this hip hop secular videos where there is a lot of nudity. But the youth can come to church and listen to good professional and quality hip hop gospel music with good beats, as well and good Christian content or guidance in the lyrics (Participant Y 16).

5.8.7 Creates wealth

In Nigeria, hip hop music is a great source of income because it creates employment and is a source of wealth for the Nigerian youth (Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone, 2016:116; Okafor, 2005:14). Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016:118) argue that HH music in

Nigeria has evolved into a multi-business music industry and many Nigerian youth have become wealthy in their pursuit of HH music.

Participant Y 6 from the Eastern region, when asked about the opportunities provided by HHC, said that the youth can become famous and create wealth through HHC. He reasoned that a lot of opportunities are offered by HHC:

HHC makes you to become famous and you will blow⁸⁹ good wealth because HH music is very marketable in Nigeria... HH music CDs sell like hotcakes because youth and old people alike are dancing to and liking HH music. It is trending, bro (Participant Y 6);

I see a lot of HH guys, I mean guys from poor homes are becoming big boys and big girls⁹⁰ because of their HH brand and music (Participant YPCED 12).

HH music has created employment and wealth so that youth from poor families are able to gain wealth and live a luxurious life with lavish lifestyles and behaviours.

CATEGORY C: THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT

Theological discernment is understood in terms of responding to questions, opportunities and challenges, including questions of interest and concern, through a normative understanding of who God is and what God's grace to humanity entails (Hendriks, 2014:62; Höring, 2013:46; Nel, 2005:17), thus thinking theologically and biblically about issues, and questions of concern, challenges and opportunities.

5.9 Equipping for Theological Discernment

On the question, what is your opinion on equipping youth for theological discernment as they engage hip hop culture? Participants drew my attention to a pertinent point:

First, we need to draw closer to the youths, understand the youths, what are their priorities in life? What are the things that drive them? Then by the time you look at all those areas, and then you will see how best you can redirect the youths to have a purposeful living. To have a life that God wants

⁸⁹ *Blow* is slang commonly used in Nigeria to signify becoming rich and famous, e.g. *I don blow* means I have achieved wealth and fame.

⁹⁰ Being a *big boy* or *big girl* is slang that connotes being rich, famous and influential. That is, someone who is admired for their fame and wealth.

them to live. They will still achieve all these things in life, but they have a purpose in life that they are not drifted from, their faith and being relevant in the church, so you need to study them and know what their interests are and see how best you can also measure the interest, whether it will be of help to the church or it will take them away from the church. It is something that will take time to study them, to move along with them, hear how they do things, how they behave, how they respond to issues, the in-between, you will see how you can fashion it. It will take time but it will draw them gradually. It is something that we are still struggling with, we have not yet arrived, but God is helping us (YPCED 9);

I am not trained for youth ministry as such, but there are some course in my theological training that have to do with youths and children. So they serve as a help, as tools that I use in doing this one. My experience also in youth fellowship, because youth ministry also is like coming up now (Participant YPCE 2).

Youth ministry and other faith community Christian ministries need to equip the youth for theological discernment so they can respond to questions and discern right and wrong through the understanding of God's normative paradigm. Schweitzer (2014:184) buttresses that theological reflection should be built into conversation with the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors if it is going to survive for years and not collapse. The equipping should begin with youth ministry and spiritual leaders relating with the youth, so as to first understand who they are and what their areas of interest are before they can be appropriately equipped for theological discernment.

This suggests that youth should be equipped for theological discipline as 'lay theologians' through the approach of you[theology] which tries to make sense of the ultimate questions of who God is and what God really means to them. In the light of this understanding, Schweitzer (2014:184) and Tanis (2016:101) call for the youth to be engaged in youth ministry as 'lay theologians' whose questions and challenges make them ask, think, seek answers and innovate theological practices.

5.9.1 Equipping of Christian faith as insurance model

The youth are equipped for theological discernment through the understanding of their Christian faith. This also entails equipping the youth and discipling them to understand the Christian faith so that it will serve as an insurance model of fire extinguisher to quench the challenges of life. This will aid their judgement of right and wrong in their pursuit of wealth,

music to listen to and the entertainment industry. For a clearer understanding of this concept, I quote the participants at length:

I see equipping youth to understand the Christian faith as somebody whose life is totally sold to Christ, somebody who won't do anything without the authorisation that comes from Christ Himself (Gal. 2:20), have being crucified with Christ who lives in me and the life I live. I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave his Son for me. Meaning that I now have a new owner and it is the owner who determines what I do and do not do, so that is the way I view Christianity. So if we have some that call themselves Christians in this celebrity web, so to speak, and are yet not driven by the Holy Ghost to determine their language, dress code and stuff, I will say maybe they are Christians by identity but not by practice (Participant YPCED 2);

The Christian faith is not what I call fire insurance, it is not saving young people from hell alone, but it is aimed at transforming the way they think generally, concerning every area of their life – their thoughts relating to wealth, relating to work, relating to relationships, relating to entertainment and pleasure and leisure, all of those things, that is what their faith is supposed to do. So if young people have been trained to be theologically discerning, they are able to wisely deconstruct hip hop culture in the sense of looking at the content that comes to them and even the mode of delivery that comes to them concerning hip hop culture, and rightly make choices about what entertainment options they will take and how to even evaluate some of these contents. For example, basically what music does, is that it is not just entertainment, it is the transmission of a worldview, of a way of thinking. When we are singing some songs, we are also singing to tunes and rhythms, we are singing the writer's thoughts and I think, like Ravi Zaharias quoted Andrew Fletcher, the philosopher who said, "let me write the songs of the lands, I don't care who writes the laws". So if young people are theologically trained, they are able to look at this content and make moral choices and say, okay, this content does not match this belief. A typical example is what should be our attitude towards wealth? The Lord has blessed us with wealth not for self-indulgence, yes, we will be comfortable, the Bible even says we should enjoy our wealth, but for a person who does not have the knowledge of Scriptures, they see wealth as an end in itself, making money, being comfortable, having everything you want, so that such things become the motivation of life. But for a young person who has been trained, who has been disciplined and trained, they know that they are just stewards to the wealth that the Lord has given for them to use; the wealth to bring glory to God, to bless other people and things like that. So yes, theological discernment is needed for young people to first of all make the right entertainment choices and secondly, to effectively evaluate the content that is found in hip hop culture (Participant YPCED 3).

Christian faith is living a life that emulates the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is a life that is directed by appreciation of Jesus's crucifixion and death. The equipping of the youth with

theological discernment using the Christian faith can be described as fire insurance to quench engulfing fire. One interesting theory that I deduct, is the necessity of having fire insurance before been engulfed by fire. This narrative could also suppose that the necessity for fire insurance is so that resettlement takes place if one has been engulfed by fire. Thus, equipping the youth with theological discernment can serve two purposes: (1) As a preventive measure; being equipped to prevent an unpleasant event from happening; and (2) As a corrective measure; being equipped for corrective measures after an unpleasant event.

5.9.2 Tools of equipping for theological discernment

One of the aims and objectives of this research study (fifth) is, “to propose to the faith community (youth ministry and church) possible theological approaches to equipping youth for theological discernment in the engagement with hip hop culture”. There are tools that can be used to equip the youth for a life of discernment. A life of discernment is about learning to decipher God and God's character rightly. To discern God's character, is to reflect on God's character as exemplified in Jesus, who is God incarnate to humanity, and allow that character to shape lives and patterns (Eklund, 2009:3).

As discussed in section 2.3, White (2005:63) propounds four models of discernment that can guide the youth in navigating society. The aim of these models is to equip them to be social actors who, in partnership with God (God-relationship), can discern theologically. The goal of these four modes of discernment is so that youth will not fall prey and be gullible as consumers of various youth cultures.

The four models as propounded by White are: (1) Listening: listening to God with one's heart. Listening is about developing intuition and prayer practices; (2) Understanding: engaging one's mind in loving God. Understanding connotes a model of critical and integrative reflection; (3) Remembering/dreaming: loving God with one's soul. Remembering is "attending through prayer and contemplation to the yearnings of our hearts and those of a broken world" while dreaming is bringing to bear the full resources of the Christian tradition as depicted in the Scriptures, liturgy, and doctrine; (4) Acting: loving God with the whole of one's strength (2005:63-85, 88, 152). In ECWA, the following themes are the tools for equipping the youth for theological discernment.

5.9.2.1 Church Bible studies

Equipping the youth for theological discernment can be done through the model of Bible studies as taught by pastors, youth ministry and spiritual leaders. Equipping through church Bible studies connotes that the youth are taught the Word of God as Christian faith. Osmer (2008:134) argues that prophetic discernment takes place with “both divine disclosure and the human shaping of God’s Word”. The shaping of God’s Word is potent for equipping the youth for discernment:

The pastors, youth ministry and spiritual heads of the church have a high role to play to make sure these youths become better people by letting them know more about the Word of God. It all falls back to the equippers and the willingness of the youth to be equipped. Not necessarily for the youth to go to the seminary. They can be taught how to apply theology to life situations. But you must discuss those situations with them while you are teaching them the Bible studies, else the youth may not know how to apply the Bible to their situations (Participant YPCED 5);

The Bible said faith comes from hearing and hearing by the Word of God, so youth ministers and Bible study leaders keep teaching and mentoring youth, and keep encouraging and showing them the part of rightness and wrongness in righteousness. Those teaching must also be leaders who lead by example (Participant YPCED 6).

The youth can be equipped for theological discernment through Bible studies. It is the responsibility of those who work with the youth in youth ministry and church Bible study leaders to equip the youth in the faith community for theological discernment. Osmer (2008:135) elucidates that prophetic discernment in the faith community uses three methods to discover God’s Word to diagnose and engage present realities, contexts and situations: (1) Theological interpretation; (2) Ethical reflection; and (3) Good practice. Theological discernment entails that the Word of God is interpreted, ethical lessons are deduced from the Word of God, and the praxis of discernment is consistently practiced using the Word of God as the lens.

5.8.2.2 Prayer meetings and the gift of the Holy Spirit

Prayer is another tool for equipping the youth for theological discernment. ECWA engages the youth in weekly prayer programmes:

You know prayer is actually key to discernment. That is why in ECWA we have prayer meetings weekly in our LCB. Also, there are always prayers in our programme for every youth fellowship

week. At the place of prayers, the Holy Spirit prepares you for a life of discernment (Participant Y 14).

Through prayer the Holy Spirit prepares the youth for a life of discernment. The youth are equipped for discernment as they spend time in a place of prayer. Discernment is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

5.9.2.3 Living testaments

Equipping for theological discernment also occurs through observing and learning from the lives of preachers, parents, adults in the church and youth leaders, as described by Participant YL 1:

Personally I studied the men of God, my parents and other youth leaders a lot. There are pastors that I know who are living right in God. They made decision not to join other preachers who exploit members for their money. I am equipped by preachers whose lives show integrity and they do not compromise biblical standards because of money. I am also equipped by the way my parents love each other. Because of their lifestyle, I now know how to treat my own husband and children when I am married. There are also some former youth leaders whose lives I emulate (Participant YL 1).

A living testament denotes that members of the faith community emulate the life of the Christian faith by practically living out biblical injunctions. That is, becoming the Bible in practice for other to read and learn of God. This participant narrated that she is equipped for a life of discernment by observing and learning from the practical lives of the living testaments around her. She is equipped to discern right from wrong by observing how her pastors decide not to join the bandwagon of other preachers who exploit church members for their money. This has taught her not to emulate church leaders who compromise for the sake of wealth.

She is also equipped for the right kind of marriage through the practical way her parents love each other. More so, she narrates how the lifestyles of former leaders of the fellowship equip her to discern right and wrong. Thus, the youth having living testaments around them who can equip them for theological discernment because they have seen how others decide between right and wrong.

5.9.2.4 Jesus's model of discipleship and mentorship

Chiroma (2015:73) argues for an approach in youth ministry where the youth are guided on how Christ can be formed in them. Jesus's model of discipleship and mentorship affords the example for modelling His lifestyle in the youth. Jesus's model of discipleship is pertinent to equipping the youth for theological discernment, as described by Participant YPCED 2:

I think if we are going to follow the Jesus model of discipleship as a means of equipping youth for the theological discernment that you are asking about, we will have youth better equipped to live out their faith through wise decisions in the society. The Bible says that Jesus called the disciples with him and I am yet to see many people these days who will let me get young people or another person who will be with me, so that he will study their lives. Discipleship and mentorship is not studying what someone has written in a book, it is calling someone to study you as a person and if you do not have the legitimacy, you don't have the moral spirituality, and then you can't say like Paul did, 'follow me as I followed Christ', then you do not have discipleship. If it is that we just come and there is a book already written for us called discipleship manual and all we do is read that book, and I just make sure you get the answers correct and you say the right things, then discipleship has not even started for me (Participant YPCED 2).

Jesus's model of discipleship is an equipping tool for theological discernment. Jesus drew His disciples to live with Him, and He equipped them to discern right and wrong by observing Jesus's life. The Christian faith is about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus, through divine birth, enculturated His human descent as a Jewish person, but He also aligned Himself with a culture that was not of His human descent when he spoke to a Samaritan at the well.

Discipleship and mentorship teach young people the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry. It equips the youth with theological understanding of Christianity and how to respond to concerns of interest. As argued by Weber (2014:177), discipleship is a process of training a young person about how to develop as a Christian. In her argument, she posits that the discipleship process "is reliant on the lifestyle of the teacher", who could be a disciple-shaping mentor, life coach, or disciple (Weber, 2014:177).

Discipleship and mentorship can be reliant on the lifestyle of the teacher, or teaching can be in the form of theological nuggets to a person through a one-on-one or group lesson class,

but preferably it should be one-on-one contact between the disciple and the learner. Lesson classes can be through (1) baptismal class once a person accepts the Lordship of Jesus over his or her life, (2) the girls and boys brigades where the ECWA youth attend training weekly, or (3) discipleship classes organised by interdenominational faith-based institutions like The Navigators, Frontline Fellowship, Scripture Union (SU), Equipping The Saints (ETS), Peace House, Word of Life and Calvary Ministry (CAPRO).

I was trained; first of all, it was in our youth ministry organisation called the 'Word of Life', which has a whole or more general form of training youth on the need for discernment with the help of the Holy Spirit (Participant YPCED 4);

It's a couple of facilitators from our master life who taught me how to discern biblically or is it theological that you guys call it now. Some elders and teachers, people who had gone through the master life training, did helped me a lot on discerning through the help of the Holy Spirit (Participant YL 11);

I have been involved in some leadership seminars as well as discipleship training, and also on some of training using Equipping The Saints (ETS) material to figure out theological responds to problems that am confronts me and the society (Participant YL 3);

I knew about discerning to do right from wrong through the children Sunday school of our church then. The children Sunday school taught me a lot of the stuff I earlier knew about God and how am supposed to respond to life (Participant YL 1);

For me, it was at Vocational Bible School (VBS) that I first heard about anything call being theological. The teachers disciplined us to understand how to live a Christian life as kids, and how to discern and resist temptation because we are Christian (Participant YL 12).

5.9.2.5 Personal spiritual journey

A personal journey with Jesus Christ is vital for equipping the youth for theological discernment. Maturity in Christian faith and Christian ministry is actually personal and individualistic. Weber (2015:5) narrates that the uniqueness of a personal contextual spiritual journey of faith is potent in helping the youth to mature in their relationship with Christ.

The Gospel comes through the way each individual perceives the Gospel message and the world they are living in. If Jesus Christ has to be made to appear real to the person, especially the youth,

the youth must accept the Gospel and our Christian doctrine personally. Otherwise, if Jesus Christ is just introduced to them in personal terms, the Gospel will be an abstract message. It is very difficult for the youth to relate the Bible to reality if the Gospel is not yet personal to the youth (YPCED 2).

Equipping for theological discernment must be personal. The youth must be equipped to personally own their Christian belief, otherwise the Gospel is an abstract message. This argument suggests the importance of equipping the youth as lay theologians through the approach of you[theology], lay theologians who can be equipped to own their Christian journey. Thus, they will discern right and wrong based on their personal relationship with God and the growth in their Christian spiritual journey.

5.10 Conclusion

The findings of this empirical study reveal that the ECWA youth programmes do equip the youth with theological content through the tools of Bible study, prayer meetings, living testament, Jesus's model of discipleship, discipleship and mentorship as modes of teaching for theological discernment, personal spiritual journey and ECWA culture. However, the programme does not equip the youth with theological discernment with regard to engaging with HHC, because although HHC is prevalent in society and a reality in the lives of the youth, it is rarely discussed (if discussed at all) in the church youth programmes and yearly themes – for different reasons. These reasons include fear of cultural interpellation, denial of the reality in society, and lack of feedback mechanisms from the youth to the EE, who decides the annual yearly themes that determine the youth programmes and youth week programmes.

Another deduction from these participants' responses is the assumption that, since the youth are taught theology through their individual walk with God, Bible studies and prayer meetings, these should also equip them to conquer the challenges and vices of HHC and maximise the opportunities of HHC with discernment. There is also the assumption that the same drafted programmes can be sent to both rural and urban cosmopolitan areas, which does not always meet the needs in those areas.

One more deduction is that the youth do not determine the annual themes of youth ministry. The EE at the ECWA headquarters determines the central theme for all ministries in the ECWA (youth, women and men). Therefore, the youth must align all their events in

accordance with the theme chosen for the year, irrespective of its relevance to their concerns or interests. However, the youths do not draft their programme by themselves because they are generally seen as incomplete human beings who are still dependent on their parents and are unable of leading the right decisions without guidance.

The next chapter engages normative discussions on themes generated from the findings. It further proposes proactive measures of engaging the practical theological framework of pragmatic task.

CHAPTER SIX: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ECWA YOUTH MINISTRY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter engages with discussions on the findings from the empirical data to answer the research question. In answering the research question of this research study, I used Osmer's two theological tasks to argue for a normative response to the findings of this research study, and a pragmatic response that argues for proactive action.

Osmer (2008:133) in his argument of practical theological methodology understands the normative task to entail seeking to discern God's will for present realities. That is, engaging present human realities with the quest to discern God's will in that reality through prophetic discernment. Prophetic discernment suggests the interpretation of past tradition as written in the Word of God and present human realities. That is, the prophetic discernment of interpreting past tradition and today's human realities involves the interpretation of God's divine disclosure in the Word of God and the human shaping of God's Word (Osmer, 2008:134-135). Niebuhr (1951:194) argues that transformers of culture seek to engage human realities and culture with Christ. By the grace of God, human life can be transformed in and to the glory of God (Niebuhr, 1951:196).

Thus, this chapter employs the normative and pragmatic tasks of Osmer's practical theological methodology to discuss and assist the faith community, especially ECWA church in addressing how it may proceed in equipping the youth for theological discernment. In employing these two tasks, this chapter suggests specific strategies of action necessary to equip the youth and youth leaders for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC as an attempt to achieve the second research aim and objective of this research study: "To understand and extend different models and tools of equipping for theological discernment within the faith community". The normative discussion and pragmatic actions are also employed to achieve the fifth research aim and objective of this research study: "To propose to the faith community (youth ministry and church) possible practical theological approaches to equipping the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with HHC".

The research findings shared in Chapter Five depict that there are two cultures in the reality of ECWA youth members – the ECWA culture, which is the culture believed by and practised within the church, and the HHC, which is the prevalent culture in cosmopolitan cities. I discussed the research question of this research study, which is how the ECWA youth ministry programme can equip its youth with the theological discernment required for them to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities of the contemporary HHC. This research study engaged the normative and pragmatic tasks of Osmer to discuss the possibilities of equipping the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with HHC. These possibilities for how the youth can be equipped for theological discernment were discussed in section 6.6 (hip hop church). Section 6.7 and 6.8 address the discussion of how the ECWA culture and HHC can successfully co-exist and meet the concerns of interest for practitioners of both cultures. I argue for cultural models such as acculturation and enculturation. These models and understandings can guide us in establishing a successful co-existing culture in the church that informs programmes that enrich an ECWA culture that tolerates and accommodates HHC for the sake of the youth and the youth ministry of the denomination.

In response to the findings about the essentiality of equipping for theological discernment, I argue for theological incarnation, reception history theory, and the gift of discernment as guiding models for equipping the youth for theological discernment. This equipping will enable them to discern right and wrong as they engage the challenges of HHC as discussed in section 6.5.

6.1.1 Summary of findings

The findings reveal that the ECWA CED is responsible for drafting the youth week of prayers programmes and the ECWA EE is responsible for deciding the annual themes for all ECWA ministry programmes (youth, women and men). The annual themes determine the theology that will be taught by the church (weekly Bible studies, DCC conventions, LCC conventions and sermons in local churches). The theme chosen by the EE serves as the ECWA theme and theology for all annual ECWA programmes. The EE decides the annual theme for youth programmes and the CED drafts the programmes and theology from the theme by writing a Bible study booklet and drafting the youth ministry annual programme. Both the CED and EE are adults and parents who make these decisions in regard to youth programmes. One reason for this is the conceptualisation of youth: some of the adults believe that the youth are still children who are not responsible enough to bear

such responsibilities. Another reason is that the youth are perceived as incomplete human beings because they are still in the development phase.

On the other hand, the youth expressed a desire to decide the annual themes that determine their programmes, because the drafted programmes do not take into account the reality of their concerns, and it do not address the prevalent phenomenon of HHC.

The findings discovered that, although HHC, with its challenges and opportunities, is prevalent in the cosmopolitan cities, it is not a subject of discussion in ECWA as a result of what is referred to as the ECWA culture and the denial of HHC. The findings of ECWA culture as a culture of denial resonates with Smith and Jackson's viewpoint of some American Churches (2005:33-34). In their book, *The Hip-Hop Church: Connecting with the movement shaping our culture*, they discussed the prevalence and impact of the HHC in American society and how, despite its prevalence and impact in the society, some (if not most) of the churches in the USA, with the exception of some senior and youth pastors, are in denial of HHC and turn a blind eye to its impact on the youth's way of life. However, in Niebuhr's (1951:191-194, 196) arguments on Christ the transformer of culture, he argues for an involvement with culture that calls for conversionists with a hopeful view of culture who understand culture in the light of historic human events reflecting God's interaction with humanity. Thus, instead of the ECWA faith community living in denial of the HHC, they can become transformers of HH by engaging the culture with the perception and understanding that Christ is the transformer of culture.

This perception and understanding as argued by Niebuhr (1951:196) connotes that Christ as the transformer of culture entails three things: (1) That God has hands in human creativity, and that creativity is good (and can be good despite the sinful nature of humanity); (2) That though there can be sin in culture, hope is not lost, because Christ is the redemption of human culture; (3) Christ defeats sin not by escaping, fighting or denying human frailty, but by engaging and showing love to human beings within culture. The fifth goal of this research study is, "To propose to the faith community (youth ministry and church) possible theological approaches to equipping the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with hip hop culture". Thus, I propose that the faith community theologially equip the youth and youth leaders for theological discernment to engage HHC with Christ's redemptive and transformative message to humanity, an engagement that is God-oriented and Christ-focussed. This equipping can be done by teaching the youth and

youth leaders the Christian faith and Christian life as exemplified in the life and ministry of Christ. Section 2.6 discussed models of education for Christian ministry, which entails equipping the youth and youth leaders with education regarding Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry.

The ECWA culture and HHC are two cultures that exist within the same context; the ECWA culture is the dominant culture in the church, while HHC is the prevalent and contemporary culture in cosmopolitan cities. The ECWA culture was created by parents and adults who are the church leaders, while the HHC is the prevalent culture in society and among youths. Thus, there is a dichotomy between the ECWA culture (adults and parents) and the HHC (youth). In this dichotomy within the church, Klaasen (2018:1) argues that the “youth occupy a traditional marginal position” in regard to decision-making. The adults and parents constitute what Klaasen refers to as church centre (spiritual leaders) and are the decision-making body within the church. So, there is a dichotomy between the centre (powerful) and margin (powerless) in relation to decision-making. In Klaasen’s (2018:1) words regarding church ministry, worship and formation, and administration, the centre (powerful) makes the decisions while the margin (powerless) are receptors of such decisions.

Another finding is that HHC is not discussed in the ECWA church because the drafters of the annual themes and youth fellowship week programmes do not include it in the programmes for discussion. The annual themes and the youth fellowship week prayers do not have the opportunity to discuss HHC or make room for HHC in the church.

The findings also discovered that the ECWA youth fellowship week programmes and the annual themes equip the youth with theological content through prayer meetings, Bible studies and sermons, but do not equip them for theological discernment in their interface with the HHC, which is prevalent in cosmopolitan cities in Nigeria. This is because HHC is not discussed by the youth when they are in church, even though the youth live it in society. This has created a double standard in the life of the youth. They embrace and live out HHC at home, at work and in society, but pretend not to in church because their parents, adults and the church culture do not accept it. Another consequence is that the ECWA is losing its youth to the Pentecostal churches, which have embraced them and given an enabling environment for the youth to live out elements of HHC. Two participants express this view:

Really, I think the time we are in now is the hip hop season. It has crept into the church, but whether it is for good or for bad, only time will tell. In some churches, especially Pentecostal churches, you

see people rap in the course of singing gospel songs, they adapt it, rightly or wrongly, but for me what is important is the spirit behind whatever everybody is doing. Even though ECWA is fighting this movement not to happen in church, but it is in the youth already. I think discernment on the rightness or wrongness should be the goal and not fighting youth over a culture that is everywhere in the city (Participant YPCED 6);

The hip hop culture is an 'imported culture' and a culture that is influencing growth in the churches today. Unfortunately, or fortunately, any church that sticks with the traditional parents culture and does not conform to this imported culture are losing its youth members to other churches (Pentecostal churches) who understand the times by importing this HHC into their liturgy of worship (Participant YL 8).

Churches that engage HHC into their liturgy of worship are understood to be churches that understand the times because HHC is a way of life that is already part of the youth's reality. Thus, the youth gravitate to churches that embrace the liturgy of HHC that allows expression to God during worship and self-expression of opinions, viewpoints and experiences.

6.1.2 The contextual implications for ECWA

The contextual implications of this research study is that the findings are relevant discoveries of viewpoints, experiences and opinions within ECWA churches located in cosmopolitan cities. That is, the contextual understanding of discernment for HHC were obtained from participants within cosmopolitan churches in ECWA.

Another contextual implication of the study findings of this research is that ECWA churches and probably other evangelical and orthodox churches with the same kind of structures of administration where spiritual leaders decide on annual themes and draft programmes for youth, could be losing their youth to Pentecostal churches who engage HHC in their liturgy of worship.

6.1.3 Practical implications of this research study

The research findings and recommendations gained from this study are applicable to the faith community in ECWA. However, the significance of these findings and discussions could be applicable to other faith communities that share the same context as ECWA in terms of denomination and geographical location. The same research question to other faith communities and academic contexts, could generate the same or different findings and

discussions that could enrich the faith community and academia with equipping for theological discernment.

6.2 Programme of Youth Ministry in ECWA

The youth ministry in ECWA operates through youth fellowship in different LCBs. The youth fellowship is a Christian ministry under the supervision of the CEO. The CEOs collect the annual programmes from the CED. The CED receives the annual ECWA themes from the EE. These themes inform the Bible study content and theology that will be taught at the youth fellowships of all LCBs – irrespective of location (cosmopolitan and rural) and irrespective of relevance in addressing the youth’s concerns of interest. The shared concern of participants was the need for a feedback mechanism that can aid the spiritual leaders at CED draft annual programmes that are relevant in addressing the concerns of interest among the youth.

6.2.1 Programme feedback mechanism

A feedback mechanism can enable ECWA youth ministry to achieve its goal as written in the ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook (2010b:6). The goal is to equip the youth for maturity in Christ (Col. 1:28), a life of maturity that reflects the Christian faith and Christian life and is modelled after Christ. It is significant to quote participant YPCED 3 at length on the need for a feedback mechanism in ECWA:

I do not know if the Christian Education department through the CEO is aware that the ECWA does not have a feedback mechanism where youth can express their views about the yearly themes and youth week programmes sent to them. There is not any form of evaluation that comes up after everything. Therefore, I doubt if they will be aware if youth complain over this kind of structure and programme. From my part, I have tried to share on an occasion or two about how these things should be done. I have shared with the Christian Education Office, with the person who is in charge of youth ministry. I have shared with them, that I think you should have youth pastors develop some of these things together with other young ministers in our seminary. I have shared that with them, but concerning being aware, I do not know to what level they are aware, I cannot categorically say (Participant YPCED 3).

The CED of the ECWA needs to establish a structured mechanism to get feedback from the youth. To achieve this feedback mechanism, the CED will need to source youth viewpoints and opinions about the annual themes and programmes. The CED could adopt the service

of feedback mechanism tools such as Qualaroo, SurveyMonkey or Survicate, which can help the CED generate feedback from the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors regarding the youth week programmes and the annual themes of ECWA.

To use these survey tools (Qualaroo, SurveyMonkey and Survicate), the CED can administer questionnaires through e-mail and survey tools platforms. Other tools for generating feedback are Google Docs and social media survey platforms on Facebook, website feedback forms, and traditional feedback platforms via developing feedback forms. These traditional platforms require generating opinions and feedback through the LYC and DYC, as supervised by the CEOs at the DCCs, and youth pastors where the DCC has one (one of the concerns raised by some participants is that there are few youth pastors in the ECWA).

Generating feedback will provide useful and relevant information that can help the CED to:

- (1) Improve the youth week of prayer programmes;
- (2) Help the CED to assess the relevance of the programmes disseminated to the youth;
- (3) Understand the behaviour of the youth and what is conditioning their behaviour;
- (4) Give the youth a sense of belonging as co-owners of the church, alongside older church members;
- (5) Give the youth an opportunity to educate the CED on trending and contemporary issues in society that affect them (the youth);
- (6) Equip the youth for theological discernment on issues that pervade cosmopolitan cities;
- (7) Give the CED the insight to develop programmes and approaches that can equip the youth with discernment of wrong and right in regard to engaging with HHC;
- (8) Empower the youth ministry to effectively engage with the youth regarding their concerns of interest, instead of answering questions that the youth are not asking.

6.2.2 Suggested feedback mechanism

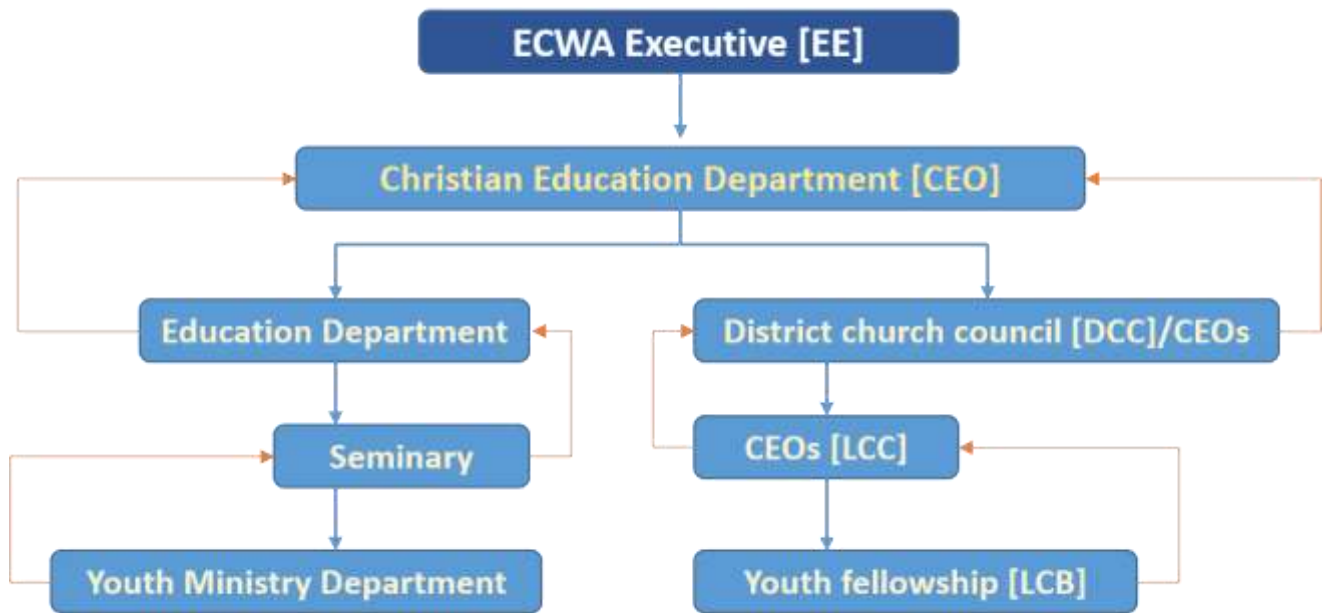


Figure 6.1: Suggested feedback mechanism

The above figure 6.1 is a suggested feedback mechanism for the ECWA youth ministry programme. The EE should decide the annual themes as the spiritual leaders of the church. The themes should be given to the CED, which should in turn send the themes to the academic gatekeepers (youth ministry department in the seminary). The academic gatekeepers should draft a programme while mindful of its theological impetus for cosmopolitan and rural areas for the youth ministry. Then, they should send the programme back to the CED to verify and approve the programme as administrative gatekeepers. After approval, the CED should send the programme to CEOs who will send the programme to all LCBs. At the LCBs, the youth and youth leaders should engage the programme as practitioner gatekeepers. In LCBs where there is a gatekeeper who is designated as the youth pastor, the CEO should send the programme to them so they can engage and contextualise the programme as a practitioner and academic gatekeeper.

6.3 ECWA culture

Some of the participants narrated their viewpoints and experiences of the ECWA culture. ECWA has a culture that has classically conditioned the ideology and behaviour of ECWA members. The conditioning informs what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in ECWA churches. Culture, according to Adama (2015:116) and Chuta (2008:7), is derived from the Latin word ‘cultura’, which means ‘cultivation’ or ‘to tend’. This refers to cultivating or

tending in the sense of improvement and development of ideology, manners, behaviours, a community and/or a person. Cultivating connotes that culture grows (and is grown) as an ideology, behaviours and manners of an individual or a community. ECWA culture is an ideology, behavioural practices that are commonly practiced by ECWA members.

For Devaney (2001:6) and Pattillo-McCoy (1998:767), culture is ideology, thoughts and perceptions that consist of rhetorical, interactional and material tools that are expressed through strategic action and a way of life. Deducing from the conceptualisation of Devaney and Pattillo-McCoy and the root meaning of culture as explained by Adama and Chuta, I understand culture in this research study as: (1) an ideology, (2) developed and not static, (3) expressed through words, behaviours and manners, (4) a lifestyle that is lived out, (5) dynamic and subject to improvement, (6) practised by people and/or a community, (7) can be transmitted from one generation to another, and (8) classically conditions people to think and behave in a certain fashion.

Hofstede (2004:52) adds that culture refers to “the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving”. Culture is a process of developing beliefs and values and practising attitudes and religion that create meaning for a person and/or community. Engaging in the understanding that culture is a belief system and a religion by way of reception, history promotes making meaning of a text to inform cultural practices.

Culture is created and sustained by people (Devaney, 2001:6; Kemi and Chijioke, 2017:148). Devaney (2001:6) emphasises that people are the associates, cultural practitioners, negotiators and re-negotiators of culture. As discussed in section 3.2 (a discussion on culture), human beings are the people who create and co-create culture for themselves, their community and genealogy. People are the social actors in their own culture. Premised on this argument – that people are the social actors, creators and cultural practitioners of culture – I firstly argue that the ECWA church, through the youth ministry, can equip the youth to create a religious culture in HHC. Secondly, the youth can be equipped to create elements of HHC in the ECWA church. Since culture is created by the people who practise and transmit culture from generation to generation, the youth can

transmit the values of Christian faith, Christian life and ministry through HHC, especially because HHC provides people with creativity and power.

In the words of Kuttner (2016:543), HHC connotes creativity, power, motion, music and dance that are attractive and influence how people respond to them. Thus Kuttner (2016:543) argues that, if the role of HHC is “to do free theatre, our role should be supporting it. And the same thing – if ours is to do actions, do rallies downtown, project HH’s role is to bring their creative stuff to get everybody singing to the same tune”. To openly support avenues where the youth are able to engage HHC with creativity and transmit their stories and experiences of their Christian faith, the church and gatekeepers will need to walk alongside them, as argued by Selvam and Ellis. Selvam (2006:65) and Ellis (2015:121) argue for an approach that requires journeying alongside the youth as Jesus journeyed with the two men as depicted in Luke 24:13-35. That is, the understanding that God’s action can be seen in their progress, brokenness and impossibility (Ellis, 2015:121). The journey may not yield instant results through programmes, but it will equip the youth with an experience of love and care. Engaging this understanding of patiently journeying with the youth, could require an element of training of the church and the gatekeepers who are involved in youth ministry. The equipping of the church and gatekeepers could require a relationship, a synergy between youth ministry practitioners and academics. This connotes organising workshops, seminars, and conferences and inviting seasoned youth workers and youth pastors from the field (practitioners), and youth ministry and practical theologians from the academia.

In ECWA, the church has provided a cultural blueprint for her members, as expressed by the interviewed participants. The cultural blueprint has classically conditioned the youth to think, behave and develop certain assumptions about the denomination. The participants said that prayer meetings, Bible studies, the covering of hair, not being expressive in worship and women not wearing trousers comprise the cultural ‘tool kits’ of ECWA culture.

The youth participants expressed dissatisfaction with some of the cultural tool kits in ECWA, especially cultural tool kits that restrain the youth from wearing trousers and expressing themselves in worship. These cultural tool kits are not documented in the church’s articles of faith, but the practice is registered in the minds of the youth. However, this is understandable because culture can be theoretical in the mind of the people or written in a document; culture can be either practised as a way of life, or an ideology.

Furthermore, the participants also expressed that these restraints are the reason why some ECWA youth are leaving the ECWA church for Pentecostal churches, where the denominations do not restrain members from expressing themselves during worship and do not condition their women not to wear trousers. Since culture is dynamic and not static, the culture of the parents who created these cultural tool kits, can invite the youth to be co-creators of ECWA culture. However, as argued in section 6.3, the mainstream culture (church centre) can create a space for HHC to be incorporated as part of the ECWA culture, such as elements of HHC that serve as tool kits that encourage graffiti art, and HH rap music with its beat and rhythms. The expression of worship in liturgy, which is one of the opportunities offered by HHC, can be established as part of the ECWA cultural tool kit. HHC also offers the youth a platform to increasingly participate in the political space of the church and the nation. Kuttner (2016:527) argues, and I concur, that HHC affords the youth the civic opportunity to express their opinions and experiences. Thus, if HHC is incorporated into the ECWA culture's mode, ritual worship in its youth ministry programmes and church services, it will give the youth a platform for expressive worship, and courage to express their political opinions about the nation, Nigeria.

According to Kemi and Chijioke (2017:148), there are constructive cultural tool kits that are the fibre of religion in the geo-political regions of Nigeria. They add that "culture and religion are two main fibres sustaining the continued existence of a community" and that it is difficult to separate religion from culture, because religion itself is a collection of cultural systems. This indicates that the Christian religion⁹¹ and culture of materialism occupy an important and crucial position in African societies, which means that the Christian religion and culture are two interwoven components that co-exist. Adama (2015:115) adds that the interweaving of the two cultures creates cross-fertilisation and an interaction of ideas, beliefs, concepts and ways of life. The result of such cross-fertilisation is the creation of new ways of doing things.

Both religion and culture are twin realities that influence people in the community. The Christian religion therefore can create cultural tool kits in the community. Kemi and Chijioke (2017:148) provide some constructive cultural tool kits that are used in religious and cultural circles in Nigeria. These cultural tool kits place "high emphasis on uprightness,

⁹¹ Kemi and Chijioke (2017:151) narrate that "religion sells like premium motor spirit (PMS) in Nigeria. Because of unemployment, some men/women in the society have turned themselves into men/women of God overnight. This has therefore turned religion, especially Christianity into a trade". The Christian religion is a popular and established religion in Nigeria.

truth, contentment, respect, which are needed in making contemporary religion worthy to practice” (Kemi and Chijioke, 2017:148).

As expressed by some participants, HHC is a Western culture, while some said it is an American culture that was brought to Nigeria and, by extension, Africa. It was likewise brought into religion in the ECWA. Nigerian scholars Kemi and Chijioke (2017:156) argue that “religion in contemporary Nigeria society was introduced by Westernization with all its attendant temptations”. The same can be said of Nigerian women adopting Western-style apparel in fashion (Adelaja, Salusso and Black, 2016:169; Anikweze, 2012:11)⁹². As argued by Kemi and Chijioke (2017:156), the Christian religion was imported into Nigeria, and has made an immeasurable impact through developing cultural tool kits in society. In Nigeria there are denominational cultural tool kits that are unique to each denomination. ECWA culture reflects cultural tool kits that are developed by the spiritual leaders and observed in ECWA churches.

However, Participant Y 8 narrates that the ECWA culture is a Northern culture that only reflects the acceptable and unacceptable norms in the Northern region of Nigeria:

The persons who organises the ECWA youth week programmes⁹³ organises it with the mindset and consent of churches in rural areas and more Northern areas than is relevant to us in the city and Eastern areas. Remember, the Northern and Eastern areas have different cultures. So, let us have a programme that could meet the needs of different areas (city) and geo-political regions (Participant Y 8).

According to this participant, besides the need for different programmes for different contexts (urban and rural), the fact that the ECWA youth ministry programmes are organised like a Northern programme for a Northern audience, also needs to be addressed. The programmes are designed from a Northern cultural perspective and best suitable for a Northern audience. The reason for this submission is that: (1) The programmes are drafted at ECWA headquarters located in the Northern region; and (2) The acceptable and unacceptable norms that constitute the ECWA culture are a Northern way of life that have been adopted as the church culture. As argued by Participant Y 8, who is from the Eastern

⁹² As argued by Adelaja et al. (2016:169) and Anikweze (2012:11), the wearing of Western-style apparel like trousers by women is an adopted Western fashion in Nigeria.

⁹³ As conceptualised in Chapter One, section 1.11.6, the ECWA youth week programme is one of the youth ministry programmes organised for the youth in all LCBs.

region, there is a perception that the ECWA youth ministry programmes are drafted with a Northern mindset for a Northern audience.

Participant Y 8's viewpoint that the ECWA culture of drafting a Northern programme and sending it to the Eastern region of Nigeria, could be a perception or a true reflection of the ECWA culture and how the ECWA youth ministry programmes are drafted. According to Craith (2004:280), cultural practices are not limited to a particular location. So, cultural practices as practiced in the Northern region of Nigeria can spread and be cultural practices in other regions of Nigeria, as the ECWA culture is a cultural norm in Northern Nigeria and sent as programmes to other regions of Nigeria. But Craith (2004:280) also argues that culture is constantly reworked, renegotiated and redefined. Culture is an ever-evolving way of life, and different generations have different ideas as to what forms their own culture. Thus, the ECWA culture can be reworked, renegotiated and redefined within the parties that are involved in the church (including the youth and adults).

I argue that the ECWA church can be receptive of HHC just as it was receptive of the Northern culture of dress and ordinance of worship as imported into the church. Although HHC was imported into the Nigerian community from global trends, the ECWA can: (1) Develop programmes that train the youth for immeasurable impact; and (2) Develop the youth for theological discernment in their interaction with HHC so they can create globalised content for HHC.

The equipping of the youth by theologically educating them for the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry, will inform their choices and decisions regarding the right and wrong of their interaction with the challenges and opportunities of HHC. However, equipping the youth for theological discernment does not exempt them from the challenges of HHC. Rather, it equips them to navigate the challenges of HHC, and maximise the opportunities to express their views, experiences and opinions about the church and issues in society.

6.3.1 Culture is created and can be recreated

Culture is created and lived by human beings. Culture is created by human beings for human beings and practised by human beings (Davaney, 2001:6; Grenz, 2000:305). Human beings are the people who create, evolve and co-create culture for themselves, their community and genealogy. Thus, people are the social actors of their own culture. Culture as an

ideology, way of doing things and way of life is not static because it is created by human beings who are ever evolving and co-creating cultural elements and outlets for themselves and the community. That is, culture is dynamic and not static. Thus, people are the social actors who are involved in this dynamic way of life. People are responsible for creating and renegotiating their cultural beliefs and lifestyle.

Davaney (2001:6) adds that people contribute to the production of meaning, values, behaviour and ways of life. People are the producers of culture on multiple levels; through their resistance to the elite's ideologies of dominance, their creative appropriation and reconfiguration of the cultural production of the powerful, and through the creation of cultural practices and creating an identity that is their own. People, through their social processes such as language, values, artefacts, behaviours and music, construct their cultural way of life (Ogidi, 2015:28; Cloete, 2012:2; Borgman, 1997:65).

For ECWA youth to be creators and re-negotiators of ECWA culture and HHC, they will need to be equipped by the faith community on how to respond to the cultural practices of ECWA culture and HHC using their reflection on the life of Jesus (Christian life) as recorded in the Word of God as their guide for measurement. Niebuhr (1951:103), in his viewpoint on Christ for culture, argues that the historicity of Jesus's earthly life among people within their culture, acknowledges that people were attracted to Jesus as a result of his interaction and influence in the moral and religious way of life.

ECWA can sustain its culture of teaching the Bible, but should understand the contemporary trends in society so that the Bible will speak to youth cultural realities, so that the youth will be better helped (equipped) to engage with their realities. It will also aid them in how to apply the Bible truths in their daily lives, especially because:

There is more to life than just knowing the Word (Bible); the youth want to know how the Word of God can be appropriated for their realities. Youth could want to be contemporary without compromise, in other words knowing the Word in theory and knowing how to apply it in living it out when confronted with contemporary, trending issues... The church should properly teach the youth about the opportunities and discourage the youth, giving reasons for not allowing their jeans to sag, growing dreadlocks, rapping about money, drugs and women and sex. Let the church really know that hip hop is and is going to be prevalent (Participant YL 11).

This narration reasons that the youth could also want the church to acknowledge their realities, instead of ignoring their realities simply because it differs from the realities of the past. The question is; How does the Word of God speak to their reality?⁹⁴ The youth desires to be theologically equipped on how to appropriate the Word of God into their daily reality of concern. There is the desire to engage contemporary issues in society without compromising their Christian life and Christian faith.

6.3.2 Gatekeepers in ECWA Youth Ministry

The practice of gatekeeping is rooted in biblical history as a practice with specific responsibilities. Examples of gatekeeping in biblical histories are:

Shallum son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his fellow gatekeepers from his family (the Korahites) were responsible for guarding the thresholds of the tent just as their ancestors had been responsible for guarding the entrance to the dwelling of the LORD. (1 Chron. 9:19 NIV)

They and their descendants were in charge of guarding the gates of the house of the LORD – the house called the tent of meeting. (1 Chron. 9:23 NIV)

They would spend the night stationed around the house of God, because they had to guard it; and they had charge of the key for opening it each morning. (1 Chron. 9:27 NIV)

The gatekeepers of the temple: the descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita and Shobai 139. (Ezra 2:42 NIV)

Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. (Ps. 84:10)

From the aforementioned biblical history (passages), gatekeeping entails guarding the thresholds of the tent of meeting, guarding the gates of the house of the Lord, having charge of the key for opening access. Gatekeepers are custodians of the rules of engagement concerning the Lord's work and tradition. Their duty is to guard, protect and attend to the customary duties of maintaining the cultural traditions of the tent of meeting, thus having interaction with people. Similarly, youth ministry gatekeepers have duties including maintaining cultural traditions, except that youth ministry gatekeepers are not just

⁹⁴ I engaged this thought and perspective in the theology of incarnation.

custodians of cultural traditions, but, as Bergler (2010:21) argues, are also participants in culture who create, co-create and promote cultural elements and traditions in society.

Bergler (2010:21) further adds that gatekeepers are custodians, participants and practitioners of cultural realities who understand the cultural contexts in society from an experiential perspective due to their daily involvement and engagement with the people. Youth ministry in ECWA has three levels of gatekeepers who are custodians, co-creators and maintainers of traditions.

6.3.2.1 Academician (theologians)

Academician as gatekeepers in youth ministry are cultural gatekeepers who understand the cultural context in society from an academic perspective. The youth ministry academics are involved in diagnosing and analysing youth ministry through their engagement with literature and empirical studies. Bergler (2010:21), who calls them youth ministry educators, argues that one pertinent role of youth ministry educators is to convince youth ministers of their role as ‘cultural gatekeepers’ and to equip youth ministry practitioners and administrators to create an intergenerational culture of spiritual maturity. According to Pearson and Gapes (2002:11), the preparation of youth ministry is an invitation to academic theologians to apply their theological expertise to youth ministry in formulating theology of youth ministry.

In educating youth ministries practitioners, Wood (1994:5) argues that it is through active participation in a community of theological inquiry that academics acquire practical theological education to propound theories and approaches for the ministry, thus, implying that youth ministry academics are equipped theologians who propound theories, approaches and models for youth ministry regarding how to engage culture. Examples of youth ministry academics in ECWA are youth pastors, youth ministry students and lecturers in tertiary institution (seminaries and universities).

Academician in youth ministry can equip youth ministry practitioners and administrators through education in ministry (section 2.6.3) and education in schools of theology (section 2.6.4). The academics can organise workshops and seminars to educate practitioners and administrators on theological approaches to youth ministry, Christian faith, the Christian life and Christian practical ministry.

6.3.2.2 Practitioners (youth leaders, youth pastors, youth workers)

Youth ministry practitioners are youth ministers who practically engage with the youth in the field (foot soldiers) as cultural gatekeepers. They are foot soldiers who are not theologically trained, but involved in journeying with the youth as youth ministers. They are cultural gatekeepers who understand the cultural contexts in the society from their engagement with the youth and their own daily involvement with realities of concern in society.

Practitioners are gatekeepers who could be theologically trained pastors, youth workers or youth leaders who are lay theologians (as discussed in section 2.8.2.1 and section 2.8.2.1.1) and lead the youth at fellowship groups. Examples of practitioners as gatekeepers in ECWA are youth pastors who are designated by senior pastors, youth workers who work with interdenominational organisations like Word of Life, and youth leaders who are elected to serve for three years as one tenure (though subject to re-election for another tenure). Wood (1994:3) argues that youth ministry practitioners in the church are equipped through the schools of theology by youth ministry educators (academics). That is, youth ministry practitioners are equipped as lay theologians who engage culture and impact the youth to engage their concerns of interest like HHC.

6.3.2.3 Administrators (CEDs & CEOs)

Youth ministry administrators are youth ministers who administer policies and curricula and are gatekeepers of church traditions. In ECWA, they are the CED who draft youth ministry policies, programmes and documents for implementation, and CEOs who supervise the youth ministry programmes at fellowship groups. Youth ministry administrators are gatekeepers in youth ministry who are cultural gatekeepers who understand the cultural context and traditions of ECWA from an administrative perspective due to their engagement, study and implementation of ECWA policies and programmes.

Administrators draft and formulate ministry policies and handbooks for the youth, women's and men's fellowships to execute (ECWA Men's Fellowship Guide, 2010:10a; ECWA Youth Fellowship Handbook, 2010b:7; ECWA Women's Fellowship Guide, 1997:11). These three ministries (youth, women and men) are under the supervision of the CEOs at various DCCs. As custodians of these ECWA ministries, the ECWA headquarter CED

office drafts the yearly ECWA youth ministry programmes (including the Bible study for the youth weeks).

6.3.2.4 Theological training for youth ministry

Youth ministry in ECWA needs consistent training, training that will equip the youth ministry gatekeepers with the theological education for Christian ministry as exemplified in Nigeria at Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS). JETS offer a first degree in youth ministry. To minister and equip youth as social actors in God-relationships, the youth ministry will need to: (1) Journey with the youth to develop a maturing relationship with God (Hunsinger, 2015:140); (2) Understand the context of the youth in society (O’Keefe, 2008:41) (3) Guide them on how to engage their realities (culture) from a normative paradigm (Osmer, 2008:134); and (4) Understand how they can theologically discern and respond to the challenges and opportunities that confront the youth (Ellis, 2015:121).

The church needs theological training that will equip the gatekeepers to work together in synergy and in a complementary role as they all work for the glorification of God and edification of the youth. Firstly, in the spirit of playing complementary roles, the academics will need to develop from extant literature and empirical studies theories, principles and theologies that train and equip practitioners and academics with the know-how for youth ministry. Secondly, the practitioners will need to engage academics and administrators in discussion by sharing their experiences with youth and society from ethnographic and autographic paradigms. Thirdly, the administrators will need to engage the academics and practitioners in discussions centred on policies, curricula and programmes of events for youth ministry meetings that are relevant to the youth.

6.4 Hip Hop Culture as a Phenomenon

6.4.1 Hip hop culture as a phenomenon

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines phenomenon as a remarkable situation or happening that is observed to exist (2009:1076). Phenomenon is a remarkable situation or happening that prevails in a society or community. Hodge (2018:20) argues that HHC is an influential cultural phenomenon whose dominance in popular culture pre-dates decades in urban (cosmopolitan) cities.

As reported in section 5.4, HHC is a lifestyle, a phenomenon that exists in cosmopolitan cities of Nigeria. A Nigerian scholar, Adedeji (2013:1), argues that HHC as a phenomenon is the fastest growing youth-driven culture in Nigeria. Kitwana (2005: xii) narrates that HHC is a phenomenon due to the variable of the global information age, which aids it by increasing its capacity for limitless space of influence in society. However, Smith (2018:3) adds that, though HHC is a global cultural phenomenon, it also creates local and regional underground scenes. Thus HHC is global and glocalised in different contexts as discussed in section 3.3.2. That is, glocalisation of HHC shows that its elements permeate different societies in unique ways that may not be commonly experienced in other societies.

From the research findings and Adedeji's local viewpoint, I submit that HHC is an undeniable phenomenon and reality in Nigerian cosmopolitan cities that is impacting behaviours, lifestyle, and ways of expressing worship in the church. HHC is a phenomenon that the youth are familiar with; they express their knowledgeability about the prevalence of the culture and are active hip hoppers, even though their spiritual leaders live in denial of HHC.

6.4.2 Discernment of hip hop culture

HHC is prevalent in society as it influences the youth's lifestyle, behaviours and church worship. The prevalence of HHC can be a constructive or destructive phenomenon for both hip hoppers and society (Smith and Jackson, 2006:19, 22, 188). However, the concern is not HHC in itself, but hip hoppers knowing how to discern right and wrong as they engage in hip hop lifestyle (Smith and Jackson, 2006:19, 22). Hip hop is prevalent and here to stay in society, so the least that the faith community can do, is to equip the youth and the old for engaging with HHC constructively⁹⁵. Participant YPCED 6's viewpoint agrees with Smith and Jackson when he reasoned that:

Really, I think the time we are in now is the hip hop season. It has crept into the church, but whether it is for good or for bad, only time will tell. In some churches, especially Pentecostal churches, you see people rap in the course of singing gospel songs, they adapt it, rightly or wrongly, but for me

⁹⁵ Efrem Smith narrated that though he was born in 1969, he is still in love with HHC. He was the senior pastor of Sanctuary Covenant Church, Minneapolis, USA, and considers himself as a hip hopper who lives the hip hop way of life. For Smith, being a hip hopper has everything to do with interest and choices of interest, and not about age bracketing of being youth or adult (Smith and Jackson, 2006:19).

what is important is the spirit behind whatever everybody is doing. Even though ECWA is fighting this movement not to happen in church, but it is in the youth already. I think discernment on the rightness or wrongness should be the goal and not fighting youth over a culture that is everywhere in the city (Participant YPCED 6).

For this respondent, HHC is already a youthful lifestyle; whether for good or bad, hip hop is infiltrating churches because it is the hip hop season. This suggests that equipping for discernment regarding the right and wrong of HHC should be the response of the church, as opposed to fighting HHC, which is already a way of life in society and some churches. I agree with this participant and Smith and Jackson because it resonates with the second research aim and objective of this research study, which seeks to understand and extend different models and tools of equipping for theological discernment within the faith community.

Theological discernment is synonymous with thinking theologically and biblically about issues and questions regarding their concerns of interest. Theological discernment is equipping and guiding youth with God's Word for present realities so as to think and theologically understand how God works in their journey and works through them (Tanis, 2016:101; Schweitzer, 2014:184; Nel, 2003:75; Dean, 2001:15). To understand God's Word for present realities, in situations and contexts with discernment, Osmer promotes a normative discernment called prophetic discernment. Prophetic discernment entails how God's divine disclosure shapes the attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle of the human being (Osmer, 2008:134), that is, human beings being able to reconcile God's divine disclosure as written in the Word of God with their present realities, situations and concerns of interest.

Osmer (2008:135-139, 149-161, 153) proposes three methods in prophetic discernment that can help the faith community discover God's Word to diagnose and engage present realities, contexts and situations:

- (1) Theological interpretation is a normative process that focusses on how the faith community can interpret episodes, situations, and contexts with theological concepts (Osmer, 2008:139). This is a method that requires that the faith community uses theological concepts to interpret an event, situation or phenomenon, for example, the theological concept of showing forgiveness and defending those who are guilty according to the law as exemplified by Jesus sparing the life of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). Jesus defended

her from been killed according to the law before cautioning her not to sin any more. The faith community can interpret that theological concept and learn to show forgiveness to people who may not deserve it by law.

- (2) Ethical reflection is the method of applying ethical guidelines, rules and principles to events, situations or phenomena by using certain biblical and traditional principles and guidelines to discern engagement with events and situations. This process of discernment requires that the faith community and individuals in the faith community understand ethical normative principles that should govern their behaviours and actions as they journey through challenges and opportunities.
- (3) Good practice is the method of learning and drawing from models of good practice and allowing the lessons from those good practices to guide discernment in engagement with events, situations and phenomena. These models of good practice could be biblical characters, or adults who exemplify good behaviour in society. This could be much needed in the Nigerian society. The youth could learn from the oral history of older adults of good standing in society. Also, the prophetic discernment of good practice enables the faith community to learn new understanding of God, the Christian life, Christian faith and Christian ministry.

6.5 Challenges and Opportunities of Hip Hop Culture

One of the research aims and objectives of this study (the fourth) seeks to understand and address the impact of the challenges and opportunities posed by hip hop youth culture. HHC is not void of challenges and opportunities. The challenges and opportunities of HHC as discovered in the findings in regards to lifestyle and behaviours, suggest that HHC can be a destructive phenomenon (challenges) or/and a constructive phenomenon (opportunities). Whether HHC is a destructive or constructive phenomenon, is a byproduct of the lifestyle of hip hoppers and the hip hop audience. That is, HHC is a dynamic culture that is created and ever-evolving, and the culture is created and consumed by the lifestyle of the people who engage the culture.

6.5.1 Theological challenges of hip hop culture

Participants expressed that HHC is seen as a vehicle for destructive purposes – it is perceived as a culture that promotes sexism by patriarchal masculinity, explicit sexual exposure, gangsterism and drugs, and violence. This is illustrated in figures 6.2 below.



Figure 6.2. Discussed theological challenges of HHC

6.5.1.1 Sexism/masculine dominance

HHC is patriarchal in nature, thus it tends to be prejudiced and discriminate against women (Smith and Powell, 2018:3). This prejudice against women is caused by the dominance of patriarchal masculinity as an integral aspect of HHC. Addressing the challenge of patriarchal dominance in HHC, Boggs (2015:59) says that gender equality remains a persistent blind spot in HHC, especially as exemplified in rap music. The practice of rap music as an element of HHC provides a compelling site of masculine dominance. This masculine dominance makes HHC a patriarchal culture that practices sexism against female hip hop rap artists and fans.

For Boggs (2015:61), this patriarchal masculine dominance is prevalent among black males who dominate the feminine HH rap music artists and sometimes project women as sex objects. This view of black patriarchal masculine dominance in hip hop music resonates with participant observation about the Nigerian rap music industry.

In Nigeria, hip hop rap music is patriarchal in nature and projects women as sex objects (Shonekan, 2010:9). Shonekan (2010:9) argues that in the Nigerian society, male HH rappers practice sexism by using females as sex objects by depicting explicit sexual content and exposing women's bodies for the gratification of men. To extend Shonekan's argument, I discovered that some female Nigerian artists are also guilty of showing prejudice by exposing women as sex objects. Examples of Nigerian female hip hop artists who promote

women as sex objects are Tiwa Savage in her song featuring Wizkid and Spell entitled ‘Ma Lo’, Suzie Jenina Esimaje, better known as Jemima (stage name), in her song, ‘My body’, and Queen singer Caroline Sam, better known as Maheeda (stage name), who sang a Christmas song in the hip hop genre.

6.5.1.2 Explicit sexual exposure in content

Hip hop culture promotes sexual saturation in the community and society (Akpan, 2006:95; Androustopoulos and Scholz, 2003:464; Shonekan, 2010:9). Explicit sexual content is saturated within the cosmopolitan cities through HH elements such as rap music videos and HHC outlets like fashion. For Smith and Powell (2018:3) and Hodge (2018:14), HHC is a sexualised culture that promotes sexual exposure as a way of life.

In Nigerian cosmopolitan cities, HHC promotes sexual saturation through seductive fashions, especially for women, hip hop music and advertisements (Shonekan, 2010:9; Akpan, 2006:95). HHC poses the challenge of explicit sexual content to hip hoppers through seductive dress and hip hop music, and to society through advertisement billboards, children and adult cartoons, movies and advertisement of products and services such as car washes (Doritos car wash), energy drinks (Sexy Commercial Featuring Xyience Xenergy Girl Monica), and jeans (Calvin Klein jeans, fall 2015).

6.5.1.3 Gangsterism and drugs

Butler (2004:992) describes gangsterism as an HHC racket among the youth that leads to involvement in violent acts like crime and gang behaviour, particularly organised crime that promotes, peddles and consumes drugs and alcohol. Some extracts from the interviews confirm Butler’s expression that gangsterism in HHC is associated with taking drugs, involvement in gangs and incessant alcohol consumption. Walkera, Navarro, Hoffmana, Wagnerb, Stalgaitisb, and Jordan (2018:28, 33) add that HHC is associated with an increased exposure to and risk of using tobacco. Cranwell, Murray, Lewis, Leonardi-bee, Dockrell, and Britton (2015:703) agree, but add that the hip hop music genre videos promote substance abuse such as the use of cocaine, alcohol and weed.

In fact, tobacco and alcoholic companies historically use HHC’s lifestyle to market cigarettes and alcoholic products through promotional activities aligning with the hip hop cultural lifestyle (Walkera et al., 2018:29; Cruz, Wright, and Crawford, 2010:147).

6.5.1.4 Violence

Gangsterism in HHC expresses itself in violent behaviour to express disapproval of existing oppression, marginalisation, and discrimination in society. Pope (2015:189) explains that:

“The politics of violence, hustling, and contempt within three historical eras (Panther, Gangster, and Hyphy) were responses to the worsening local conditions. These eras provide an underground model of a militant and radical inner city discourse largely insulated from mainstream influence. Hip hop was the vehicle for its expression.”

HHC is known for using the violence as an approach to communicate to political powers. Hip hoppers engage violence for destructive purposes by becoming militant and using force to express the experiences and pain in society. Hanchard (2006:17) refers to “political parallelism and understanding that rap music in the 1980s and 1990s was a direct reaction to what was seen as incessant police surveillance and violence”.

6.5.2 Theological opportunities of hip hop culture

HHC is seen as a vehicle for constructive purposes as opportunities, as expressed by participants – it can be used for soul winning (evangelism), expression in worship, wealth creation and giving voice to the voiceless. This is illustrated in figure 6.4 below.

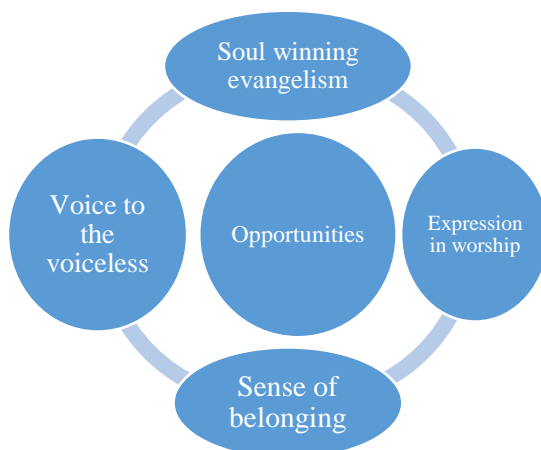


Figure 6.3. The discussed theological opportunities of HHC

6.5.2.1 Soul winning

Abraham (2015:285) narrates that, in the last three decades in South Africa, evangelical Christians have embraced HHC as a way of communicating Christian religious beliefs to

young audiences. HHC has become a vehicle to evangelise the youth generation who are hip hoppers. As Smith and Jackson (2005:154, 201) explain, through the lyrics, a gospel hip hop emcee and rapper “is telling the listener what’s really going on from their perspective, and they are presenting a way of living within urban culture”. The rappers tell the audience their salvation story of how they experience the saving love and grace of God in their lives. In sharing their stories, they also invite the listeners to respond to their stories by being willing to join them in experiencing this love and grace of God. Soul winning happens when the listeners respond and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour (Smith and Jackson, 2005:201).

Abraham (2015:285), arguing for HHC as a pedagogy for teaching Christian religious beliefs and values, notes that as a result of the influence of North American evangelism, South African Christian hip hoppers are attempting and promoting the HH music genre by utilising it as a form of pedagogy to teach and transmit religious beliefs and values to the youth. The Nigerian Christian hip hoppers can learn from the South African Christian hip hoppers, and by extension learn from North American evangelism to equip Christian hip hoppers on how to share their Christian faith for soul winning through the various elements of HHC. Thus, the Nigerian Christian youth in ECWA and by extension, other faith communities, can become God’s biblical witnesses as fallible people in the community who are called to share the love and grace of God with people in their own community, a community that can be a physical neighbourhood or an HHC neighbourhood not in a particular location (Hendriks, 2004:31).

Another praxis of soul winning is that non-church hip hoppers can be evangelised through young people who are hip hoppers. Watkins (2003: 85) and Hodge (2014: 60) argue that hip hop rappers in the ‘secular music’ industry who occasionally make use of religious themes, Christian messages or articulate religious clichés and sentiments, become de facto religious educators or lay theologians for many young people who for different reasons are disconnected from religious institutions.

This demonstrates the soul winning platform that HHC offers the Christian faith community to share the Christian faith through elements of HHC to hip hoppers (Christians and/or non-Christians alike). Smith and Jackson (2005:91) buttress that HHC brings people of all walks of life together. HHC is the hub of togetherness – irrespective of race and religion.

6.5.2.2 Expression in worship

HHC grants freedom of expression in worship. Vito (2015:397) submits that HHC is an outlet for expression. The expression could be in worship as people express themselves for the glory of God in worship, or a deejay leading the people in worship with music on turntables and CD's (Smith and Jackson, 2005:180-181).

HHC creates an atmosphere of responsive worship where the service leader, preacher and all in attendance correspond in responsive worship. It is not a worship where the audience only comes to listen, they also have the freedom to partake in the worship.

Beside HHC as a culture that creates opportunities for expression in worship, HHC is an outlet for expression about realities in society. Vito (2015:397) narrates that HHC is an outlet of expression that challenges, accepts, and addresses globalised and glocalised issues in society through manifested behaviour and lifestyle, and outlets of HHC. For Degbovie (2005:307) and Shonekan (2010:5), HHC provides an opportunity to communicate powerful oratorical, didactic messages and expressions of frustration. HHC offers the ECWA youth the opportunity to express their frustration with the challenges in society.

Scherpf offers another aspect of expression that is worth mentioning. Scherf (2001:82) posits that Christian rappers have been known to transform dissertations in evangelical theological colleges into rap albums. Thus, freedom of expression can also connote that hip hoppers in academia can transmit the knowledge in their dissertations to society by rapping them to their hip hop audiences and at hip hop churches.

6.5.2.3 Wealth creation

Hip hop is a highly marketed culture that yields financial profit for hip hoppers (Smith and Powell, 2018:3). In Nigeria, hip hop music is a great source of income because it creates employment, and thus is a source of wealth for the Nigerian youth (Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone, 2016:116; Okafor, 2005:14). Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016:118) argue that HH music in Nigeria has evolved into a multi-business music industry and many Nigerian youth have become wealthy in their pursuit of HH music.

6.5.2.4 Voice to the voiceless

HHC is influential to offering hip hoppers who are voiceless in society, the opportunity to voice their opinions, perceptions and experiences (Travis and Maston, 2014:18-20; Shami, 2012:26). Shami (2012:26) states that HHC provides a creative platform for the marginalised to voice their opinions to the world. Travis and Maston (2014:18) add that HHC gives the youth the voice to address their realities and tell their stories.

Hodge (2018:15) shares his story of how HHC gave him a voice and courage to air his voice while experiencing racism due to white dominance in the neighbourhood where he grew up. Hip hop created, and continues to create, a voice to push back against these types of dominant oppression. HHC is the platform that gives the voiceless a platform to express their voices.

6.6 Hip hop church

In realisation of the challenges and opportunities of HHC from the research findings as highlighted in section 5.7 and 5.8, and ECWA denial of HHC (section 5.6.4), I discussed the significance of hip hop church that can create an enabling environment for youth and adults who are HH audience, as propounded by Smith and Jackson (2005:35). Establishing a hip hop church in cosmopolitan cities can enable the faith community to equip youth to engage HHC in cosmopolitan cities. The secondary research question of this study reflected on how the faith community equips youth to engage HHC in cosmopolitan cities. Smith and Jackson's argument for the establishment of hip hop church in cosmopolitan cities can answer the secondary research question of this study.

Smith and Jackson (2005:17-57) promulgate the establishment of hip hop churches as a pragmatic church response to the prevalence of HHC in society. Their context shares similarities with the Nigerian context, where this research study was conducted. Theirs' was in an African American cosmopolitan context, youth are the hip hoppers (hip hop audience), and hip hop is prevalent in their cities (Smith and Jackson 2005:17-20). This research study was conducted among the youth in cosmopolitan Nigerian cities, where hip hop is also prevalent.

The church ignoring or denying the prevalence of HHC will not change the reality of its impact and influence in society. Rather, Smith and Jackson (2005:17-57) argue that, "it will

reduce its influence; it will only separate us from the youth moving to its rhythm. Smith and Jackson (2005:17-57) ask, how will they hear Christ's message of truth and hope if we don't speak their language? And how can we speak their language if we don't understand and embrace their culture?" Thus, I agree with Smith and Jackson's experimentation of a hip hop church as a practical theological response to the prevalence of HHC in Nigeria.

This discussion on hip hop culture may not address all the challenges of HHC, nor can it utilise all the opportunities of HHC, but a hip hop church with a church service once a month⁹⁶ could provide a practical response from the church to the youth because of the prevalence of HHC within society as expressed by the some of the participants. Reason for having the hip hop church once in a month in so that the youth will not be separated from the opportunity of youth fellowshiping with adults and parents in the same church services. Thus, the youth will have services with adults and parents to foster intergenerational relationship (connection), while also having unique hip hop church services among their peers and fellow hip hoppers who may belong to that Church or other faith community.

Smith and Jackson (2005:35) argue that HHC outside the church community is renowned for evil and worldly purposes such as glorifying drugs, alcohol abuse and addiction, and elevating violence as a means of resolving conflict, but HHC formed in the church could create a community of love, peace, and fun, built on the cultural elements of dance, rap music and visual art.

Smith and Jackson (2005:35) further argue that the church "can see everything as created by God for God's purposes and to be enjoyed by human beings and used for kingdom purpose". Smith and Jackson's (2005:35) argument that the church could create a presence and impact on HHC for God's purpose, resonates with Niebuhr's (1951: 191) viewpoint of Christ as the transformer of culture for His glorification. The church, with the theological conviction of God as the creator and sustainer of all that is created, can engage human culture and transform human life for the glory of God (1951:196). So, the church has the theological mandate to impact culture with God's transformational love, care, wisdom, morality and religious philosophy by engaging culture (Niebuhr, 1951:103). Adding to the

⁹⁶ I suggest hip hop church services once a month in the evening. The reason is so that the youth can sustain the connection of morning services with adults (parents). The hip hop church will not be a substitute for Sunday morning services, but rather a collaborative attempt to equip the youth for discernment on HHC as they engage it.

argument that the church has the theological mandate to engage culture, Hodge (2018:20) argues that the theology of HHC is that “God ‘shows up’ in the most unusual of places and the most interesting locations – more often than not, in the intersection of the sacred and the profane”.

HHC transcends religious affiliations. Christians, Muslims and New Agers are hip hoppers (Smith and Jackson, 2005:110). The hip hop church can take God’s message to both sacred and profane places of different religions, since hip hop in itself is not a religion but a pattern of life with possibilities of cross-religious affiliation. Thus, the hip hop church can even use hip hop music to evangelise hip hoppers of other religious or hip hoppers without any religious convictions.

In commenting on a pragmatic response from the church on challenges within the society, Osmer (2011:2) adds that, “in both the church and academy, the challenge of developing new forms of Christian practice in a modernising world and providing good reasons to justify these practices was front and centre”. In agreement with Osmer’s argument of the church and academy pragmatically developing forms of praxis that respond to the challenges in the society, this research study proposes a hip hop church in response to the challenges and opportunities of HHC in a modernising society. Osmer (2011:2) buttresses that developing Christian practices in response to a challenges within the society justifies the existence of practical theology.

Osmer said, “It was in this context that practical theology first emerged as an academic discipline in the modern, research university”. Osmer (2011:2), in validation of his argument, said that he drew inferences from Friederich Schleiermacher’s viewpoints as written in *Brief outline on the study of theology* (1966) and *Christian caring: Selections from Practical Theology* (1988). Osmer cited Schleiermacher as saying that “In the face of modernity, its task was to develop ‘theories of practice’ and ‘rules of art’ that might guide the effective practice of the leaders of the church”. Marrison (2011:5), commenting on Osmer’s argument on the significance of the church and academy developing new forms of pragmatic actions in response to the challenges in the society, notes that Osmer’s argument supports the prophetic quality of having the courage to address the challenges in the world by going beyond existing traditions and developing practices in response to the challenges ourselves.

Premising on Osmer's and Marrison's argument for a pragmatic response to the contemporary challenges in society, this research study discuss the development of a hip hop church as a pragmatic response to the impact of HHC in society. Developing a hip hop church as a pragmatic response relates to the fifth aim and objective of this research study, which seeks to offer a pragmatic response to the descriptive-empirical and interpretive discoveries in this study.

In a hip hop church, the youth will be equipped with the understanding to transmit their Christian life and the Christian faith as argued in Chapter Two (section 2.7.1.2) through cultural artefacts, cultural aesthetics and renewal approaches like HHC. According to Kobin and Tyson (2006:344), HHC is a phenomenon (ideology and praxis) that embodies an entire way of sharing experiences and Christian faith through new cultural aesthetics and renewal approaches.

Price (2006:17) adds that HHC is a phenomenon that engages conversations around developing new cultural aesthetics and renewal approaches for expression. Thus, HHC connotes that experiences, messages and ideologies can be developed and shared through cultural artefacts and aesthetics. In the hip hop church, the youth and the gatekeepers will engage with culture as active practitioners of culture, transmitting God's message through HH music in songs and lyrics. This can also be communicated through fashion, by producing fashionable tee-shirts, face and pee caps, and clothes with messages that depict God's character, the Christian faith and Christian life, for example, inscriptions like '100% Jesus⁹⁷', 'What would Jesus do? (WWJD)', 'Jesus cares', 'Politics in righteousness', 'Stop the religious killing of youth in Nigeria', and 'Dialogue better than war', to mention but a few (see figures 6.4 and 6.5).

⁹⁷ Fig. 6.3. Celebrity footballer Neymar was the most expensive footballer in 2018 after Barcelona bought his contract from with Paris Saint Germain (PSG for €213 million. He is a celebrity who is renowned for transmitting God's message through different stylisations as exemplified in the picture above.



Figure 6:4: Celebrity Neymar da Silva Santos Júnior transmitting God's message through stylisation



Figure 6:5: Hip hop cultural artefacts with Christian messages like tee shirts with the inscriptions 'Reps for Jesus', 'What would Jesus do? (WWJD)', and 'Drugs kill you, Say no'.

Besides using cultural artefacts to share the Christian faith and Christian life, other elements of HHC also provide platforms or avenues to express a Christian HH message as shown in figure 6.5.

6.6.1 Graffiti

The envisioned hip hop church will be a church where the elements of HHC can be used as a platform in worship. The element of graffiti art is useful in expressing creativity. Motley and Henderson (2008:245) argue that graffiti is an expressive medium to show creativity and intelligence in using art to communicate a message. Abraham (2015:285), from a South African perspective, understands graffiti as the calligraphy and comic of art which is often created on walls with spray-paint. From a Nigerian context, Adedeji (2013:1) describes graffiti as a creative art where the Nigerian youth as social actors use the street to communicate concepts and imagery with a definite message. The hip hop church can use

graffiti to express the Christian faith through calligraphy of visual images on walls as depicted in figure 6.6.



Figure 6.6: Examples of graffiti

6.6.2 Rapping/ rap music

Another elements of HHC that can be used by the hip hop church, is rap music. Abraham (2015:285) adds that rapping entails the rhymed speech over music, adding that hip hop music is also referred to as rap music, which is the most prominent element of HHC. Perullo (2005:97) narrates that rap music is a popular genre of music in Africa. The genre of rap music has created for the youth a genre of music with bytes and rhythms that are unique and intriguing.

Rap music also provides the youth with a platform to express themselves through this genre of music as social actors, creating their own behavioural practices as a reflection of Christian life and teaching society. Sylvan (2002:4) adds that music is one of the most powerful tools used by different religions to communicate religious beliefs and interpret meaning to society. Thus, the youth as social actors can use hip hop rap music to communicate and express their Christian life. Music and religion are intimately linked in almost every culture and in almost every historical period (Sylvan, 2002:4).

In Abraham's (2015:288) viewpoint, rap music has a pedagogical aspect⁹⁸ because it can be used to verbally express an ideology, message and behavioural pattern; it can teach using a certain language (outlet) of HHC called slanguage. According to Adedeji (2013:1), language as a social phenomenon means that the youth create their own cultural language

⁹⁸ Abraham (2015:293), arguing for HHC as a pedagogical model to educate hip hoppers and society, narrates that HHC encourages teaching through creativity and verbal self-expression in rap songs. It enables rappers to communicate and teach society with their individual experiences and comments about the realities in society – good, bad, and ugly. HHC is a teaching tool to accomplish such a teaching model (pedagogical).

from their interaction with global connectivity or within their own glocalised community. This is called slangs or slanguage in Nigeria.



Figure 6:7: Examples of rap elements

6.6.3 Deejaying

Another elements of HHC that can be instrumental in the hip hop church, is deejaying. Katz (2012:4) describes deejaying as an element of HHC that entails playing phonograph records on the air. The deejay compiles a selection of different artists' music on a CD and plays it from a turntable as the worship leader in a hip hop church (Smith and Jackson, 2005:180). Abraham (2015:285) adds that deejaying consists of the deejay creating music using turntables and other electronic devices to remix sounds, beats and rhythms.

The nature of the hip hop church should include hip hoply⁹⁹ praise and worship with a deejay. Smith & Jackson (2005:17-19) narrate that in their hip hop church, the service consists of liturgy of worship like breakdancing, spoken words, responsive reading of the Bible (for example the audience and service leaders alternating reading Bible passages), funky beats, fun, music concert and teaching. The teachings are on topical subjects such as the elements of HHC, love, sex, friendship, beat-boxing, cognitive development, fashion, and theologically engaging in discussions on critical questions that concern the youth and society. These nature of subjects could aid the gatekeepers to co-ordinate the hip hop church in Nigeria.

6.7 Acculturation

Unger, Schwartz, Huh, Soto and Lourdes (2014:1293) argue that acculturation is a cultural phenomenon that promotes the co-existence of two cultures within the same

⁹⁹ Hip hoply means that the praise and worship is with the beats and rhythms of HH music or HH deejaying music.

societal/communal context. Ojeda, Piña-Watson, Castillo, Castillo, Khan and Leigh (2011:1) add that acculturation is a multi-dimensional process, which entails adaptation within a majority host culture. Acculturation implies two-way cultural existence. The first culture is the majority or host culture (culture A), which is the predominant culture within a context or community. The traditional culture exists before other cultures attempt to exist within that community. The second is the minority or contemporary culture (culture B). These cultures seeks to exist within the same community so as to influence behaviour, socio-cultural and psychological way of life as the individuals adapt to the successful co-existence of both culture A and culture B as depicted in figure 6.8. A culture is imported, developed, evolved and practised within an existing culture in the community.

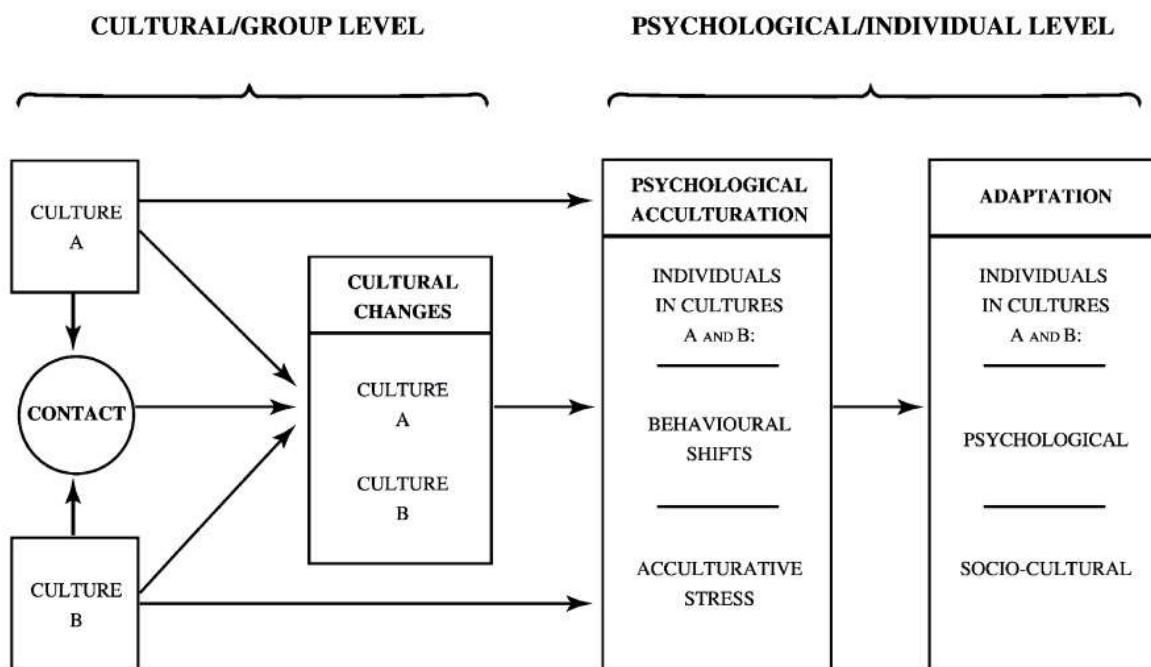


Figure 6.8: Acculturation – culture A and culture B breeds successful co-existence (adopted from Berry, 2005)

In this research study, the traditional African culture is regarded as the majority or host culture (culture A), while HHC is the minority or contemporary culture (culture B). I acknowledge the tension that can exist in acculturation; a tension arising from how the host culture (African traditional) and contemporary culture (HHC) can co-exist with each other. However, I argue for tolerance and respect from the participants in each culture. For acculturation to take place, the host culture needs to tolerate the contemporary culture, and the contemporary culture needs to respect the host culture. That is, in the Nigerian globalised community, parents and elders who are the host culture, will need to tolerate the contemporary HHC, as expressed by the youth in Chapter Five.

On the other hand, the youth will need to respect the host culture. That said, in the Nigerian community, due to our African traditional culture, more effort will be required from the host culture to tolerate the contemporary culture in order to achieve the co-existence of both cultures. The reason for this is that, due to the values of respect in the Nigerian host culture, the parents and older adults will need to provide space and opportunity for the contemporary culture (HHC) to co-exist within the same community. Another reason is that the physical and cultural environments in Nigeria remind the youth that they are living in their parents' cultural community, so it will take tolerance from their parents for them to be open and real and live out their own culture, while also respecting their parents' culture.

According to the conceptualisations of acculturation of Unger et al. (2014:1294) and Ojeda et al. (2011:3), co-existence suggests the existence of one major culture that existed before the minor culture. In the context of the Nigerian community, the concern and quest for acculturation has to do with how the youth (contemporary culture) wrestle with or relate to the parents (host culture). Failure to adapt to the host culture, or the host culture not accepting the contemporary culture, could have effects on the contemporary culture. Unger et al. (2014:1293) conducted an empirical study among Hispanic young people who live in the American culture. They discovered in their behavioural study that the youth feel discriminated against when the culture they live in does not accept or lives in denial of their own particular culture. Lorenzo-Blanco, Unger, Baezconde-Garbanati, Ritt-Olsen and Soto (2012:1350) conducted a similar empirical study with young people and, like Unger et al. (2014), discovered that youth who are unable to acculturate, feel discriminated against, are prone to rebellion (fraternity) and suffer depression and mental and physical health challenges later in life.

These studies reveal that when young people experience discrimination against and non-acceptance of their own culture, it can lead to substance abuse. That is, discrimination by the host culture has the potential to cause members of the contemporary culture to revert to deviant behaviour and substance addiction, such as drug abuse, and higher intercept (initial) levels of tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use (Unger et al., 2014:1295).

The study by Unger et al. (2014:1293) also reveals that, when young people experience positive cultural resources and tolerance from the host culture, it can have a positive effect on their behaviour and assure them of the protection of the host culture. That is, acceptance

from the host culture can give the contemporary culture freedom and assurance to co-exist successfully in the host culture.

Deducing from the above empirical study, which share three units of analysis with the current research study – youth, cosmopolitan location and a contemporary culture – I argue for acculturation in the Nigerian context. That is, I argue for successful co-existence of the parents' culture (host culture) and contemporary culture (HHC) in the Nigerian community (especially among the denominational divide, with a focus on ECWA members). In Nigeria, the parents' culture is the host culture while HHC is the contemporary culture. A successful co-existence of these two cultures can be vital for both the parents and the youth, and especially for the youth, since the parents' culture is the majority (host) culture. For successful co-existence, the host culture will need to be tolerant of the contemporary culture, while the contemporary culture will need to be respectful of the host culture. This successful co-existence entails that the contemporary culture appreciates the traditions and values of the host culture as expressed in section 5.5.6, where the contemporary culture commended the host culture for helping them (contemporary culture) to be committed to prayers, Bible study and lessons about the Christian life.

As revealed by Unger et al.'s (2014:1294) empirical findings, the successful co-existence of the host and contemporary cultures can facilitate a better relationship between young people and their parents, protect young people from negative peer influences, and provide a preventative influence against drug addiction, substance and alcohol abuse, which are some of the vices of HHC. The youth can be protected from getting ensnared in these vices of HHC through a better relationship with their parents – whether these are biological, spiritual or care givers.

This suggests that acculturation between the parents' culture and HHC can enrich the relationship between the church executives and the youth, to such an extent that both cultures will find expression within the church. The church executives and older adults in the church can better equip the youth for their engagement with HHC, because the youth will not need to live in denial or face discrimination from the church because of their engagement with HHC. The church, as the host culture, can give freedom of expression to the youth in the church who desire and long to express their aptitude for HHC by embracing, or at least tolerating, HHC. That said, it will privilege the church to encourage, guide and correct the youth as they live out the elements of HHC.

Moreover, it will give the youth a sense of significance in the church, in the sense that the youth will assume relevance as members of the church and will not just be people who come to church and do what the adults in church want them to do. Rather, they will co-exist with the host culture in the church through active involvement in drafting programmes that address the youth's areas of concern. In investigating the research question of this research study, which seeks to address how the ECWA youth programmes can equip the youth for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC, it came to light that the church will primarily need to promote the process of acculturation between the parents' culture (host culture) and HHC (contemporary culture). There must be a synergy that allows the youth to be expressive of their own culture and find space to co-exist with the parents' culture. Then the church can equip the youth on how to navigate HHC.

There are consensus processes and strategies for two cultures to co-exist and acculturate (Berry, 2005:698-699; Farver, Bhadha and Narang, 2002:11; Berry and Kalin, 1995:310; Berry and Kim 1998:207). These are:

- (a) Assimilation is the process and strategy of the acculturating and immersing of a minority culture in a host culture. That is, the process of the minority culture seeking to co-exist with the behaviour and lifestyle of the host society. It entails a strategy where the contemporary HHC, the minority culture, seeks to become part of the host traditional Nigerian culture;
- (b) Separation is the process that occurs when members of the minority culture do not desire and are unwilling to engage the host culture. Unlike the assimilation process, the separation process happens when the members of the contemporary HHC are not willing to engage the host traditional Nigerian culture for whatsoever reasons;
- (c) Marginalisation takes place when members of the contemporary culture are neither interested in the minority culture nor the host culture, that is, rejecting the contemporary HHC and avoiding the host traditional Nigerian culture;
- (d) Integration is the process where members of the minority culture have a positive attitude and reflect behaviour that maintains their minority culture and is still able to integrate with the host culture.

Acculturation draws attention to the fact that the two cultures involved need to interact. However, the individual members of the contemporary culture can decide how to engage the host culture as explained in these four processes of acculturation (Berry, 2005:704). The

decision of the cultural members is expressed through their behavioural approach to the host culture (Berry, 2004:166). A concern is that acculturation can cause a member of the minority culture to be forced to accept their host culture, which could cause acculturative stress or cultural shock (Berry, 2005:707; Berry and Kalin, 1995:310).

6.8 Enculturation

Ojeda et al. (2011:3) understand enculturation as the process of maintenance of an individual's culture of origin as they engage with a mainstream culture. Deducing from these research findings, HHC is a mainstream culture among the youth. HHC is prevalent in society and has become the youth's preferred mainstream culture over their culture of origin or birth or ethnicity.

Enculturation entails two cardinal concepts: (1) There is a mainstream culture among a particular group of people. A mainstream culture is the culture that is predominantly practised, preferred and popularly lived among the people; (2) There is a culture of origin. The culture of origin is the cultural disposition taught and lived at birth.

Thus, enculturation in relation to this research is understanding how the youth can engage with and live within the mainstream culture of HHC, but not completely lose their original African culture as practised by their parents. In appreciation of the mainstream culture of parents in Nigeria, Kemi and Chijoke (2017:148) argue that the youth will need to learn and maintain the original cultural way of life and values that teach and emphasise truth, respect, uprightness, communal life and contentment. This way of life and these values will make contemporary HHC a worthy practice in Nigeria.

To achieve enculturation, it is pertinent to achieve synergy on two fronts: (1) The parents will need to teach the youth the core of African values as practised and demonstrated through the values of respect and shame. The same can be said of the faith community. The faith community will need to educate the youth with theological understanding of the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry, so they (the youth) can be equipped for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC; and (2) The youth will need to theologically engage HHC with discernment by merging the host culture and contemporary HHC. The youth should be equipped to engage with HHC without losing their original identity as Christian youth.

Furthermore, to achieve this bicultural way of life that entails equipping the youth to retain their Christian faith, life, identity and ministry, there must be an open forum for discussion of the mainstream youth culture, namely HHC. As narrated by some participants, HHC is seldomly discussed in youth week programmes and annual themes designated for the youth. Some youth called it a culture of denial because it denies the reality of the influence of HHC on the youth.

The parents' culture will need to recognise that the mainstream culture of HHC is a reality that needs to be given attention so that the youth can be known for who they are and better equipped in their area of interest. An open forum of discussion is pertinent to equipping the youth with theological understanding for a bicultural experience. This approach to equipping the youth by allowing an open forum discussion on HHC, will aid the youth to engage in HHC while maintaining their Christian faith, life and ministry. Living in denial will not equip the youth for a life of enculturation, because discussing the phenomenon on an open platform (church meetings, youth ministry programmes) will help them understand how to navigate HHC with theological discernment.

Ojeda et al. (2011:4) conducted an empirical study among Latino young people living in the USA who were able to enculturate with the host culture. They discovered from the participants that if young people are not able to enculturate, it can cause internal conflict in the sense that decision-making can become affected. That is, not being able to enculturate, gives rise to indecision among young people, indecision that affects their discernment in decision-making and arises from their inability to maintain their own mainstream culture within their culture of origin. They also discovered that young people who are able to enculturate, enjoy a protective sense of confidence. That is, enculturation enables the youth to navigate both cultures successfully.

6.9 Theological Engagement

Gleaning from the findings in section 5.4, where participants narrated on the prevalence of HHC in Nigerian society, and section 5.9, where they reported the need for theological engagement with HHC, this section discussed the significance of youth ministry programmes engaging theological reflection that can equip the youth for theological discernment in their engagement with the prevalent HHC in society.

Theological engagement in youth ministry programmes should be relevant in addressing challenges and issues that are prevalent in the society. For Senter (2014:57) and Aragon (2015:6), youth ministry programmes should be devised with theological reflection that understands and discusses the past and present realities of the youth in their own contexts and societies. Theological reflection in youth ministry programmes is essential to equip the youth with theological understanding for theological discernment in their engagement with the prevalent cultures, challenges and issues of concern that confront them (or they confront) in society.

Youth ministry programmes that are void of theological reflection, cannot sustain youth ministry. Dean (2001:15), commenting on the relevance of theological discernment in youth ministry programmes, argues that youth ministry that is not built on theological teaching, is sure to collapse. Thus, she believes that youth ministry that builds its programmes on theological reflection, is the normal practice in this era of youth ministry. Schweitzer (2014:184) shares Dean's view, by arguing that theological reflection should be built into conversation with the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors if it is going to survive (Schweitzer, 2014:184). Thus, it is essential that youth ministry constructs theology that equips the youth to engage the culture in society.

In constructing a theological engagement with culture, Clanton (2010:43) argues for a theological interpretive tradition that engages with modern-day culture. If scholars do not engage with the interpretive tradition of the Bible, they will not understand the disproportionate impact that culture has and will continue to have on readers of the Bible (Clanton, 2010:43). Readers of the Bible engage with the Bible from their cultural paradigm. That is, culture influences the interpretation of the Bible in the mind of the reader. Culture can be better understood when scholars engage with the interpretive tradition of the Bible.

Clanton (2010:43) adds that the interpretive tradition of the Bible entails understanding God as an interactive God, instead of an interventionist God. An interactive God speaks to people in the language of their culture. Clanton further notes that God speaks to humanity through humans in the language and context of humanity (McEntire, 2010:37). This entails God speaking and transmitting God's message to humanity through different means in different cultures. Thus, "in the modern world, there is a vast array of media by which we can transmit narrative containing a divine character – written literature, film, music and theatre"

(McEntire, 2010:29). God's message as written in the biblical literature has been transmitted into a cultural way of life through music because, as argued by McEntire, God interacts with humanity through the means of written literature, film, music and theatre. In transmitting these messages, the media creates different platforms for encountering God and God's character. Thus, God's character as exemplified by the host culture in regard to contentment, respect and a devoted life of prayers and Bible study, can be transmitted into contemporary HHC through music.

Adopting the interpretive tradition of the Bible, the interactive God can communicate to the youth through HHC. McEntire (2010:30) argues that God's divine character can be transmitted through fashion and songs. Contemporary gospel artists can transmit God's divine character of love, mercy and forgiveness through HH music. Perkinson (2010:94) argues that "Hip hop culture offers the concrete inundation of sounds capable of pounding the text with its sonic equivalent. This is the real Bible-thumping aesthetic". The overflowing sounds of HH beats and lyrics transmitting the messages of God's divine character, can be a good liturgy for the church, especially at youth events, conventions and services.

Through the platform of theological engagement in addressing vices in society, the youth can also express their opinions about church and society, and proffer biblical solutions to societal challenges as social actors (section 2.9.3 discusses the youth as social actors). Therefore, both God's divine character and youth viewpoints on society (religious, political, economic and ministry) can be transmitted and expressed through contemporary gospel music.

Theological engagement with the youth will mean that gatekeepers (youth ministry practitioners), academics or scholars (equippers of gatekeepers), and administrators are able to teach God's message in a way that resonates with and speaks to their cultural realities. Equipping the youth with God's message on Christian faith, Christian life, Christian ministry and schools of theology, as argued in section 2.6 (models of education for Christian youth ministry), and equipping the youth with the theology of youth ministry, as explained in section 2.8 (theology that could inform youth ministry), will entail interaction with their culture of interest, as expressed in section 5.4 (prevalence of HHC as their culture of interest). The theology of youth ministry must engage HHC through the elements of HHC,

as explained in section 3.4 (elements of HHC), and the cultural outlet of HHC, as discussed in section 3.5 (cultural outlets of HHC).

From the aforementioned, I argue that, when developing programmes with theological content that can equip the youth for theological discernment, the CED will need to understand the culture of the youth and how God's message can speak to their culture, as God is an interactive God who speaks to humanity through humanity. The programmes must address HHC as a prevalent culture among the youth, and how the youth can discern right and wrong in the engagement with HHC. If the programmes and annual themes of ECWA do not create an opportunity for HHC and continue to live in denial of the prevalence and influence of HHC, as alluded to by some participants in section 5.4 (denial of the prevalence of HHC in Nigerian society), the youth will not experience an encounter with the interactive God who speaks through their culture.

6.9.1 General equipping for theological discernment

In section 5.8, participants narrate that ECWA youth ministry programmes equip the youth for theological discernment, but not in relation to HHC. The equipping in ECWA is through programmes like Bible studies, prayer meetings and discipleship for a personal relationship with God. These programmes equip the youth with theological understanding of God, building the Christian faith and living the Christian life.

6.9.2 Specific equipping on hip hop culture

In section 5.3.3 participants narrate that the youth ministry programmes do not equip the youth for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC because HHC is not discussed. Since HHC has not been an annual theme in ECWA and has not been included in the youth ministry programmes, the ECWA, including its youth, has not been equipped for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC. Aragon (2015:6) argues for theological reflection in youth ministry that addresses specific questions and challenges faced by the youth in their own contexts and societies. This suggests that youth ministry programmes should equip youth for theological discernment regarding specific concerns that are prevalent in society and concerns of interest for the youth.

6.9.3 Theology of incarnation

God speaking to humanity through humanity is exemplified in the theology of incarnation, as depicted in John 1:4, 11 and 14. In the theology of incarnation, God speaks to humanity by becoming part of humanity in a bodily human form. The biblical narrative in John 1:14 reads, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth”. The theology of incarnation teaches that God became human through Jesus Christ and dwelt among humans (Root, 2007:88; Green, 1999:209). Bonhoeffer (2001:217) notes that, “it is true that all human beings as such are ‘with Christ’ as a consequence of the incarnation, since Jesus bears the whole human nature”. That is, by the humanity of God in Christ Jesus, human beings must share the humanity of other human beings.

The biblical narrative in John 1:11 depicts that “He came to that which was his own...” Jesus is the icon and model of Christian life and Christian faith, as incarnated in a cultural context. As the incarnate Word, Jesus’s life and ministry were culturally embedded within a people, for example, His encounter with the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-24), and His encounter with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). The theology of incarnation implies that Jesus encountered people in real-life situations. Root (2007:89) adds that, “the divine being cannot be found otherwise than in human form”.

Youth ministry administrators and academics, together with practitioners, can incarnate into the space of the youth and address real-life situations (Root, 2007:87). This will entail becoming one with the youth in an attempt to understand the youth and share in their struggles in discerning the choices between right and wrong. Just as Jesus became human and dwelt among humans in the flesh, the youth ministry in the ECWA can dwell in HHC with the youth by learning their slang, fashion and liturgy of worship.

6.9.4 Gift of discernment

According to Lienhard (2003:505), discernment is an authentic Christian response to life situations using the Word of God and the enabling of the Spirit of God that gives the gift of discernment. Discernment is using the guide of a Christian response regarding right and wrong. One can deduce from Lienhard’s conceptualisation that the guide to discernment is the Word of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of discernment to enable Christians¹⁰⁰ to respond to situations and concerns of interest, and also helps Christians and the faith community to distinguish between the influence of God's Spirit and the evil Spirit to give the Christian and faith community direction in any given situation. The gift of discernment also enables the youth ministry to warn the youth in the face of the vices and challenges of HHC, to avoid being influenced and led astray by false messages and behaviours promoted by some creators of HH culture.

In 1 Corinthians 12:10, the Bible says that the gift of discernment enables specific Christians to have the ability to distinguish and discern between good and evil spirits. This means that this gift can enable the discernment of the influence of God's Spirit and evil spirits in HHC. It could enable the youth to decipher good and evil in HHC. Youth who are gifted with the gift of discernment by the Spirit of God can act morally and ethically when interacting with HHC, reflecting the message of the Christian faith and Christian life.

However, in Hebrews 5:14, the Bible says that discernment requires constant practice to distinguish good from evil. Christian youth who are gifted with the gift of discerning between good and evil, will need to be equipped and will need constant practice that aids the effectiveness of the gift.

6.9.5 Reception history theory

Clanton (2010:43) argues that the fundamental praxis of reception history theory "has to do with the issue of textual determinacy". Textual determinacy means that the meaning of a biblical text does not reside in the text or in the process of reading, but is created by the reader, who creates a meaning that could differ from that of another reader of the same biblical text. What is called reception history theory today, is called the exposition of Scripture by Ebeling. Ebeling (1968:28) describes exposition of Scripture as twofolds: (1) As the ability of an individual to read and interpret the Bible in praxis of music, dancing and prayers which are referred to as non-verbal media; (2) As the reception of the biblical

¹⁰⁰ In 1 Cor. 12:11, the Bible says that "All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines" (NIV). The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to certain Christians as the Holy Spirit wills. That is, it is the Spirit of God (not the individual Christian) that chooses who to gift. These passages also indicate that not everyone will have a particular gift. Although discernment of right and wrong is for all, the gift of discernment teaches that some Christians are especially gifted with the gift of discernment for this task. Thus, the gift of discernment is a gift given to certain Christians by the Spirit of God.

texts amidst actions of violence like political actions and wars, actions of reconciliation like peace-keeping, and realities of life like suffering and happiness in institutions. These understandings connote that the biblical texts are vulnerable to textual determinacy in different situations. Luz (2006:123) adds that reception history is the receptiveness of the biblical texts in different periods of time, situations and contexts.

The textual determinacy of reception history theory suggests that multiple and valid meanings are possible from a text, depending on the assumptions and cultural context of the reader's interpretive community (Clanton, 2010:43; Luz, 2006:124). Clanton argues that reception theory is "the sum total of the traditions, methods, and approaches to texts that enable the reader to read a certain way and that validate the reader's interpretation" (2010:43). Readers' interpretations connote that the meanings of a text are informed by the parameters of their (the readers') historical identity and religious experience (Clanton, 2010:43). There are parameters that influence how people create meaning from a text. The reader's historical identity and religious experience within the confines of the scope of denominational articles of faith influence the creation of meaning from a text. This accounts for different meanings of the same text, thus different meanings in different denominations within the faith community.

These parameters influence the creation of meanings from a text and are an invitation to equip the youth with an aptitude for theological discernment that can aid their creation of meaning. Equipping the youth with aptitude for theological discernment through schools of theology, as argued in section 2.6.4 (establishing schools of theology to educate), can enable the youth to become lay theologians and theologians who can use their understanding of meaning as cultural gatekeepers of HHC. Clanton (2010:43) argues that reception history theory encourages scholars and the faith community to take the meaning created from the text seriously and transmit the meaning through different genres, such as art, film and music (Clanton, 2010:44).

The meaning in a biblical text can be used to create meaning for people in a cultural space. Meaning is created out of the text as interpreted by the reader (Luz, 2006:124), suggesting that the reader of a biblical text plays a pertinent role in creating meaning from the biblical text as it speaks to his or her realities in society. That is the reason why equipping the youth with skills for biblical interpretation is vital to the faith community. The youth should be equipped as lay theologians and you[theologians] to create meaning out of the texts that can

help them develop discernment between right and wrong, and also enable them to transmit the biblical text through films, art and HH graffiti and music.

Sawyer (2004:11) adds, “the afterlife of the Bible has been infinitely more influential, in everyday life and every way – theologically, politically, culturally, and aesthetically – than its ancient near-eastern prehistory”. This suggests that equipping the youth and youth leaders with theological content will enable them to transmit God’s character into the everyday life of youth, culture and politics through the avenues of films, art and HH graffiti and music. Sawyer’s argument also suggests that transmitting God’s character through the avenues of films, art and HH graffiti and music has been more influential in everyday life than the prehistoric narrative as written in the Bible.

Luz (2006:125), arguing for reception history theory as an approach to theological engagement with culture, narrates:

“The Bible over centuries has formed and shaped our culture and our churches, but it has become unknown among so-called educated people of today. The study of reception history will help us regain the relevance to biblical text/history in shaping who we are and also regain in us consciousness to clarify our own relation to the texts of the past as we study.”

Luz’s argument suggests that the Bible should form and shape culture. The relevance of biblical text is how it speaks and shapes the cultural realities of people in society. The biblical text regains consciousness in the everyday life of people if the biblical text speaks to their culture. That is, the biblical text gains relevance in the consciousness and life of people if the biblical text addresses their concerns of interest. Integrating this argument into HHC, the biblical text can be made relevant to HHC by transmitting the biblical text into forming and shaping the culture.

Glocally, the youth ministry in Nigeria can be equipped through the schools of theology to transmit theology from the biblical text into HHC. For this to happen in Nigeria, the church, through its youth ministry, could constructively develop the biblical content as cultural gatekeepers in relation to HHC. The stories of characters in the Bible are biblical texts that can be lived out to shape HHC. In section 2.8.1 this research study discussed that the theology of listening to the youth will enable the youth ministry to hear and know the stories of youth so as to understand their realities. However, there is another dimension to listening.

Both youth and youth ministry can study biblical texts and listen to the stories of characters in the Bible so as to make sense of the biblical texts in terms of dealing with challenges, that is, engaging with cultural realities through the interpretive skills that enable individuals to learn from the stories of characters in the Bible. For example, Joseph in his engagement with the Egyptian culture and living in Potiphar's house, still maintained his Jewish cultural traditions, the tradition of reverence for God. For Joseph, it was a sin against his Jewish tradition to have sex with Potiphar's wife who tried to seduce him (Gen. 39).

Jesus read the scroll of Isaiah and interpreted his mission of proclaiming good news to the poor, proclaiming freedom to the captives and setting the oppressed free as written in the text: "...and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free" (Luke 4:17, 18).

Jesus read this biblical text as written in Isaiah and interpreted it to allude to his redemptive mission on earth. The biblical text in Isaiah does not name Jesus, but he interpreted the biblical text as his mission statement. Thus, reception history entails the reader interpreting the biblical text and creating meaning from the text as Jesus created a meaning from the Isaiah text as his mission statement.

Equipping with reception history will empower the church to create and transmit the biblical text into HHC. Instead of the ECWA church living in denial and not drafting programmes and annual themes that address HHC, as narrated by the participants, it will be pertinent to adopt the theory of reception history.

Clanton (2010:45) argues:

"The hope of the reception historian is that through examining these renderings of interpretive reading, we can make sense of at least some of the ways the Bible has functioned in our culture as well as how flesh-and-blood interpreters have made sense of their own world by interpreting the Bible."

The purpose of reception history theory is to equip readers with an interpretive reading that can enable them to make sense of the biblical text in engaging with their cultural realities. Reception history theory can:

- (1) Equip the ECWA youth as creators and transmitters of HHC;
- (2) Equip the youth to learn the art and science of interpreting biblical texts;
- (3) Allow the youth to transmit God's character as content that forms HHC;
- (4) Allow the youth ministry to contextually engage with HHC as creators of HHC. To this praxis, Perkinson (2005:95) adds that "Hip hop culture is not the Gospel, but it is the percussive pound of an instinctual defiance". That is, the Gospel can have a powerful impact on HHC if the youth ministry contextually engages HHC as social actors and creators of culture.
- (5) Allow the youth to transmit the Christian faith to HHC through the genre of HH rap music. Boggs (2015:63) adds that HH rap artists use the microphone as an access point to the global network of social and commercial exchange;
- (6) Allow the youth to transmit the theological content of salvation, sanctification, morality, discipline, politics, economics and discernment through the genre of HH music. Kemi and Chijioke (2017:148) argue that the religious faithful should engage culture with content that exemplify their beliefs.

However, Clanton (2010:45) cautions that reception history does not promote the malleability of the biblical texts in biblical and theological literature, but that reception history should rather be used "to divulge the reciprocal relationship between individual and cooperate identity, and interpretation of the Bible". Thus, reception history does not discredit the textual interpretation of the Bible; rather, it encourages readers to learn to interpret the biblical text as it speaks to the cultural reality of people.

6.10 Conclusion

Theological discernment invites the faith community to equip the youth with theological understanding. Equipping can take place through establishing a hip hop church that meets at an evening hip hop service once in a month, and through theological engagement, such as the theology of incarnation, theology of reception history, and understanding the gift of discernment through the doctrine of pneumatology that teaches the role and function of the Holy Spirit in the faith community. These theological engagements will equip the youth with tools for discernment – tools that will guide their discernment of right and wrong in their interaction with HHC and their response to other realities of concern.

This chapter discussed the need for acculturation and enculturation to promote the successful co-existence between the traditional culture of the parents (by extension the ECWA culture), and HHC (by extension the culture lived by the youth) to develop synergy as each culture appeals to a different audience. Due to the nature of Nigerian culture, the values of respect and shame give power to the traditional parents' culture to draft programmes for the youth, because they are parents and the youth are the recipients of the programmes. The parents' traditional culture will need to tolerate and accommodate HHC so that both cultures can co-exist and create a culture for the church and the community. This is especially needed because culture is not static, because its tool kits are ever evolving and subject to improvement by the practitioners and cultural gatekeepers.

This chapter also discussed a concern raised by some of the participants regarding the need for a feedback mechanism in the ECWA youth ministry. I have discussed what tools can be employed to generate feedback from the youth in order to evaluate the relevance of the youth week programmes and the meaningfulness of the annual themes in ECWA.

Chapter Seven will answer the research question of this research study by reflecting on a summary of the findings. That is, reflection on the findings in literature and reflection on the findings from the participants. It will submit the themes discovered in the process of this research study and make recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE STUDY

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I make a summary of discoveries from the literature study and a summary of findings from empirical data of participants. Both the findings from literature and empirical findings aid the discoveries that enable this research study to understand the youth as social actors who can be equipped for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC. Youth as hip hoppers are creators of the content of HHC because they can transmit the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry as messages through the various elements of HHC like rap music, language and deejaying.

This chapter narrates a reflection on the research question, the research design and the methodology that was engaged to investigate the research question. It admits the limitation of the current research study, and makes recommendations for further studies that could serve as a motivation for youth ministry gatekeepers to engage with the youth through different models of Christian education.

This chapter engages the pragmatic tasks to proffer proactive actions that can equip youth for theological discernment as an attempt to achieve the fifth research aims and objective of this research study, “To propose to the faith community (youth ministry and church) possible practical theological approaches to equipping the youth for theological discernment in the engagement with HHC”.

7.2 Reflection on the Research Question

The primary research question and secondary research question for this study are, “How does the ECWA youth ministry programme equip its youth with the theological discernment required for them to identify and engage with the challenges and opportunities within hip hop culture (HHC)?” and “How could the faith community equip youth to engage HHC in cosmopolitan cities?”.

To seek a response to these research questions, I adopted the qualitative research design which aids the analysis of people’s opinions and viewpoints in words and not quantities or

in terms of frequency. The research question seeks to investigate, “How does... and How could...?” This suggests the need for responses that express people’s opinions and viewpoints in terms of words and not quantities or frequency. The question of seeking to know “How does... and How could?” necessitates a qualitative study. Qualitative study seeks to understand people’s opinions, viewpoints, understanding and experiences in words.

It enriches a researcher with information about people’s (participants’) experiences and the reality of a social phenomenon in their own words. Accordingly, a qualitative research method provides the descriptive response of the respondents and describes why the respondents think in a certain manner (Hansen, 2013:3; Mouton, 2001:194; Rubin and Rubin, 1995:31).

To investigate the research questions, I engaged the research methodology of theoretical (literature) study and empirical study. Theoretical study aided understanding of the research question from ongoing discussions about the key components of the research question: youth ministry programme, hip hop culture and theological discernment. I engaged literature using the deductive approach to investigate the theological challenges and opportunities of HHC, and models of equipping the youth for theological discernment. The findings from literature and empirical studies discussed the models and approaches of establishing of a theology of youth ministry that specifically equips the youth for theological discernment that aids their engagement with HHC.

For the empirical study, I seek opinions, experiences and understanding of the influence of the HHC phenomenon and how ECWA youth ministry programmes are equipping youth and youth leaders with theological discernment in their engagement with HHC. I adopted inductive coding to generate themes (categories) from data generated from the participants.

7.3 Reflection on Findings

7.3.1 Reflection on findings from literature

Chapter One, Two, Three and Four of this research study were conducted using the research design of literature study to answer the research question of this research study.

In chapter One and Four, this research introduced the road map of this research study. It narrated the background to and motivation for the study and reported that the findings of a

research problem leads to the generating of a research question. Research aims and objectives were created in cognisance with the research question. Investigating the research question required a research design and methodology, while achieving the research aims and objectives required a framework. The research methodology for this research study was literature (theoretical) and empirical study and the research design is qualitative study. For the literature study I engaged a deductive approach, and for the empirical study I used inductive coding. The empirical study adopted the approach of in-depth interviews, a pilot study, saturated sampling size, and a thematic approach to analyse the empirical data collected from participants using inductive coding.

In regards to achieving the research aims and objectives, I engaged the practical theological framework as promoted by Osmer. Osmer promoted four practical theological tasks that were used as the structure for practical theological arguments in this research study. The four theological tasks are (1) Descriptive (“What is happening?”); (2) Interpretive (“Why is it happening?”); (3) Normative (“What ought to be happening?”); and (4) Pragmatic (“How to proactively engage what is happening?”) (Osmer, 2005: xv; 2008:32-161, 2012:319).

Chapter Two explored a conceptual and contextual understanding of theological discernment. Theological discernment is the normative process of thinking, making decisions and displaying an authentic faith response in relation to right and wrong, good and evil, truth and falsehood, using a biblical (Word of God) lens in each situation of life (Hendriks, 2014:62). This chapter explored the understanding to equip the youth as social actors so they can articulate their faith in different situations and contexts (Aragon, 2015:6; Höring, 2013:46; Nel, 2005:17). That is, theological discernment in this context is guiding the ECWA youth to intersect with Christian faith, Christian life, and Christian ministry and the challenges and opportunities of HHC. The intersection is normative in that theological and biblical stories and narratives are the compendium for judging right and wrong.

Equipping the youth with different models and tools for theological discernment, entails the guidance of the youth to understand how God works in them and through them to address the contemporary HHC in society. Models of equipping as argued by White (2005:63-162) include listening to God through the Word of God; understanding the love of God and loving God; keeping in memory the love of God in every intersection with humanity and phenomena in society; proactively showing through lifestyle and behaviour the love of God towards humanity; and engaging phenomena from a normative lens.

Chapter Two also argued for equipping ECWA youth and youth leaders through the models of education on Christian faith, education in Christian life, and education in Christian ministry. This includes education in youth ministry through the models of schools of theology by the three groups of youth ministry gatekeepers in ECWA: academics, practitioners, and administrators. Schweitzer (2014:185), Astley (2013:2; 2002:49) and Armstrong (2013:65, argue for equipping of the youth by academic theologians to become lay theologians who are equipped to develop theology as ordinary theologians. I extended this argument by proposing the praxis of you[theology] as a model for equipping the youth for theological discernment – this is a theology developed by youth that is relevant, contextual and speaks to their reality.

Chapter Three focussed on HHC: the conceptualisation of HHC, creation of cultural norms associated with HHC, HHC as a learned behaviour within society (in conversation with Ivan Pavlov), the influence of HHC among the youth, and the challenges it poses to their lifestyle and behaviours – vis-à-vis the opportunities it offers the youth as social actors to express their stories, opinions and viewpoints to society.

Hip hop culture is a phenomenon that is conceptualised as a way of life (lifestyle), outlet of expression, and learned behaviour (Vito, 2015:396-397; Shonekan, 2010:4; Terkourafi, 2010:333; Kitwana, 2005:xii; Perry, 2004:202), including cultural outlets like slanguage and fashion (dress) (Adedeji, 2013:1; Motley and Henderson, 2008:243; Perullo, 2005:78)

There are elements of praxis that constitute HHC, some of which are unique to HHC such as graffiti art, rap music, and deejaying (Malone and Martinez, 2015:1; Katz, 2012:4-5, 214; Motley and Henderson, 2008:245) Thus, the cultural outlets depict a lifestyle and behaviour and the elements of graffiti art, rap music, and deejaying are the constituents of HHC. These elements and outlets pose theological challenges and offer theological opportunities for youth and youth ministry in their engagement with HHC.

7.3.2 Reflection on findings from empirical study

Chapter Five sought to find out in the words of the youth how the ECWA youth ministry programme equips them for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC. I found that HHC, though a global phenomenon, is also glocalised in the Nigerian society. HHC in Nigeria is a lifestyle embraced by the Nigerian youth who take delight in the outlets of the culture, thus emulating and creating their own HHC content.

Some reasons that account for the Nigerian youth embracing HHC is because: (1) Hip hop gives the youth a platform to express their opinions on social, religious and political subjects in the community; (2) Hip hop rap music communicates beats that resonate with youth interest in music – hip hop rap music is the most engaged element of HHC in Nigeria; (3) It offers youth freedom of expression in worship in church.

I found that churches that accommodate the outlets and elements of HHC in their church worship tend to entice more youth as church members, and churches like ECWA that do not embrace the cultural outlets and elements of HHC are losing their church youth to the churches that do.

In regard to the ECWA youth programme equipping youth for theological discernment on HHC, I discovered that the programme does not equip the youth for theological discernment on this culture as a result of what some participants call ECWA culture. ECWA culture informs acceptable and unacceptable outlets of expression in church. Thus, HHC is not taught or discussed in church because of the perceived ECWA culture. The ECWA culture was created by parents and adults who are the church leaders, while HHC is the prevalent culture among the youth in society.

Chapter Six engaged the findings from participants and proposed to ECWA (and other faith communities that share the same concern of tension between HHC and traditional culture) some proactive steps that can aid the church to equip its youth with theological discernment on the theological challenges and theological opportunities of HHC.

Thus, there is a dichotomy between the ECWA culture (adults and parents) and the HHC (youth). In this dichotomy within the church, Klaasen (2018:1) argues that the “youth occupy a traditional marginal position” in regard to decision-making. The adults and parents constitute what Klaasen refers to as church centre (spiritual leaders) and are the decision-making body within the church. So, there is a dichotomy between the centre (powerful) and margin (powerless) in terms of decision-making. In Klaasen’s (2018:1) words, in regards to church ministry, worship and formation, and administration, the centre (powerful) makes the decisions while the margin (powerless) are receptors of such decisions.

The dichotomy between the ECWA culture (adults and parents) and the HHC (youth) demonstrates the answer to the research question of this research study. The research question investigated how the ECWA youth programmes equip the youth for theological

discernment on the theological challenges and theological opportunities of HHC, showing that the dichotomy between the culture of the adults who draft the programmes and youth who implement the programmes makes it necessary to bridge or reduce the dichotomy so that both the adults and youth can co-exist within the same church, but with different programmes in response to their cultural needs.

In this chapter, I advocated a practical theological response of establishing a hip hop church that meets once a month for the youth; gatekeepers in ECWA youth ministry synergy; youth ministry adopting the theology of incarnation when engaging with HHC; exercising the gift of discernment; and engaging the challenges of HHC through a normative lens that is ethical, theological and born out of consistent good practice. I also proposed the missiological approach of acculturation and enculturation that enables two cultures (ECWA culture and HHC) to successfully co-exist together.

7.4 General Conclusion on Research Study

This research study discovered that the present structure of the CED drafting the youth week of prayers programmes can be sustained, however, there should be a feedback mechanism where the youth at LYBs gets the opportunity to express satisfaction and dissatisfaction about the relevance of the programmes.

The annual themes as decided by the EE and youth ministry programmes as decided by the CED should address phenomena in society. The EE could consider annual themes that are contemporary and will give the youth an enabling environment to discover the contemporary issues that are phenomenological to youth in society.

Equipping the youth with theological understanding to enhance theological discernment does not exempt the youth and youth leaders from the theological challenges of HHC. However, it equips the youth with the aptitude to discern right and wrong in their engagement with HHC using a normative lens. Equipping for theological discernment aids the youth to navigate the challenges of HHC and maximise the opportunities of expressing their views, experiences and opinions about the church and issues in the society.

The youth should be equipped to recognise the challenges of HHC and seek to find ways to address them. Equipping the youth for theological discernment also grants them understanding of how to maximise the opportunities of HHC. HHC provides a platform for

the youth to express their stories and their viewpoints on political and socio-economic realities in society. Thus, youth ministry programmes should be relevant in terms of equipping youth for theological discernment so they will be able to resist the evils of HHC and explore the opportunities of HHC. Equipping the youth for theological discernment in their engagement with HHC can be likened to handing someone a map to navigate a journey. Having the map in hand is no guarantee that the person cannot or may not lose their way, however, the map can serve two purposes: (1) To guide the person to know how to navigate the route using the map; and (2) To be able to reroute should they lose their way.

Equipping the youth for theological discernment entails equipping the youth for a lifestyle of discernment. Discernment connotes making a judgement on right and wrong that is ethical, theological and rooted in good practice. The argument is for youth ministry and other arms of faith communities to teach, educate through different modes of teaching (learning) such as mentorship, collaborative learning and discipleship and equip the hip hop generation of youth about how to use HHC as a cultural, religious and secular tool to express and share their opinions, viewpoints, and stories, and raise their voices about their concerns of interest in regard to church doctrine, injustice, political and economic inequalities.

Academic gatekeepers equip practitioner and administrative gatekeepers with theological understanding of contemporary youth cultures like HHC. The practitioner gatekeepers equip academic gatekeepers regarding the phenomena and realities in society that need a theological response (from academics) and policies (from administrators) to engage the phenomenon. The administrative gatekeepers equip the academic gatekeepers and practitioner gatekeepers with policies, curricula and programmes for their engagement with youth in youth ministry.

The youth need to be equipped for theological discernment so they can respond to questions and discern right and wrong through the understanding of God's normative paradigm. Schweitzer (2014:184) buttresses that theological reflection should be built into conversation with the youth, youth leaders and youth pastors if it is going to survive (Schweitzer, 2014:184). The equipping should begin with youth ministry and spiritual leaders relating with the youth so as to understand who they are and what their areas of interest are before they can be appropriately equipped for theological discernment. This suggests that the youth should be equipped as 'lay theologians' through the approach of you[theology] who try to make sense of the ultimate questions of who God is and what God

really means to them. In the light of this understanding, Schweitzer (2014:184) and Tanis (2016:101) call for youth to be engaged as ‘lay theologians’ whose questions and challenges make them ask, think, seek answers and innovate theological practices.

Therefore, this study argues for a youth ministry that empowers the youth to understand God’s working for themselves and equip them with theological discernment to locate God’s plan in their lives of struggles, failures, and opportunities. It is helpful to quote Ellis on this: “What is necessary for youth ministry is an approach which values adolescents not for their potentiality but for their actual lived experience and is able to hope and locate God’s action not in progress but in brokenness and impossibility” (2015:121).

7.4.1 Limitations of the current study

This research study has several limitations as is customary in all research studies because there is no academic research that is not susceptible to limitations. Firstly, this research study is limited to a context; a Nigerian context. Though the context is in Nigeria, it is limited in terms of geographic location to one state within each region and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria. In each state, this research study is limited to one cosmopolitan DCC. I chose to glocalise a particular social context of HHC because, as Osmer (2008:4) argues, a good practice in practical theology entails in-depth study regarding “particular episodes, situations, or contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide our responses”. The phenomenon of HHC is a global culture. However, it localises in different contexts and geographic localities as a glocalised lifestyle among the youth (Motley and Henderson, 2008:243, 245; Condry, 2001:374).

Secondly, this research study is limited to cosmopolitan cities. Though the literature findings of this research study represent a global conceptualisation of theological discernment in engagement with HHC, the empirical findings represent opinions and viewpoints from cosmopolitan Nigerian cities.

Thirdly, the number of participants were limited. The quest was to achieve saturation of data and not to interview all ECWA youth and youth leaders in cosmopolitan cities, thus participants were purposefully selected.

Fourthly, this research study is limited to a practical theological framework that provided the structure to achieve the aims and objectives of this research study.

7.4.2 Recommendations

This section provides recommendations gleaned from findings from literature and participants viewpoints', especially recommendations from participants. I synergised their recommendations into the following suggestions for this research study:

1. Institutionalising schools of theology in each district (DCC). The schools of theology will focus on equipping youth and youth leaders for basic theological inquiry about the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian practical ministry and train Christians to become lay theologians by equipping them with theological discernment and a good sense of theological judgement and reflection.
2. That the youth ministry department at the seminary be responsible for drafting the annual youth programmes instead of the CED at ECWA headquarters, because they are gatekeepers who understand culture from a theological perspective.
3. A youth ministry department at the ECWA headquarters where research can be conducted that relates to overseeing the affairs of the youth. Also, all cosmopolitan churches should have established youth ministries as an evolution of youth fellowship¹⁰¹. An examples of this recommendation is evident in ECWA Goodnews Maitama, Abuja, a cosmopolitan church with youth ministry with three units – youth fellowship, Rhythms of Life, and singles' fellowship.
4. Different youth ministry programmes for urban cosmopolitan cities and rural areas because the contexts differ. What is desired and obtainable for the youths in urban areas, especially the working class, cannot meet the yearnings of those in rural areas.
5. A feedback mechanism between the church youth and the CED and EE of ECWA. The feedback mechanism will create opportunities for the youth's voices to be heard regarding programmes that concern them. Dean and Foster, in arguing for the importance of getting the voice of the youth involved in planning and drafting their own programmes, say that "God needs their [young people's] prophetic voices in the church, in the culture, and in the families they call their own" (1998:26).
6. A hip hop church for cosmopolitan cities, especially in Abuja, the Federal Capital City of Nigeria that meets once a month for service. It is pertinent for the youth to also worship at an adult church so they can understudy values from the host culture

¹⁰¹ Youth fellowship should focus on building each member of the youth fellowship unto faith formation and maturity, while youth ministry should focus on sharing the Christian faith with those who are not members of the Christian faith community.

- (parents' traditional culture). This will also aid enculturation and acculturation between the youth and adults (parents' traditional culture).
7. Churches should not live in denial of phenomena in society. The Christian message should speak about and engage the cultural practices of the youth. The theology taught should be a reflection of and address what is happening in society by, for example, theologically addressing the challenges and opportunities of HHC.
 8. The youth as social actors should be equipped with an aptitude to theologically discern the attitudes, behaviours and values that they observe and imitate from HHC. More so, the church youth should also create a presence in HHC. As social actors they can produce a particular way of life that transforms HHC.
 9. A review of the ECWA minister's handbook to include a job description for youth pastors.
 10. Practical theology adopting the theology of *genetivus subjectivus* (Noval, 2013:35). A theology that entails consistent dialogue between seminary and university which are within the academics (practical theology) and within churches as practitioners. The essence of this dialogue is facilitate a theology of youth that is relevant to young people's concern of realities. .
 11. An annual gatekeepers workshop where cutting edge contemporary issues among youth and youth ministry models can be discussed by the gatekeepers in youth ministry (academician, practitioners and administrators) in order to develop youth ministry models that are relevant to different contexts (cosmopolitan and rural).
 12. Practical theological researches should engage empirical study that will equip them with understanding of contemporary issues from the perspectives of the youth.
 13. Youth ministry gatekeepers should equip parents as other gatekeepers with an understanding of HHC so parents can engage and connect with their youth on HHC.
 14. Parents as gatekeepers has the responsibility of equipping their youth with an understanding of the Christian faith, Christian life and Christian ministry.

7.5 Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Studies

This research study concludes that ECWA youth ministry programmes generally equip the youth for theological discernment through Bible studies, prayer and fire insurance equipping, but does not equip the youth specifically for HHC. The findings of this empirical study reveal that the ECWA youth programmes do equip the youth with theological content through the tools of Bible study, prayer meetings, living testament,

Jesus's model of discipleship, discipleship and mentorship, personal spiritual journey and ECWA culture. However, the programmes do not equip the youth with theology for theological discernment regarding engaging with HHC, because although HHC is prevalent in the society and a reality in the lives of the youths, it is not discussed in church – a culture of denial.

This research study recommends further studies on the relevance of ECWA youth programmes to theologically equip the youth in rural areas for their areas of challenges and opportunities. There is also a need to research and compare the phenomenon of HHC in cosmopolitan (urban) and rural areas in Nigeria. Further study can also be carried out on HHC as a religious praxis among the youth, and more research on theological discernment is needed.

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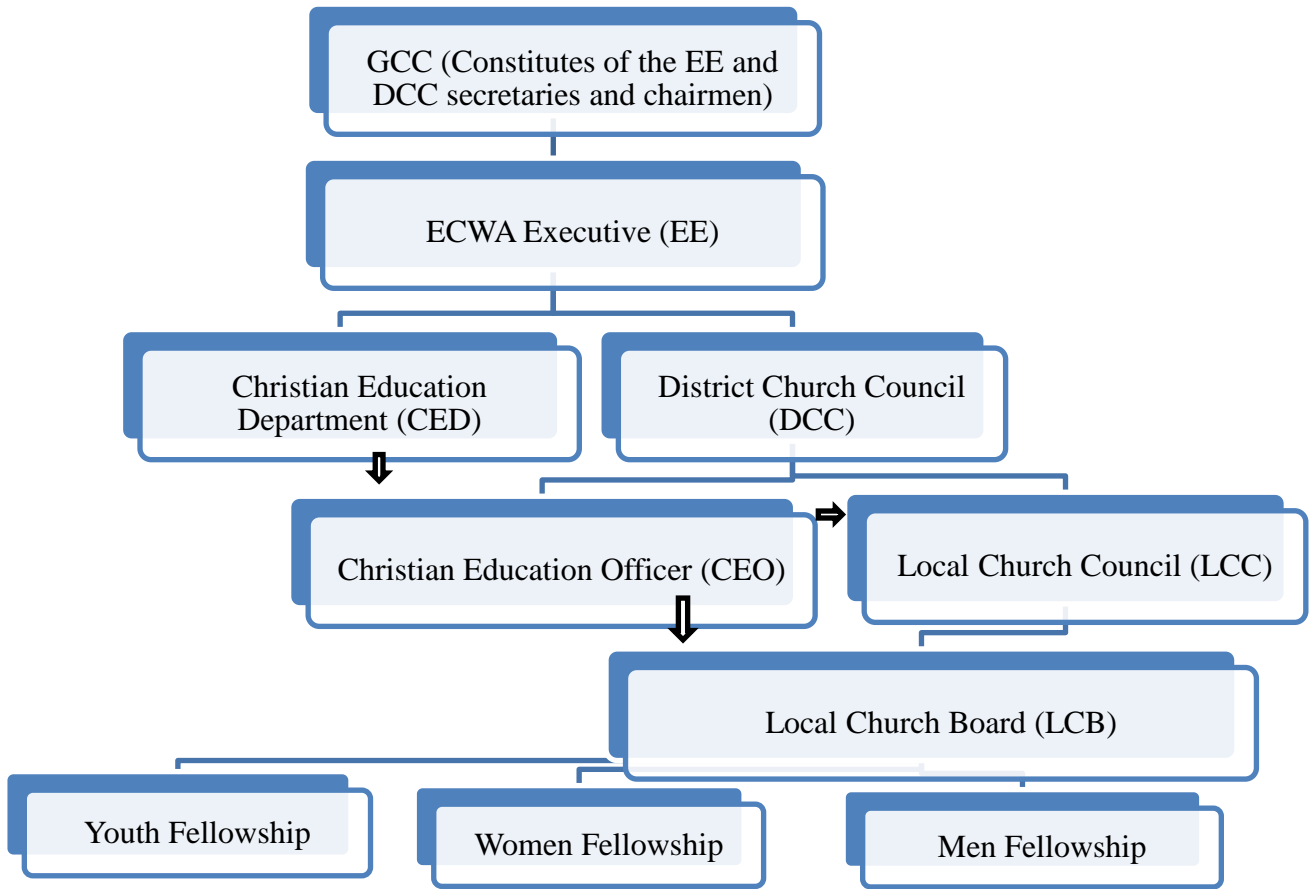
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ADDENDUM A: Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) organogram



ADDENDUM B: Letter requesting permission from Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) to conduct this research study.

No. 6 Merriman Street
Stellenbosch, Cape Town
Western Cape
South Africa
May 21, 2017.

To the General Secretary
ECWA Headquarter
Jos
Plateau State
Sir,

Permission to conduct research study in ECWA

Calvary greetings in Jesus name! As an ECWA staff currently on study leave at Stellenbosch University. I am currently doing my doctoral studies in youth ministry, department of practical theology and missiology, Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch. I am conducting a research study on the title, “Teaching theological discernment: youth ministry programme in ECWA Nigerian and contemporary hip hop culture”.

The motivation for this research study is personal and academic. My personal motivation stemmed from decades of experience as associate pastor who was designated as youth pastor at ECWA Goodnews Maitama, Abuja; I experience youth engagement with hip hop culture as expresses in their lifestyle and behaviour. In terms of academic motivation, the desire to undertake this research stems from a recommendation in my master’s thesis (MTh), which was completed at Stellenbosch University in December 2015. In my master’s research study, I recommended the need for the Church to equip the youth with theological understanding as they engage with contemporary issues in the society (youth culture).

The purpose of this research study is to investigate, how does the ECWA youth ministry program (annual theme and youth week fellowship program) equips ECWA youth to navigate through the challenges of hip hop culture and gives them the understanding on how to share their Christian faith and Christian life on hip hop culture. To achieve this purpose, I will be interviewing youth fellowship members and youth leaders within the age of 18 –

35 years in cosmopolitan cities, District Church council's Christian education officer, and Christian education department at ECWA headquarters.

Sir, if this permission is granted, I will apply for ethical clearance approval from the University before embarking on the empirical study (interviews) that I intend to commence in July/August 2017 after ethical clearance has been approved. It will be a purposeful selection of participants. Thus, the selection of the participants in cosmopolitan Churches will be done their pastors. Also, no payment will be made to participants and no costs will be incurred by any participant because, it is my responsibility to travel to conduct the interviews at respective DCC at each region of Nigeria (Ebute-Meta- Lagos State, Western region; Aba DCC-Abia and River state, Eastern and Southern region; Kano DCC- Kano, Northern region; and Garki DCC, Abuja, Federal Capital City). ECWA and the participants will have access to a copy of the final dissertation.

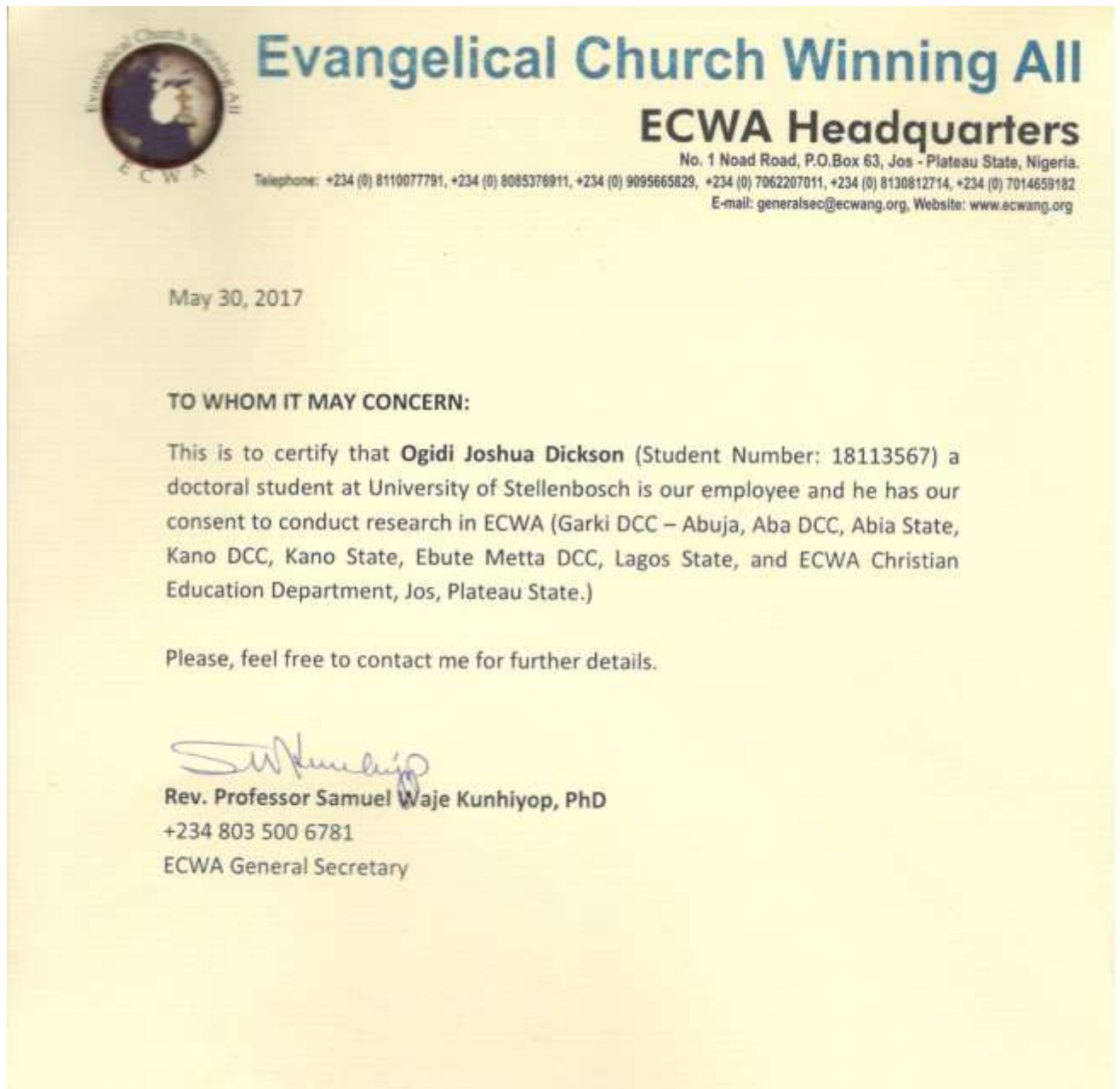
I hereby request your permission to engage participants in these DCC's for my doctoral research.

Yours faithfully,



Ogidi Joshua Dickson

ADDENDUM C: Approval letter from ECWA



ADDENDUM D: Ethical clearance certificate from Stellenbosch University**NOTICE OF APPROVAL**

REC Humanities New Application Form

21 July 2017

Project number: THE-2017-0336-219

Project Title: PhD DISSERTATION

Dear Past Joshua Ogidi

Your REC Humanities New Application Form submitted on 27 June 2017 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Humanities.

Please note the following about your approved submission:

Ethics approval period: 21 July 2017 - 20 July 2020**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

The researcher should note the DESC's comment regarding the informed consent form: Please add to the ICF that participants were selected because they are youth members of ECWA, youth pastors, youth leaders of part of the Youth Department of the Church.

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (THE-2017-0336-219) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Research Protocol/Proposal	PhD Dissertation Proposal	20/06/2017	
Data collection tool	Submit_Question_Youth	26/06/2017	
Data collection tool	submit_Question_Pastor & CEO	26/06/2017	
Data collection tool	submit_Question_Youth leader	26/06/2017	
Informed Consent Form	SU_Consent_to_Participate_in_Research	26/06/2017	
Proof of permission	ECWA permission letter_May 31	26/06/2017	
Informed Consent Form	Withdrawal Template	26/06/2017	

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.
The Research Ethics Committee: Humanities complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the general responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. Conducting the Research. You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.

2. Participant Enrollment. You may not recruit or enroll participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

3. Informed Consent. You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.

4. Continuing Review. The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is **your responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.

5. Amendments and Changes. If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You may **not** initiate any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

6. Adverse or Unanticipated Events. Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouche within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the REC's requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.

7. Research Record Keeping. You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC

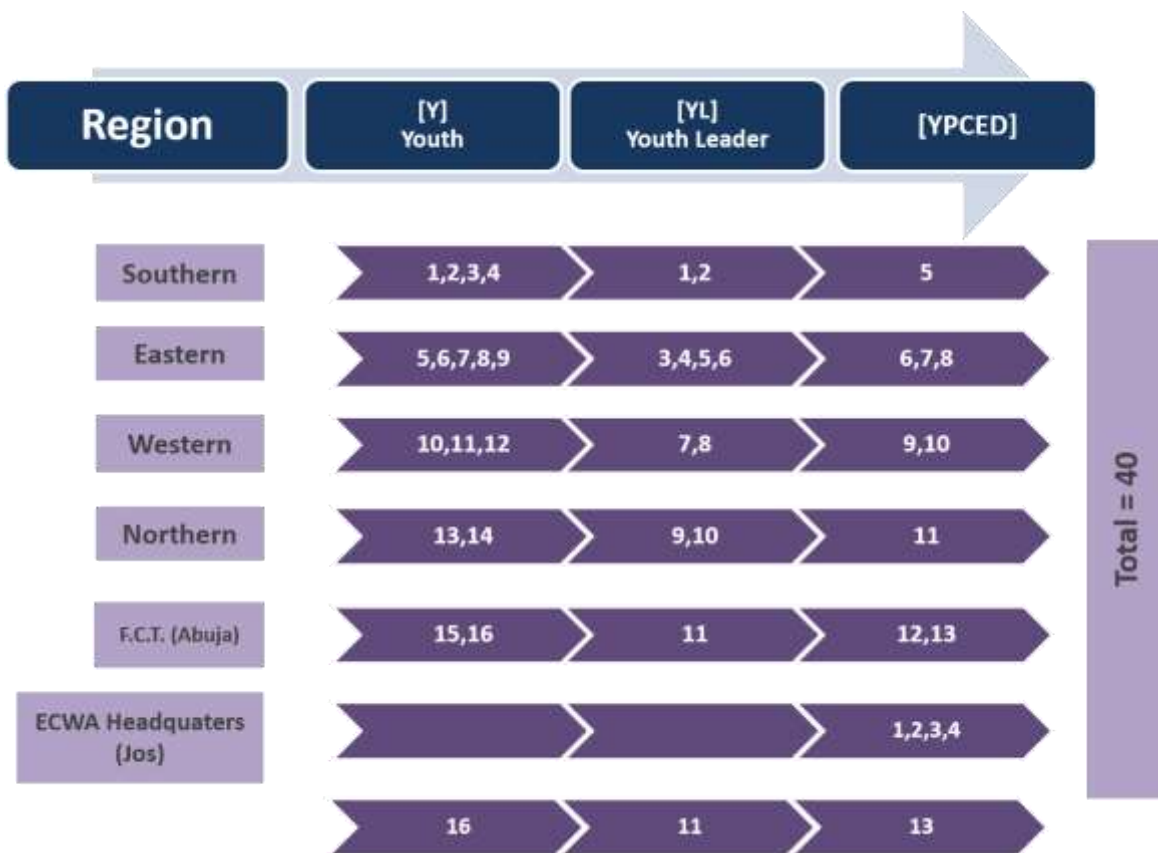
8. Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

9. Final reports. When you have completed (no further participant enrollment, interactions or interventions) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.

10. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits. If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

ADDENDUM E: INTERVIEWED PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR REGIONS

For example, Y1, Y2, Y3, and Y4 are participants from Southern region of Nigeria.



ADDENDUM F: Questionnaires to youth leaders (Category YL)

**TEACHING THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT: YOUTH MINISTRY
PROGRAMME IN ECWA NIGERIAN AND CONTEMPORARY HIP HOP
CULTURE**

Questions for youth Leaders

Demography:

1. Surname and Name.....
2. Sex Male () Female ()
3. Year of Birth.....
4. District Church Council (DCC)
5. State and region
6. Local Youth Board (LYB)
7. Position at your LYB

Questions

Category A: Program

1. How did you become involved in youth leadership? Please say the process.
2. How were you equipped theologically to serve in youth ministry?
3. Who is currently responsible for drafting the ECWA youth week of prayers?

Do you receive biblical teaching during the ECWA youth week of prayers? Discuss your experience

- a. Do you receive biblical teaching on hip hop culture through the ECWA annual youth fellowship program? Why
- b. Do you receive biblical teaching on hip hop culture through the annual themes at your LYB youth meetings? Why
4. Should the same Youth week program be used in both urban and rural locations? Why

Category B: Hip hop youth culture

1. How do you understand or experience hip hop culture? Discuss

2. How prevalence is hip hop culture in your society?
3. To the best of your own knowledge, what influence does Hip hop culture have on youth behaviour?
 - a. What are some of the Challenges of hip hop culture on youth behaviour?
 - b. What are some of the opportunities of hip hop culture on youth behaviour?
4. Do you think understanding hip hop youth culture can be effective for ECWA youth ministry? How?

Category C: Theological Discernment

1. What is your understanding of theology?
2. How relevant or irrelevant is theology to your behaviour regarding making decision?
3. Do you want to be theologically trained for youth ministry? Why
4. If you want theological understanding to inform youth's decision making, what kind of program would you suggest?

**ADDENDUM G: Questionnaires to youth pastors, Christian education department
(Category YPCED)**

**TEACHING THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT: YOUTH MINISTRY
PROGRAMME IN ECWA NIGERIAN AND CONTEMPORARY HIP HOP
CULTURE**

**Questions for youth pastors and Christian Education Department
Personnel**

Demography:

1. Surname and
Name.....
2. Year of
Birth.....
3. Theological training in youth ministry
.....
4. Years of experience in youth ministry
.....
5. District Church Council (DCC)/ Christian Education Department
(CED).....
6. Designation a. (Pastor) b. (CED) c. (CEO)

Questions

Category A: Program

1. What is your understanding of youth?
2. How were you equipped for youth ministry in ECWA?
3. Please describe how your theological training equips you for Christian ministry to youth.
4. In your own opinion, who should be responsible to draft ECWA youth week program? State your reason (s)
 - a. Should the same Youth week program be used in both urban and rural locations? Why

Category B: Hip hop youth culture

1. How do you understand or experience hip hop culture? Discuss
2. What do you think are the challenges and opportunities of hip hop culture?

Category C: Theological Discernment

1. What is your understanding of theological discernment?
2. What is your opinion on equipping youth for theological discernment as they engage

hip hop culture?

3. How do you help youth develop theological understanding that will inform their judgement of rightness and wrongness? Discuss
4. If you want theological understanding to inform youth's decision making, what kind of program would you suggest?

ADDENDUM H: Questionnaires to youth (Category Y)

**TEACHING THEOLOGICAL DISCERNMENT: YOUTH MINISTRY
PROGRAMME IN ECWA NIGERIAN AND CONTEMPORARY HIP HOP
CULTURE**

Questions for youth

Demography:

1. Surname and
Name.....
2. Sex a. (Male) b. (female)
3. Year of
Birth.....
4. District Church Council (DCC)
5. State and region
6. Local Youth Board (LYB)
.....
7. Are you a member of the fellowship or you are just attending?
.....

Questions

Category A: Program

- a. Who is responsible for the drafting the annual ECWA youth week programme?
- b. Who decides the annual ECWA theme that informs topic taught at LYB meetings?
- c. Do you receive biblical teaching during the ECWA youth week of prayers?
Discuss the biblical themes
- d. Do you receive biblical teaching on hip hop culture through the ECWA youth week program? Why
- e. Should the same Youth week program be used in both urban and rural locations? Why
- f. How do ECWA youth programme equip you about HHC?

Category B: Hip hop Youth Culture

1. How do you understand or experience hip hop culture? Discuss
2. How prevalent is HHC in your society?
3. To the best of your knowledge, what influence does Hip hop culture have on youth lifestyle?
4. What are some of the Challenges of hip hop culture as noticed in youth lifestyle?
5. What are some of the opportunities of hip hop culture as noticed in youth lifestyle?

Category B: Theological Discernment

1. What is your understanding of theology?
2. How relevant or irrelevant is theology to your lifestyle regarding judging rightness and wrongness?
3. How does your youth program equip you theologically to understand the Hip hop culture and its influence?

ADDENDUM I: Turnitin receipt

11/19/2018	Turnitin link 2 - Excludes the bibliography
	
<h2>Digital Receipt</h2>	
This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.	
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ADDENDUM J: SIMILARITY INDEX REPORT

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Turnitin Originality Report

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 Abraham, Ibrahim, "Christian hip hop as pedagogy: a South African case study", *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 2015.

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